"Processuality" and Relativity in Metaphoric Nature of Symbols

Podoliaka Andrij

This paper concerns the metaphoric nature of symbols as reflections of continuous processes of various types. As implied by its title, it deals with meanings of semantic constructions[1], so, on one hand, cross-cultural semantics can be specified as its field of study. On the other hand, one of the main ideas is that the meanings of semantic constructions are intertwined with modes of existence (i.e. phases of relative processes of constant change) and reflections of those modes by means of symbols. These notions make it much harder to define the field of study of this paper. It is an attempt of cross-field examination of symbolic constructions. To add some more to define the field of study by means of metaphors, let us use two poems of unknown authorship that Joseph Campbell cites in his *The Mythic Image.*

> *That we come to this earth to live is untrue:*
> *We come but to sleep, to dream.*
> Aztec poem, anonymous (Campbell 1974, I-1).

> I am Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow, and I have the power to be born a second time. I am the divine hidden Soul who creates the gods... I am the lord of the men who are raised up; the lord who comes forth out of darkness and whose forms of existence are of the house wherein are the dead. Hail, lord of the shrine that stands in the middle of the earth. He is I, and I am He (*Book of the Dead, Chapter of the coming forth by day)* (Campbell 1974, I-17).

1. On relativity and processes as the core of all phenomena

a) In my analytical/descriptive[2] framework I treat all entities, even those which appear to be static or unchanging, as processes with different speeds of change. I assume that everything is changing because there is no proof of the opposite, while there are numerous examples in physics (General Theory of Relativity; Quantum Mechanics) and other sciences that can be understood as related to the all-are-processes assumption. Quantum Mechanics is built on the assumption that an electron is a particle and wave at the same time, i.e. to describe the characteristic behavior of electrons we should use characteristics of both waves and particles. Furthermore, according to the Uncertainty Principle, the precise location and momentum of an electron at a given instant cannot be known, so it's future motion cannot be determined, but only a range of possibilities for the future motion of the particle can be described (Beller 2001).

Most folk-models explaining all too paradoxical life with a little bit more comprehensible notions or, using different terms, common sense, also claim that everything is changing and you cannot enter the same river twice. Thus, following obscure explanations of quantum mechanics and no less perplexing common sense I approach everything as processes, as changing forms of matter/energy.

Those entities/phenomena that appear to be static, devoid of change, nevertheless are still changing processes with the speed of change beyond the reach of a particular measuring device. Their range of change can still in theory be tracked down within another, broader field of measurement. Thus, static nature and the range of change are relative properties whose content depends on the chosen (or delineated in a certain temporally and spatially fixed way) framework of investigation. To give an example, in order to notice the change in the shape of a mountain we need to spread the

framework of measurements over thousands if not hundreds of thousands of years. Within a shorter temporal frames the mountain can be described as static, i.e. without noticeable change in its shape.

b) The features of relativity and processuality[3] influence definitions of the nature of all phenomena in the physical aspect of reality as well as in the epistemological sphere of knowledge. Trees and stones are changing as well as concepts and patterns of social life. The way we perceive and comprehend their change and their nature depends on the perspective we accept or create.

2. On infeasibility of one absolutely objective perspective

c) One of the basic premises of my analytical/descriptive framework is that there is no absolutely objective perspective from which different subjects with different frameworks could comprehend the same phenomena in absolutely the same way. I am not saying that phenomena can not exist without a comprehending subject. What I am saying is that existence of the phenomena within the subject (by existence within the subject I mean the subject's perception of and reflection on the phenomena) is intertwined with the subject's[4] own existence with all its specifics. Communication is carried in most cases via common denominators of the phenomenon, denominators which agents of communication assume to have common features. In other words, different subjects are defining for each other common properties of the phenomena, (re-)creating the descriptions of the phenomenological realities, using historical/cultural heritage of descriptions accumulated and created by preceding generations.

d) The space of intersubjectivity exists because all phenomena are multifaceted and intertwined with each other. This intertwined nature allows subjects to share definitions of some properties of the phenomena in generally applicable ways within a community

of knowledge while ignoring the features that cannot be universalized or generalized. In order to make it sound less abstract and confusing I want to give an example of the features which cannot be universalized, for instance feelings. Each feeling is unique in its subjectivity within a unique scope of experience, but the description of the feeling is conducted by putting the expression of the feeling into socially/culturally specified descriptive framework.

