changing worlds & signs of the times

Selected Proceedings
from the 10th International Conference
of the Hellenic Semiotics Society

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Resilience and Chrysalis Reality: Navigating Through Diaphanous Space and Polychronic Time

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Abstract

Space and time in human experience are merely ordering systems upon which all of the social activities and objects in the world can be perceived as real, where continuity and discontinuity appear as dualism. Animating and leading meaningful change while simultaneously maintaining the resilience of continuity can be accomplished by reframing the perception of reality: space and time. Contemporary societies can persevere through the metamorphoses of reality by navigating through diaphanous space and polychronic time. To engage in this navigation is to be willing to experience the transparency and integration of the chrysalis process. Our capacity to navigate through diaphanous space and polychronic time liberates us from the limitations of the present, dogmatic ideologies, and uncertainties of exploring unfamiliar boundaries.

Keywords

chrysalis , reality , semiotics , space-time , transmodernity

Preamble

Observing current world affairs and events, it is evident to me that there is a growing need to go beyond what we conventionally perceive into what we are imaginatively capable of interpreting. Perceiving reality as absolute and autonomous has encouraged contemporary societies to conceive space and time as immutable entities that can be used as standards for measuring events, objects, and even qualities. There has never been a time in history when it has been more significant for societies to engage in a transformational process that would lead to global well-being and a sustainable way of living. And this transformation requires uncanny and resilient talent, or "cunning intelligence" (Detienne & Vernant, 1991), to persevere through the chrysalis process. Interestingly, this talent goes back to the time of the Greeks, who "prized very highly a talent for making out against the odds of great strength" (Dunne, 1993, p. 257). The notion of "reality" is, indeed, illusive and ambiguous. Driving from the Latin word *res*, reality has long been associated with "things" and "objects". Worse yet, reality has been considered as the "ultimate truth" in perceiving "space", "time", and even "reason". We seem to have developed a tendency to experience reality in ways we value and in manners that enable us to perceive more of what we value. However, the word *res* comes from the verb *reri*, which literally means "to think" (Bohm, 1980, p. 54). This meaning, of course, draws our attention to the semiotic relation between what goes on in the mind and what is recognized as reality. Charles S. Peirce's semiotics has certainly changed epistemological limitations and broken through the dead-end of spatial and temporal reality, advancing a much broader and more commodious way of creating and interpreting signs that cross the absolute boundary of space-time and human perception. In crossing this boundary, John Deely (1992; 2002) emphasizes that the permeability between mind-independent being (*ens reale*) and mind-dependent being (*ens rationis*) is a two-way relation (see Colbey, 2009). This permeability, or transparency between mind and nature (Bateson, 1979), takes us to the heart of the social construction of reality.

Nothing in reality is merely a static fact or an absolute certainty (Whitehead, 1978). So reality is an inseparable and undivided whole, which David Bohm (1980, p.157) calls the *rheomode*—the undivided wholeness in an ever-flowing movement. And without this sense of the undivided whole of reality, we cannot begin any imaginative and reflective interpretations to reframe the familiar and recover the unfamiliar. In this sense, imaginative interpretation as a nonlinear occurrence permits a range of images to be superimposed on each other (Makkreel, 1990); and these superimposed images allow many options to emerge for cultural and social metamorphosis.

Cultures and societies unavoidably change. They go through an immense process similar to that of the caterpillar transforming itself into a butterfly (Slater, 2009). There are no ways around this process, which certainly requires resilience. Contemporary societies would do much better engaging in and persevering through this metamorphosis

process, than resisting and resenting it. But why does this process occur? And how do societies not just survive but thrive through this chrysalis process? The answers to these questions are at the heart of this keynote address.

In order to elaborate on the relation between *resilience* and *chrysalis reality*, I like to discuss four interrelated points: first, the paradoxical phenomenon of change and continuity; second, the irony of human perception and space-time deception; third, the distinction between the "real" and the "true"; and four, navigation through diaphanous space and polychronic time in engaging with chrysalis reality. Then, I will conclude by referring to the implications of the chrysalis process in our transmodern world.