3. On the temporal and spatial limits of human existence and cognition

e) All phenomena/entities[5] with their processual and relative nature can be described under a common denominator as forms of organizing energy/matter. That is why they are all intertwined and relational, meaning they are mutually influencing each others with different strength of influence depending on the proximity of interactions.

I want to stress once again, the definition of each property/feature of a phenomenon depends on the framework of comprehension; a framework, passively chosen or actively delineated in a certain temporally and spatially fixed manner. Since spatially and temporally fixed modes are the insurmountable limits of human existence and also the limits of resonating in accord with existence, cognitive processes, comprehensions and descriptions of all phenomena are carried out within temporally and spatially fixed frameworks. As a result, spatiotemporal limitations or abstract, beyond practical experience and thus void, negation of those limitations are the only choices that human cognitive abilities have. That is why any subject, attempting to define the nature of any entity/phenomenon, rather than defining the nature or inner properties of the phenomenon, is in fact defining subject's own relation to the phenomenon within a

subjectively delineated relative framework of interaction.

f) This relational and relative nature of all definitions and descriptions is what makes me approach and characterize all cognitive processes and human existence in total as spread over metaphorical and/or mythological dimensions. That is, based on taken for granted beliefs or "objective" assumptions that in actuality are relative and "processual" correlations between different domains of influences among forms of organizing energy.

g) When I use the term *forms of organizing energy* I do not imply that there is always directionality in the change of forms. I do not mean that forms are necessarily changing from simple to more complex with constant increase in the efficiency of interactions. I simply mean that forms are constantly changing. Each description of the change depends, as I have already stressed, on the delineated framework of description, or in other words the semantic system, based on relative premises *believed* to be objective constants for the purpose of description. Without beliefs in the objectively constant nature of premises of descriptions, most, or possibly all, of the stable descriptions of phenomena would be as "stable" as painting on the wet sand near the verge of the rising ocean.

4. On the relativity of the relativity principle and multidimensional space

h) An opponent to the view of all-permeating relativity and relational correlations/connections among all phenomena might object that such an approach accepts as feasible a completely opposite approach. To put it simply, if everything is relative then the statement "everything is relative" is relative itself, meaning, that statement satisfies the requirement of the truth-condition only within certain corresponding frameworks. Furthermore, within

other frameworks based on the different premises, the opposite statements "not everything is relative" or "everything is not relative" also can have truth-condition satisfied, i.e. can be true. I accept such an opposing point of view and admit that rejecting relativity premises can have truth-conditions satisfied within different descriptive frameworks.

i) In order to harmonize seemingly contradictory approaches and ways of thinking, defending opposite but equally true statements, I entertain the notion of multidimensional space where all contradicting phenomena can coexist in more or less harmony. The multi-dimensional nature of space is one more crucial premise of my framework. I abstain from talking about multi-dimensional space in the physical world. When I am talking about multi-dimensional space, first and foremost I mean cognitive space, or the phenomenological space of human consciousness[6].

Various actual experiences are attached to the symbolic constructs in that space, thus creating networks of overlapping correlations. Since the connections between various constructs are of a metaphorical nature, even contradictory symbolic constructions can coexist there without obvious friction. A bear could be a totemic god and dinner at the same time, on different levels of apprehension. If the encounter with the actual world beyond consciousness is incomprehensible within the limits of the existing networks, the limits of the networks might be changed and new symbolic constructs might be created or internalized. Still, in most cases the creation of new symbolic networks does not happen very frequently, because the world beyond is not only comprehended but also perceived via already existing symbolic constructs. That is why only that part of the realities receives attention which can be perceived and incorporated into the worldview through already existing constructs. Constructs serve as means of interaction with and sometimes as a defense against

unknown and possibly threatening environments. It is not easy to get rid of the defending shield between oneself and the possibly dangerous world beyond. All this leads to the creation of multidimensional phenomenological space where all contradicting encounters with the world beyond the bearer (or owner/agent) of the space can be if not harmonized then at least pacified.