The Paradoxical Phenomenon of Change and Continuity

The dynamics of change and continuity seem to have produced an appearance of dualism that triggers intractable conflict and overwhelming uncertainty. Drawn from our ideological social construct, continuities and discontinuities seem to have become so complex that we perceive them as dualism. Apparently, change and continuity are seen as two opposite poles that trigger conflict; they are viewed as a contradictory relationship that must be fixed, favoring one over the other in a tensional pair. Contemporary societies have assumed that dominance, or perhaps compromise, are the ways to deal with this conflict. But continuity and change are the two interdependent states of the paradoxical phenomenon of life. Change does not dismiss the past, nor does continuity ignore the future. Neither is change the opposite of continuity; they are essentially a composition. As Lewis Mumford (1951, p. 181) emphatically asserts: "All life rests essentially on the integration (or composition) of two opposite states, stability and change, security and adventure, necessity and freedom; for without regularity and continuity there would not be enough constancy in any process to enable one to recognize change itself. "Mumford's statement brings to mind the work of Jean Gebser (1985), *The Ever-Present Origin*. Gebser's elaborate articulation of five modes of consciousness structures provides an appropriate setting for our discussion about change and continuity. Through his notion of "aperspectival world", Gebser's challenges the entire social change enterprise. He argues that societies cannot be transformed (changed) by technocratic rationality, materialistic determinism, or dualistic thought. Specifically, Gebser's idea of "diaphanous perception" offers a groundbreaking insight into the paradoxical relationship between change and continuity. The aperspectival world, Gebser says, "is a world whose structure is not only jointly based in the pre-perspectival, unperspectival, and perspectival worlds, but also mutates out of them in its essential properties and possibilities while integrating these worlds and liberating itself from their exclusive validity" (Gebser, 1985, p. 294). In other words, the aperspectival world is not an exclusive mode of consciousness; rather, it is inclusive of others worlds. And this inclusive quality is important for us to persevere through the chrysalis process activated

by the paradox of change-continuity. Although change is the fundamental nature of reality, change can be triggered by different causes: by intentional design of human agents; by necessity or need predetermined by universal law; by chance, an accidental event, an unintended act, or luck; by chaos and disorder as a result of systems bifurcation and randomness; by evolution and genetic reconstruction; and by a cosmic event or act of God. Examining these various causes for change, it becomes apparent that—other than intervention by intentional design—there is really little or no interference by humans in these causes. Only through the coping mechanism of a problem-solving strategy can we handle changes imposed on us by other causes. On the other hand, animating and leading change can only be accomplished intentionally by design (Seif, 2005). When change is triggered by external conditions, then dealing with such change is often assumed to imply the need for comprehensive analysis and a rational decision-making process. But if change is triggered by human intention, then we must understand how we make choices to initiate change—bearing in mind that to have an intention is not to follow a predetermined action, rather, it is to aim at an unfolding teleological process (Seif, 2013). In this sense, *intention is a journey, not a destination*. If we accept the premise that intentional and transformational change requires a different way of thinking, we could begin by engaging in a chrysalis process that has the potential to stimulate such a shift, which would create what systems theorists call a "second order of change". An intentional change at the second-order level will not occur without an imaginative interpretation of space and time. As we shall see shortly, the idea of navigating through diaphanous space and polychronic time plays a significant role in animating and leading social and cultural change. Animating and leading meaningful change while simultaneously maintaining the resilience of continuity can be accomplished by epistemologically and ontologically reframing our understanding of reality, where space and time are not absolute concepts. But this raises a quandary: How do we reframe our conventional perceptions and deal with the deception of space and time?

The Irony of Human Perception and Space-Time Deception

We habitually perceive the world as a three-dimensional space modulated by the passage of time. In a sense, that spatiality and temporality in human experience are merely ordering systems upon which all objects and activities in the world can be perceived as real. But this conventional and literal perception of space and time has triggered absolute sociocultural and cognitive values, which in turn have led to limiting and constraining consequences—economic scarcity, political dominance, and the valuing of efficiency over effectiveness, just to name a few characteristics of our contemporary world. The irony is that while space and time are comprehended as elements of a semiotic systemic framework that lets humans make sense of their experiences, they are not true. Even though space and time have been brought into quotidian existence by human consciousness as

truths,[1] conventional perceptions of space and time are illusory and based on idiosyncratic interpretations of reality. And like all semiotic signs, the words "space" and "time" are open to multiple interpretations. On a metaphysical level, human perceptions of space and time are essentially an unrelenting and persistent illusion. But illusion is not necessarily the opposite of truth or reality. Consider for example, how the experience of hyperreality and digital development contradicts our accepted concepts of space and time. Although linear time is a concept we have accepted, it is not as real as it may appear to us. Paradoxically, although space and time are held to be empirically *real*, they are not *true*. *What we perceive is not reality itself but reality exposed to our way of perceiving*. It is not unreasonable, then, to be in agreement with the British metaphysical philosopher John Ellis McTaggart (1908). In his famous article "The Unreality of Time", McTaggart argued that all views of time are illogical and flawed, and that time is not a real phenomenon. While McTaggart's argument implies "timeless reality", his assertion can provide the possibility for a radical conception not only of time-free but also of space-free reality, where reversibility is possible. Actually, quantum experiments have suggested the possibility of time reversal, where time flows from future to past (Stenger, 2000). Time is a relative reality, where the so-called "present time" is an illusion that "signifies nothing" (Rotman, 1987), as does the term "here". The notion of "here" is a togetherness of many "heres" that indicates an above and below, a right and left, a before and behind (Hegel, 1977, pp. 63–66). And, the notion of "now" seems to have ceased to be in the act of pointing at time. "Just as space consists of spaces, not of points, so time consists of times, not instants"; in the space-time continuum, "an instance limits time in the same way a point limits space" (Makkreel, 1990, p. 74). The notion of "now" is a "plurality of nows" and, similarly, the notion of "here" is a "plurality of heres" (Hegel, 1977, p. 64). In an Aristotelian sense, now "does not exist, since it is at once the end of the past and the beginning of the future", a sort of "in-between" (Gebser, 1985: 179). Since thinking "perspectivally" is the ultimate focus of an individual perspective[2] that, ironically, opens up as it closes space at the vanishing point, "now" is a stationary point in space and time (Gebser, 1985). With the use of perspective representation, individualism has become "the unique point of view of the individual spectator" (Giedion, 1967, p. 31), which has made the perception of space and time absolute and static entities. Therefore, *while the expression of "here and now" is cognitively real, it is fundamentally untrue*. Similar to the spirit of Gebser, Peirce tells us that the process of creating significance and meaningfulness is open, dynamic, interpretable and *transparent*. For Peirce, the past, the present, and the future are considered a synchronic indivisible triad. And yet, since the present has no independent existence—a single instant of zero—it is half of the past and half of that which is yet to come. Certainly, surrealistic artists have rejected the assumption that space and time are rigid, deterministic, or absolute. Particularly, cubists broke with the Renaissance perspective to view a spaceless-timeless reality with several points of view by dissecting objects simultaneously showing them from all sides and from

inside and outside (Giedion, 1967). Perhaps the most striking cubist painting is Picasso's Guernica, where the principles of simultaneity and transparency of space and time are presented stroboscopically. Picasso represents space as infinitude and time as the forth dimension; he dissects movement into parts, which conventional human perception is unable to grasp photographically. Also, consider Salvador Dali's The Persistence of Memory, where space and time are depicted as a fluid and soft reality, or Carte Blanche by René Magritte, who manipulates the space so that we have an illusion of a woman and horse simultaneously in front of and hidden by trees, and even hidden behind the empty space between trees. Undoubtedly, surrealistic paintings express the illusion of our sense and reveal the subconscious mind, which transcends the everyday perception of reality. Long before Galileo's controversial formulation, "common sense" at the turn of the 17th century influenced humans to perceive a reality in which the earth was the center of the universe and the sun revolved around the stand-still-flat earth. If reality were always "true", Christopher Columbus would have fallen off the edge of the flat earth! What is needed is a shift from *common sense* to *uncommon sense* in order to overcome human perception and the space-time deception. Space and time are not physical matters; neither are they absolute notions. They are real but not true. This statement reveals the peculiar distinction between the "real" and the "true."