j) It is important to remember that the existence and specifics of each multidimensional space is intertwined with the existence of the bearer (owner/agent) of the space. The bearer of the space can be not only one particular individual, but also social groups with their networks of norms, traditions, and rules of identification. For groups as well as for individuals the relativity principle is applicable. A truth-condition satisfied in one dimension (*dimension* can also be understood as a symbolic construct or network reflecting one encounter or a set of encounters with the real world) is not necessarily satisfied in another dimension constructed according to other premises. As I said in part (e) inner nature of any phenomenon in the real world without a perceiving subject can be and probably is different from the inner nature of the phenomenon where perceiving subject is present. The act of mere perception changes the reality. Thus the inner nature of any phenomenon in its pure/actual form cannot be reached. The inner sense of a truth-condition, if it exists, is beyond the reach of a perceiving subject because perception itself interacts with it. Only the relation of the subject, the bearer of the space, to the phenomenon and/or its truth-condition can be reached and described. But, each relation to the phenomenon is as unique and subjective as each feeling it is based on. Feelings are the cement with which symbolic constructs are constructed. Feelings attach constructs to each other and to the memory of the bearer of the multidimensional space of reasoning thus setting dimensions in that space. That is why the human ability to perceive and to reason

is inseparable from the human ability to feel.

5. On the objective perspective as the opposite side of the coin of relativity

k) Given the aforementioned, we may ask why, then, until the 20th century human beings with very few exceptions have believed in the existence of only one correct objective perspective, the "Eye of God", from which anything could be and should be described with universal, logical applicability? Not only believed, but led their lives, more or less successfully functioning according to the objective perspective, constantly reinforcing that view by discovering and "objectively" describing more and more new phenomena.

In my analytical space the answer has four parts.

k.1) Premises/definitions of descriptive frameworks do structure the framework in the way that all the things approached/described within the framework can be described (if they can be described at all) only according to the lines of the basic premises laid down beforehand. That is why for people who believe in the objectively describable nature of reality, reality does appear in an objectively describable way.

k.2) Modes of existence, forms of organizing energy in other words, took human forms with specifics of interaction within an individual (physiological and psychological processes) and between individuals (sociological processes) attached to it. That specifics of interactions is similar enough to make one individual subject (unable to experience completely the cognitive or emotional processes of another subject) believe that those processes are almost or completely the same. Simply put, "I believe that the other person sees the apple in the same way because s/he describes it in the same way".

What I want to emphasize here, is that any description is a

relation to reality; children learn to relate to reality in the ways accessible within the particular community of knowledge raising these children. Children's descriptions are similar, almost analogical, first of all because there is no other easily accessible choice.

k.3) Modes of human existence do have at least 2 common features: the beginning of life and the end of life. (Life after death is beyond my reach, so I have no choice but to leave it untouched.) 2 universal features of human existence (birth and death) become the basis of human beliefs/assumptions that all their encounters with the reality can also be experienced and described in the same, universally applicable way.

Life and death are intertwined in human existence and cognition. The fact of unavoidable death creates a certain shadow of insecurity and unreliability. In order to avoid such disturbing thinking, human beings endeavor to create as reliable and stable descriptions of reality as possible. In ancient time this push towards security and stability created what Joseph Campbell called the main theme of all mythologies (Campbell 1988), which is the belief in the existence of an invisible realm beyond the river of death: a realm which never stops interacting with visible reality. The question of whether or not such a metaphysical realm really exists or, if the application of the word "exist" is not the best choice for the realm beyond our existence, whether or not such a realm is ontologically real, is, again, beyond my reach. Nevertheless, this realm is epistemologically real, since it is real in the cognitive space of many human beings, and many thoughts and decisions are based on the beliefs and other symbolic constructs inhabiting that realm. If it is epistemologically real, then it is ontologically meaningful and consequentially real for those who share such a cognitive space.

k.4) One more possible reason why cognitive and physiological

processes are described in a universally applicable way might be as follows. Energy interactions within the energy field contoured by the physical human body might have common features. Consequently, cognitive processes embedded into human physiology might also have some common features.

Nevertheless, all too often the quoted examples of Indian yogis surviving untroubled conditions lethal or damaging to people not adept in yoga, or observations on Chinese abacus experts, assisted by special mental representation techniques, solving arithmetic problems "in their head" at a speed several orders of magnitude faster then the rest of humanity (Shweder 1990, p. 5) raise serious doubts about the applicability of objective perspective and universal definitions for describing human cognitive and physiological features.

1) Still on the other hand, what can be called "the rest of humanity" far from yoga or special mental representational techniques, can be assumed to share similar or common features in their physiological and cognitive processes. In most cases, medical and psychological fields rather prove this assumption. Not special but common mental techniques and thinking patterns, maybe not in an optimal way, but still can serve the purpose of representation, and to a certain degree can do it in a somewhat similar way across cultures and societies.

The question about what was first, similar physiology and cognition that created similar descriptions or similar descriptions as symbolic constructs in everyday life that structured those bodily processes in a similar way, this question seems to be impossible to address "objectively", so I decide not to address it at all. In our reasoning we cannot separate processes themselves from descriptions of the processes. Thinking operates with descriptions. Put in other way, any sentence, any description, can be viewed under two aspects: as a description of a real-world

situation or event, and as a self-contained part of our belief system (e.g. a conclusion or a premise). As descriptions, sentences describe real-world events and casual forces leading up to those events; as conclusions, they are themselves understood as being the result of the epistemic forces which cause the train of reasoning leading to a conclusion (Sweetser 1990, p. 65).

6. On "polysemantic symbols"

As Roy D`Andrade put it, human beings are opportunistic information processors, and in constructing systems of symbols will make use of any kind of structure that will help them to communicate information of interest (D`Andrade 1990). There are always trade-offs between consistency and generality in categorization. Phenomena such as polysemy and the mixture of terms for kinds of things, functions, and collections within a single hierarchical system represent compromises between the need to have symbols that are defined by simple consistent formulations and the need to organize great varieties of experience by means of limited number of symbols (D`Andrade 1990, p. 89).

In my framework, real world events and the polysemantic symbols which D`Andrade talks about understood as descriptions of those events are inseparable parts of one continuum/whole, and as such they create multidimensional cognitive spaces, by means of which bearers (owners/agents) of the spaces can relate to the real world events as well as to the symbolic constructs as counterparts of the events on the other side of the continuum, i.e. on the symbolic aspect of the reality; this other side itself is in its turn also located within the multiplicity of multidimensional cognitive space. From yet another point of view, all cognitive spaces are located in the real world and so they are parts of the real world themselves. Thus, this separation and/or segmentation into real world and cognitive spaces is also relative and relational.

This separation/segmentation is done in order to discern the difference between events/occasions in the real world and human perception and comprehension of those events/occasions through symbolic constructs of cognitive processes.

Various influences on both sides, from the real world and from symbolic multidimensional constructs, shape the form and dimensions of cognitive spaces. Since human beings share various naturally, culturally/socially, morphologically/physiologically and psychologically determined features, cognitive spaces also share dimensions similar enough to permit their bearer/agents to define various phenomena under common denominator of/for inter-group and intra-group interactions. On the other hand, just as there are no identical sets of features, so there are no identical cognitive spaces with identical dimensions.

The metaphorical (i.e. crossing apparent boundaries between domains, and flexible enough to permit interpretations matching particular set of dimensions) nature of symbolic constructs allows various domains of interactions (domains situated in the real world as well as in cognitive spaces) influence the specific of interactions and definitions created in the course of interactions via symbolic constructs.

I should acknowledge here, among others, the influence of Mark Johnson's ideas of metaphorical schemas of reasoning on my way of thinking (Johnson 1987). I intend to not only comment on his ideas of the metaphorical nature of image-schematic structures of imagination and reasoning but also to point to possible correlations of those structures of imagination and understanding with naturally/biologically determined and socially/culturally specified factors.

Functional distinctions and transactions are initiated by and correspond to human existence, which in my understanding means the ways human beings are situated within frameworks of

interactions of the surrounding and penetrating Whole. The Whole in some aspects is constituted by ways/modes of various interactions and patterns of organized energy that human beings inherited from natural world preceding the advent of humans.

Consequently, those inherited from the natural world patterns significantly influence the constitution of organized energy into human forms. This natural influence takes the shapes of various imprints, instinctive reflexes, behavioral mechanisms of reinforcement and other similar phenomena and mechanisms that exert influence on modes of human existence and reasoning. My allusions to emotional imprints and behavioral conditioning intend to address those inherited from the natural world influences.