Distinction between the "Real" and the "True"

In order to make navigation through diaphanous space and polychronic time possible, we need to be aware of the peculiar distinction between what we perceive to be "true" and what we consider as "real". Certainly, the concept of "simulacrum" challenges the subtle difference between the "real" and the "false", between the "real" and the "imaginary" (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 3). I am aware that the real and the true are, for the most part, inclusive. To illustrate, the perception of a body of water in the vast desert is real; the mirage of water, although an illusion, is a true optical phenomenon. But perhaps overlooking this subtle difference between the true and the real results in confusing and limiting assumptions about reality. Human experiences are real, but material things are true. Cultural practice is real, but scientific observation is true. Where the true depends on factual information, the real relies on multiple interpretations. And where the true is characterized by descriptive explanation of that which already exists, the real is distinguished by prescriptive composition of that which is *yet-to-come*. The distinction between the real and the true is the difference between the realm of sciences and the realm of humanities. It is commonly understood that where the sciences value objectivity, rationality, neutrality, and a concern for truth, the humanities value subjectivity, imagination, and a concern for justice. Basically, the sciences are concerned with how things are and deal primarily with what is true or factual. In scientific methods, the true (or right) answer is always the outcome of rational thought and research. Perhaps the

right or true answer works well for the natural world and technology, but it is extremely limiting and even misleading in sociocultural enterprises. There are no right or true answers for society. And yet, the difference between the real and the true can be more than just subtle. Take, for example, the Luxor Hotel in Las Vegas in the United States. As a "real" place, the sphinx and the pyramid-shaped hotel in Las Vegas are mere replicas or simulacra of the "true" Sphinx and Pyramid of Giza in Egypt. However, things can get a little murky. An example is Abu Simbel or Ramses II in Aswan, Egypt. The original monument was built in the 13th century BC. But due the construction of the High Dam during the 1960s, the monument was relocated on higher ground to avoid the destruction that would have caused by Lake Nasser. One could say that the temple at the old and original location is true, and that temple on the new location is real. This is a case where the real and true can be isomorphic. Or, we might say: sometimes the real becomes true! *What is real is not always true*. Space and time may not have truly long-lasting and meaningful consequences, but they are real. And yet, the real can be changed. That is why we are able to create our world; and this creation is done by our thoughts and actions. For the reality we experience *here-and-now* is the manifestation of our previous thought about *there-and-then*. What needs to be taken into account is that our thoughts are the trigger that influences us to create the reality we desire to experience. Fundamentally, perception provides the presence of "here-there dimension and the past-present-future dimension" (Merleau-Ponty, 1945. p. 309), which echoes the notion of "being-in-the-world" (Heidegger, 1962). To be present in the world is to inhabit space and time, and to be able to move freely in, to borrow from Merleau-Ponty (1945), "simultaneous multiplicities". Time is "like the landscape seen through a railway carriage window. Yet we do really believe that landscape is moving" (Merleau-Ponty, 1958, p. 487). Time does not flow, the past and future "spring forth" when we "reach out toward them" (p. 489). Generally speaking, human beings are no longer satisfied with facts; they demand to understand their causal connections and strive to discover ways to recreate their spatial and temporal reality. And indeed, reality is created intentionally, not accidentally—i.e. by design. If this is the case, which I believe it is, then we are able to create a desired future, whether this future is perceived as real or true. Since the Heideggerian notion of *Dasein*[3] indicates not just being-in-the-world but also being present in the past-present-future dimension (Heidegger, 1962), it is possible to be present in a space-free and time-free world. But can we really navigate through diaphanous space and polychronic time? The answer is yes.

Chrysalis Reality: Diaphanous Space and Polychronic Time

"Polychronic time" is a notion initiated by the anthropologist Edward T. Hall (1959; 1966). Particularly, his ideas of "proxemics" and "chronemics" are the semiotics of space and time (Nöth, 1990) in which it is impossible to separate time from space. The manner

in which we perceive time has a lot to do with the way we structure space (Hall 1959). Initially, Hall made a cultural distinction between polychronic time and monochronic time based on how people perceive and manage time.[4] However, subsequent research has suggested that both polychrons and monochrons are found to coexist within most cultures (Palmer & Schoorman, 1999); so it is no longer meaningful to consider an entire culture as monochronic or polychronic. The idea of navigating through diaphanous space and polychronic time is essentially a cognitive-noetic way that triggers imaginative thinking and innovative action. Therefore, this navigation requires a different kind of intelligence in order to liberate us from the gravity and limitations of the here-and-now reality. It demands a spatial and temporal intelligence that the ancient Egyptians perceived as *Aka*, "the intelligence of the heart." It is commonly known that the interrelation of space and time has been suggested by the theory of relativity, in which time curves space as much as space measures time. But "time does not curve space; it is open and opens space through its capacity of rendering space transparent" (Gebser, 1985, p. 353). Since space and time form an indivisible continuum, "freedom from space presupposes freedom from time" (p. 355). Hence, one cannot navigate through diaphanous space without polychronic time. By and large, phenomenological explorations strive to uncover our primordial relation with the space-free and time-free reality. Certainly, the work of Gebser, Hegel, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Peirce, to name a few, explore this primordial relation. Navigating through diaphanous apace and polychronic time is certainly an age-old practice; it has deep roots in human history. For instance, prehistoric cave paintings and ancient Egyptian carvings were not intended to serve as records of the past, as has commonly been believed. Rather, these paintings were representations of magical thinking and enactment intended to go beyond the limitation of space and time, creating new realities and therefore influencing the future. The ancient Egyptian's navigation through diaphanous space and polychronic time is, indeed, evident in their preoccupation with the notions of "immortality" and "everlastingness" expressed in their art and architecture. They ultimately experienced a chrysalis reality, which was manifested in their representations of permanence and change, cyclical time and noncyclical time. Consider, for example, the idea of diaphanous space represented in the principle of anthropocosmos as found in temple architecture in "The House of Life", where images of the human body and the universe were transparently interconnected. For the ancient Egyptians, the spatial directions of east and west, north and south, were transparent orientations. The east and west represented the sun god *Ra* rising from and descending into the nonlinear Underworld as initiation of birth, death, and rebirth; and the north and south represented the cyclical flow of the Nile. Evidence has also shown that the Great Pyramid, with its surprising accuracy of cosmic dimensions and passageways, represents unbounded space and time of past, present, and future. Diaphanous space and polychronic time provided a chrysalis reality for the entire Egyptian experience, where

the notion of time was conceived as a reversible circular dimension and the practice of the agriculture-based society was bound to the cycle of seasons in an infinite process and integration of nature and culture. One can reasonably conclude that the physical percepts had an immense significance for the ancient Egyptians, where visible form was a manifestation of invisible space-free and time-free reality, and where any point of space and time was seen as the center of a cross whose axes represented the cyclical flow of the Nile and the path of the sun.[5] Navigating through diaphanous space and polychronic time is not a mere philosophical proposition, but an imaginative way of thinking and acting that embodies a great deal of creativity and innovation. Again, when Merleau-Ponty (1958) declares that time exists for us only because we situated in it and act upon it, he hints at the possibility for humans to intentionally navigate not only through multiple times but also through transparent space. To think and act is to place ourselves in an imaginary situation and to find satisfaction in changing our setting. In navigating through temporal and spatial reality, one cannot plot the journey in a linear fashion but must navigate through the waves, making constant adjustments back and forth while maneuvering along the way. Thus is my preference of using the concept of *navigation*—the freedom that allows consciousness to fully engage with a space-free and time-free reality. While this navigation is an age-old practice, it has recently been unearthed through the efforts of digital development. Virtual reality has attracted contemporary societies for its capacity to add a new kind of human-machine interface where the virtual becomes complementary to the visual (actual). For instance, visual images on the Internet are virtual images in the sense that they can only be perceived through numerous transformations. Cyberspace has provided sensational experiences by integrating the visual, the virtual, and the visceral; and therefore, it has provided an opportunity for us to perceive tangible objects, physical environments, and real events (Seif, 2013). In cyberspace, images appear in a diminution of space and time, where humans and digital apparatus intertwine in visual, virtual, and visceral constellations of sensational and fascinating experiences. It is certainly reasonable to consider what we experience in cyberspace as a kind of navigation through diaphanous space and polychronic time. Although this fascination with technology (*techne*), as the art of making in the Aristotelian sense, has dominated societies for centuries and reached its pinnacle in our digital age, it has missed the teleology (*teleos*) underpinning the navigation through space-free and time-free reality. Unfortunately, other than self-indulgence and shallow entertainment (Seif, 2013), cyberspace efforts have not been fully utilized by contemporary societies in an intentional manner that integrates consciousness and reality for envisioning the future. A great deal of Peirce's work describes the affinity between reality and consciousness (which includes feeling, thought, perception, desire, intention, etc.). And this affinity brings us back to the reference to Gebser's work, in which consciousness and reality are reciprocal. In this sense, consciousness and reality form a whole