On the other hand, energy organizing into functional patterns and communities of units created inter-subjectivity, i.e. the social sphere of correlation of functioning. The specifics of existence in social spheres with distinct legacies of beliefs/notions, value systems and cultural models disseminated in fields of meanings, is another crucial factor that exerts influence on modes of human existence and reasoning.

Boundary crossing between naturally determined (i.e. determined or influenced by natural world and environment) factors and socially determined factors that define/influence human existence is possible because those factors exist in constant interactions/transactions with and within each others. Furthermore, by the interactions/transactions they influence/define human modes of existence and reasoning in multidimensional spaces of overlapping experiences and symbolic reflections of the experiences.

These constant social interactions/transactions and epistemological boundary crossings are carried out and reflected by *metaphorical structures* of original myths/beliefs and value systems/cultural models from the past as well as *cognitive mental*

spaces of the present that simultaneously belong to several *spheres/dimensions of shared experiences* (dimensions, naturally/biologically determined as well as socially or epistemologically created) and thus enable participants/subjects/actors to organize the experiences into meaningful patterns by interpreting (consciously or not) metaphorical structures describing their experiences, structures open to interpretation by their origin and definition and so by their nature.

   These organizations into meaningful patterns are realized by symbolic constructs and metaphorical links between constructs reflecting naturally determined dimensions as well as socially or epistemologically created dimensions.

7. Semantic generalizations

   Restating my basic premises one more time in a somewhat simplified way, I regard all entities in observable and comprehensible spheres (all agents, objects and actions) as processes with different speed of change, in other words, as various concentrations of constantly changing energy, constantly changing with different speed of change. For example, trees grow up and decay, and time destroys not only humans, but stones, mountains, planets and stars, in short, everything we can think of. Thus, everything is a part of changing processes, interactions of energy consisting of elementary particles constantly interacting and changing their concentrations and properties (such as locations, orbits, spins, energetic charge and so on) due to the aforementioned interactions. Thus all properties, either on the level of elementary particles, or on the level of morphological constructions and lexical units, also can be considered not as constant attributes but as episodes in the constant process of all encompassing change, and as such properties can be regarded as

staying the same only within the limits of a certain time-span, delineated from without. Moreover, some interacting processes and the results of their interactions delineate the frameworks as standards of description for other interactions.

In everyday life and cognitive generalizations stemming from everyday life those processes/entities (objects and subjects) whose speed of change is much slower than the speed human cognitive abilities can comprehend and evaluate are perceived as constant and named as nouns of various types. Examples: *girl, ball,* etc. For the purpose of everyday life activities the speed of structural change of those entities is not significant. For instance, in the sentence

The girl hit the ball

describing an action taking place during several milliseconds, in order to understand what happened during those milliseconds to whom it is not crucial to recognize that the ball will be quite different concentration of elementary particles in let's say a hundred or a thousand years from the moment when it was hit by the girl. Even more, such recognition might be redundant and interfere with the description of the present action. That is why the object (as well as subject) of the action are assumed to be constant entities since their speed of structural change (decay), as one of the properties, is negligibly small in comparison with other properties. In this case the other properties, changing much faster, are the location of the ball and the action and/or movement of the girl.

Whether or not the location and the movement can be considered as properties of the objects can be an arguable point. It can be objected that even if they are they are not inner properties of the objects since they are not determined by the structure of the object but by influences coming from outside, not from inside, not from the nature of the object itself.

Nevertheless, whether they are inner or outer properties, the location and motion are interacting with purely inner properties. In fact, if the ball is put (located) under such a pressure that even a slight resemblance of a ball cannot be recognized anymore, the inner properties of the object that previously was defined as a ball are drastically altered. By changing the location we can change other inner properties such as the shape, structure, and material concentration. The new object cannot be defined as a ball anymore because its properties do not satisfy all truth-conditions for the properties of a ball.

In yet another case, if the ball is located in a place where temperature is very high (at least over 100 degrees Celsius), again, it is not a ball anymore and we should find or create another name for this new concentration of elementary particles (in most cases it is called ashes).