which, in principle, is one and indivisible. This reciprocity of consciousness and reality is necessary for the initiation of the aperspectival world. Only with integrative spatial and temporal intelligence can human beings develop the capacity to navigate through diaphanous space and polychronic time. Gebser also reminds us that we continually draw on our origins in forming the future. He reminds us that

> The events of tomorrow are always latently present today. Tomorrow is nothing other than a today which is not yet acute, i.e., is still latent. Every manifestation of our lives inevitably contains the sum of what is past as well as what is to come. (Gebser, 1985, p. 277)

We repeatedly must go back for a better start. The "new" takes for granted the "old" through integration, for every novel idea must include the familiar, just as every familiar idea ceases to exist without novel ideas. This paradoxical process has a magical quality, making the familiar strange and the strange familiar. Space-free and time-free reality is a paradoxical phenomenon that can best be experienced through design thinking and purposeful action. Through *design*, human beings can cross the threshold between what is real and what is true, making connections between space-free and time-free reality and the perseverance through chrysalis reality. Imaginative navigation through diaphanous space and polychronic time, in a Kantian sense, makes reality transcendental reality. In *Critique of Judgment*, Kant (1951) tells us that imagination does not perform its normal perceptual task, but adopts an *a priori* judgmental function with purposefulness (Makkreel, 1990). And by extension, this transcendental reality transcends the division between what exists in physical reality and what exists in the activity of the mind. This imaginative navigation does not "annihilate" space and time (Kant, 1951); rather, it negates the linearity of time and opaqueness of space (cf. Makkreel, 1990). Navigating through space-free and time-free reality is a practice that provides unlimited future options. Our ability to navigate this malleable reality, to imagine, and to communicate new possibilities goes beyond mere prediction and forecasting. While forecasts and predictions are effective in mechanical systems and problem-solving strategies, they are limited in capturing infinite imaginative possibilities for advancing social systems. Forecasting the future based on past truth is a mere problem-solving trajectory aimed at maintaining the status quo; it is commonly used in cause-and-effect reasoning associated with reductive thought. These models or methods lead to minor changes that are described as a "first order of change", which fixes what already exists. By contrast, as mentioned above, meaningful change by design is a second order of change. As mentioned earlier, the past, the present, and the future are considered a synchronic indivisible triad. Whereas the past is "a nexus of actualities", the future is "merely real", and in this sense, "the present is the immediacy of teleological process where reality becomes actual" (Whitehead, 1978, p. 214). Therefore, the future is accessible in the present through the teleological challenge of imagining what shall become. Now, the nagging question is: How do we make the navigation through di-

aphanous space and polychronic time possible? One might argue that while it is possible to physically travel through space, it is not clear how to actually navigate through time. To be able to navigate through diaphanous space and polychronic time, one must rely on the phenomenon of *memory*, or mindful remembering. Initially, memory signifies a human being's inner disposition and devotion, where thinking is meshed with the heart (Heidegger, 1968).[6] The interweaving among memory, imaginative thinking, and the heart is not a new revelation. Again, ancient Egyptians believed in the intelligence of the heart. Indeed, this imaginational intelligence, which resides in the heart[7] (Hillman, 1992), does not operate in a restricted and confined manner but in an undifferentiated flow. And when the unselfconscious mind and the intelligent heart experience the flow that transcends the division of space and time, *past memory* morphs into *future memory* and vice versa. Memory as a key for navigation has its roots in the work of Henri Bergson, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Bertrand Russell, among many others. In a variety of ways, these philosophers challenged our conventional understanding that memory resides somewhere in the brain, arguing that memories exist in the realm of space-time and we access them by intention. In particular, Henri Bergson in his book *Matter and Memory* provides us with a remarkable theoretical understanding of the nature of memory and its connection to reality. For him, both perception and recollection are phenomena of representation. And since recollection is the representation of an absent object, memory is sufficient to reproduce perception of reality, whether rationally constructed or intuitively perceived. "Everything, then, must happen as if an independent memory gathered images as they successively occur along the course of time" (Bergson, 1913, p. 86). In the same vein, Edmund Husserl (2005) points out that while memory is the consciousness of what in the past, expectation is the consciousness of what is in the future. Perceptions are "never the real moments of things", says Henri Bergson (1913, p. 75), "but are moments of our consciousness", within which memories reverberate. "We must take into account that perception ends by being merely an occasion for remembering"; human perceptions are certainly "interlaced with memories", and inversely, memories become actual by borrowing from some perception into which memories slide (Bergson, 1913, p. 72). There are two different and independent memories: "memory-images", which recall our daily events as they occurred in the past and are stored in the present; and a profoundly different memory that recovers the past, and is "seated in the present and looking only to the future." One memory "repeats", the other "imagines." However, the two memories run side by side and mutually support each other (Bergson, 1913, pp. 92–93). Whereas memory of the past becomes our familiar path to predicting and forecasting the future, memory of the future provides a meaningful way to access a pool of options for imagining a desired future. Ultimately, while current reality is constructed by past memory, it can also be transformed by future memory. Future memory demands a shift from being trapped by the "true" to the freedom of toying with the "real," from the gravity of the presence to the weightless dream-like state of an imaginable

future. And because memory is phantasmagoric (real or imaginary), it ties together both imaginary experiences and real events. That being the case, future memory is practiced as if one is in a distant future and reminiscing about the memories of the past, which are really memories of the future. This may seem like an oxymoron, but contradictions of the oxymoron are the true wisdom within all paradoxes. *Indeed, it is possible to remember things yet-to-be*. Ironically, it is easy to trick the mind and seduce the heart into imagining future events and experiences, recalling and reminiscing about them as they were in the past. Future memory provides a cognitive leap that is essential for intentional and sustainable social and environmental change. It provides the lens through which we can gracefully persevere through the chrysalis process and imaginatively interpret the context within which these changes will take place. This navigation through apace-free and time-free reality is a heroic journey, to borrow a concept from Joseph Campbell (1949). It is acquiring the resilience necessary for persevering through the chrysalis reality. That is, we must face the challenges of abandoning our current familiar world and enter an unusual future world. We must survive these challenges with help throughout the journey. If we survive, we may achieve a great gift, which often results in the discovery of an imaginative breakthrough. We must then decide to return with this gift, facing challenges on the return journey. When we return, the transformational gift may be used to improve our world.

Conclusion: Experiencing Chrysalis Reality in Transmodern World

To conclude, the illusion of space and time can be devastating or can lead to a state of apathy commonly associated with determinism. Again, considering our recent experience of hyperreality and digital development, illusion, as mentioned earlier, is not necessarily the opposite of truth or reality. Nevertheless, our capacity to distinguish between what is "real" and what is "true" liberates us from self-imposed limitations and dogmatic ideologies. This distinction also reveals an integrated consciousness that highlights the reciprocal relationship between cultural ethos and environmental ethics. Since reality is composed of signs, it is a fair assumption to consider change and continuity also as signs. And the meaning of social change can be viewed in a semiotic sense as a system of signification into which continuities and discontinuities are integrated. Based on Peirce's semiotic signs, any phenomenon must include three elements, which are brought together in such a manner that the triad cannot be reduced to one or two elements. A semiotic sign, according to Peirce, is the *representamen* (sign), the *object*, and the *interpretant* (CP 2.228). Since this position is *only* at one semiotic moment, each element in the triad shifts its role and never permanently remains as representamen, object, and interpretant. Hence is the integrative and transparent quality of change and continuity. To navigate through diaphanous space and polychronic time is to be able to perceive and persevere through the transparency and integration of the chrysalis reality. And to transform current reality is to be able to perceive the transparency of space-