Thus, so-called outer properties (location, static and/or kinetic movement, interaction with other objects, and so on) influence inner properties (form/shape, size, structure, density, material concentration etc). Interactions between absolutely unrelated properties, properties of absolutely different nature, would be impossible. That is why in my framework the very division into the inner and outer properties is rendered infeasible; this very division is regarded as just another metaphorical dimension in the multi-dimensional cognitive space of the Whole and as such this division is real for those who believe (accept such premises) in it and it is not real (not existing beyond the sphere that questions or stipulates its existence) for those who do not believe in it (do not accept aforementioned premises as given).

It can be objected that the description of properties of a ball used in sport should be analyzed differently from a ball considered as abstract sphere. Given the certain distribution of probability of any notion and statement, still, I have to clarify my own position.

We cannot say anything about outer properties (location, movement, interaction with surrounding) of any abstract term, so all abstract notions in this case are approached in their "incarnation"(i.e. formation) in physical reality. The problem of primacy of nominal vs. empirical is beyond the scope of this article.

Mentioned examples show that distinctions between inner and outer properties as well as other descriptions of various phenomena of real world are also relative (not absolute) and subjective descriptions whose content depends on the chosen framework of standards, i.e. which properties to consider more related to the nature of the object and which to consider more related with the nature of outer influences. But, stressing one more time, the line demarcating inner and outer spheres do not exist in any reality other than the mind of the person who is drawing the line, based on personal preferences of one kind or another.

In the same line of reasoning, it can be said that verbs name processes whose speed of change human cognitive abilities can detect and comprehend as either change of concentration of energy or change of the location of the concentrated energy. By using verbs we address those processes as actions. For example, *hit, fly, go, die*, etc. Abstract verbs are a little more complicated, but if we approach them as determinants of some change in the inner or outer reality of a cognizing person, it seems clear that abstract verbs too are derivative from interactions of energy. Let us take for example abstract verbs describing mental or emotional state: *think, fear, want*, etc. In the physical reality, mental and emotional states are realized by electric impulses running through synapses and axons between different cells of the brain, impulses caused from within (flashes of memory, physiological changes, metabolism, etc) or from without (interaction with the objective or subjective reality). In either case those impulses (realized in

thoughts or emotions) are carried out as interactions of energy changing its form. In their consequences, whether leading to actions or just to the change of mental state (before or after some thought/emotion appeared the state is slightly different) the impulses are interacting with inner or outer realities changing the forms and concentrations of energy even if in a very slight way. Thus even abstract verbs are addressing interactions between various forms of energy.

Abstract nouns can be characterized in the same way as abstract verbs. The only difference would be again the speed of change in inner or outer reality, speed perceived or neglected for the sake of focusing on other aspects of interaction (as in the example of the hit ball, the decay of which is insignificant for the perception of its movement). The nouns *fear* or *thought* would be signs addressing processes whose speed of change a describing subject decides to neglect in order to focus on other aspects, more crucial for the purpose of present description.

Other grammatical, syntactic, morphological structures also can be approached as descriptive entities derived from processes of interaction between forms of energy changing its configurations and concentrations. When I noted above that "interacting processes and results of their interactions delineate the frameworks as standards of description of other interactions", I didn't elaborate on it. Now it is time to give an example in order to show how other descriptive entities, such as adverbs, adjectives and prepositions, are related to processes of interaction among forms of energy. Let us change the original sentence into two.

The girl hit the ball hard. The ball flew away very fast.

Adverbs *hard* and *fast* obviously describe the properties of the action, i.e. the properties of the process of change. In the former case it is the movement or action and the change of the location of the girl, in the latter of the ball. Even though the sentence does not

describe the change of the girl's location outwardly, this description is contained inwardly in the field of meaning of the verb *hit* that the use of this verb activates in consciousness. You cannot hit anything without changing your position and thus location slightly, so we understand that the girl changed her location, even if only for several centimeters, when we read that she hit the ball. In a similar manner the use of adverbs *hard* and *fast* draws to the focus of consciousness the frameworks in which actions are described. The words *hard* and *fast* would not have their meaning if they were not comparisons, if some harder and faster actions as well as less hard and slower actions did not exist. Thus, adverbs describing the actions (processes of change) are confirming standards of description and by the very act of confirmation are setting the standards of description anew, even if in the same way as before.

It is even easier to show the connection between the preposition *away* and the process of change. It is a characteristic of the direction (or location in case of other prepositions, such as *on, in, above* etc) of the process and as such is derivative and inseparable from the process.

Speaking about other morphological and syntactic units, adjectives address attributes acquired by nouns as a result of change. Thus adjectives are another way to characterize the process of change by means of assuming that process of change stopped in this particular moment and in this particular condition. Pronouns, articles, and other grammatical morphemes serve the purpose of constructing grammatical frameworks clarifying the relations between the aspects of the process of interaction between the units of energy.

It can be summarized that all descriptive and grammatical units originate as derivatives from processes of change looked upon from different angles with different cognitive and perceptive tools.

Moreover, aspects in incidents of the interaction set precedents and standards for describing further interactions.

In my cognitive framework all phenomena are approached as constantly engaged in interactions of various kinds. Participants of the processes of interaction of changing energy are effected (i.e. determined) and affected by those very processes (processes, setting the standards for their own causes of interaction as well as courses of description of those interactions). The courses of interactions and changes specify for the agents of the processes how to recognize the processes, how to recognize themselves as parts and participants of the processes, and how to relate to the processes of changes also effecting all and everything around.

Since location, environment and preceding history of interactions, time and space, are among the factors also influencing the course of interactions (in addition to other factors which are consequences of interactions as such setting their own standards), there is an unlimited variety of interactions and descriptive units, but unlimited within dimensions of time and space, and some theoretically possible other properties/dimensions, determined also by inner or outer influences in multi-dimensional space/universe.

As it was said in the beginning, the purpose of these investigations was to formulate a cross-field approach to the nature of symbolic constructions. If we assume that it was done more or less successfully than the consequences can be spread over all the spheres where the nature of symbols plays any significant role. How useful it all can be depends on how well it is understood and accepted.

However, given certain probability distribution of the truth-condition of any statement and notion, in other words, given conventional and metaphoric nature of any "absolute" truth, the lines of reasoning conducted on more "objective" and less

"metaphoric" premises will probably be very much inclined to reject the proposed framework as too abstract, or vague, or unclear, or illusory. Within the framework delineated in all these pages, such a rejection and its right to exist are accepted as other metaphoric dimensions within multi-dimensional cognitive space of the Whole. The question of whether or not the described framework itself can be accepted within more "clear" or more "objective" frameworks remains open.

Even if we all come to this earth to dream, as Aztec anonymous poet and Chuan-Tzy tried to show, it seems like our dreams go along very different lines. This very difference in the lines of dreams (or reasoning) is the very essence of the thing I tried to approach by means of the terms *processuality* and metaphoric nature of symbols.

Notes

1 The terms "semantic constructions", "symbolic constructions", and "symbolic constructs" are interchangeable in these investigations.

2 I use the term "analytical framework" as a synonym of "descriptive framework" because in my framework the meaning of "analysis" is a description performed according to relative principles which are believed to be "objective" and "universal".

3 One of the purposes of this paper is to define the term *processuality*, so it is not easy to do in several words what I am trying to do in several pages. Nevertheless, some sort of definition would be helpful, so parallels should be drawn with wave-function and the Uncertainty Principle of Quantum Mechanics. Just as the precise location and momentum of an electron at a given instant cannot be known and only a range of possibilities for the future motion of the particle can be described, in the same way any phenomenon (symbolic construction, its meaning) can be described as a certain point (temporally and spatially fixed point, point or probability destribution) on the change-function, i.e. function of change of the phenomenon. These characteristics in which instead of static entities all

comprehensible symbolic constructs should be approached as temporally and spatially fixed points on the change-function I term *processuality.*

4 By use of the term "subject" in this context I do not mean to imply subject vs. object duality. Rather, I use subject as a synonym for "agent", meaning agent and/or initiator of the perception and reflection.

5 I use many synonymous or almost synonymous terms and slashes because the field of meaning of the term for me might be and probably is slightly different from the field of meaning of the same term for another person since fields of meanings are related to not only cultural background but also personal histories. Using several synonymous and/or slightly different terms I hope to increase the probability of overlapping of fields of meaning that terms are pointing at.

6 The next chapter, dealing with "polysemantic symbols", will also give more details to the notion of metaphoric nature of phenomenological space of consciousness.

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