free and time-free reality. This transparency is the hallmark of the age that has been called transmodernity—a notion that was introduced by the Latin American philosopher Enrique Dussel (1985). Transmodernity, which embodies many diaphanous qualities, transcends the *visual* reality of modernity (Gutenberg Galaxy) and the *virtual* reality of postmodernity (McLuhan Galaxy) into visceral experiences (Internet Galaxy). Diaphanous perception, which is the quintessential feature of transmodernity, is inclusive of modernity and postmodernity, and it does not reject the characteristics of either. This means that reality in the transmodern world is a "hyperreality" that integrates the visual, the virtual, and the visceral. This also means that hyperreality is the condition in which our consciousness does not distinguish the real from the true. Navigating through diaphanous space and polychronic time is significant for rejuvenating cultural practices and renewing the natural environment in a world we co-inhabit, co-create, and co-experience. Learning to navigate through diaphanous space and polychronic time bridges different civilizations and stimulates cultural sensitivity and environmental sensibility. Indeed, not only can contemporary societies imagine the future, but also they can persevere through the metamorphosis of chrysalis reality, whether the causes of change are self-generated or imposed by external forces. Experiencing chrysalis reality provides the context for human beings to influence the future and fully engage in the process of meaning making. Our capacity to navigate through diaphanous space and polychronic time liberates us from dogmatic ideologies of the past, current limitations of the present, and the fear associated with the uncertainties of the future.

Endnotes

1. The notion of "perception" ties to the notion of "truth". In the German language, "to perceive", *wahrnehmen*, means literally "to take truly" (see Hegel, 1977, p. 66); it also means to "to be aware of, to discern". Consequently, whatever we perceive becomes our absolute truth!
2. Jean Gebser (1985) draws on the concept of "perspective"—advanced by the Renascence artists Filippo Brunelleschi and Leonardo da Vinci—to define his term of "perspectival thinking", hinting at the consequences of cognitively perceiving a segmented reality of absolute space and time of otherwise a continues phenomenon.
3. Heidegger uses the hyphenated word "Da-sein" to emphasize its etymological meaning as "Being-there" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 27).
4. In cultures with polychronic time, people tend to work on more than one task simultaneously, be more group oriented, view their relationships as deep and long term, and feel at ease in dealing with a sea of information. In cultures with monchronic time, people tend to segment tasks and prefer sequential time (see Hall, 1959; 1966). My preference for using the notion of "polychronic time" is not to differentiate among cultures. Rather, I use the notion across different cultures to make a case for the significance of navigating through multiple times and transparent spaces.
5. The hieroglyphic sign of *Ankh*, the "Key of Eternal Life", represents these two axes in which the cyclical path of the sun from east to west crosses the Nile, with the loop on the top representing the Nile Delta (Seif, 2010). For the ancient Egyptians, wearing the *Ankh* demonstrated awareness of the nonlinear spatial–temporal matrix of life.
6. Heidegger connects memory to thinking and the heart through the notion of disposition, which

"has a larger meaning than that given to it in modern speech; it means not merely the sensitive and emotive side of human consciousness, but the essential being of all human nature" (Heidegger, 1968, p. 148).

7. This is an interesting point where the issue of imagination and its connection to the heart has escaped most philosophical and psychological explorations. "Our hearts cannot apprehend that they are imaginatively thinking hearts, because we have so long been told that the mind thinks and the heart feels and that imagination leads us astray from both" (Hillman, 1992, p. 6). This is quite significant for our understanding of future memory, since the act of remembering is much more than tapping the storehouse of information in the brain; rather, remembering has much to do with the constructive process of imagination.

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