
THE WORKING OF THE WYRD

Even if this reconstruction of the ancient Germanic and thus Indo-European primal scene concerning deep temporality is correct, the question still arises as to what it could mean to us post-moderns caught up in the global technoculture? Our hypothesis is that the same dynamic is still at work today beneath the surface of the socio-technical system. But today the primal scene has become transformed in fundamental ways so that its connection to the out-of-time single source beyond timelessness is not so clear. In fact, the whole discourse has been transposed away from the concept of time entirely to another concept even more central to our Western culture. That concept is BEING; the most general concept we have at our disposal and the ultimate lynch pin for the totalitarian uni-verse. The uni-verse has Being. Everything in the universe has Being. And the imagined God that watches from afar over that universe is the supreme being. Being is the attribute which is attached to everything approved of by the censors that govern the uni-verse. They stamp as nonexistent dwarves, giants, dragons, jinn, and many

other creatures from the ancient Germanic pluriverse. Being is the passport to respectability within the universe. Yet even nonexistent things still have a kind of Being. They have the Being attached to their representations within the uni-verse. For Western philosophy it is the ultimate concept “Being” to which we must turn in order to apprehend the transformation of the primal scene into terms significant for us in the world today.

However, before entering the house of Being, let us consider the central concept developed within the primal scene of deep temporality. That concept is of the WYRD. This is the central Indo-European concept which comes out of our analysis of the Germanic conception of time. We have identified the wyrd with the experience of the flow of completion. The person who knows the wyrd is in harmony with what is being laid down by the single source of all causation. That person is submitting to the decree from out-of-time which manifests the eternal in the instant. This is equated with the speaking of the orlog or primal speech. It is no wonder in this light that “wyrd” and “word” are related by the mutation of vowels. One meaning of wyrd is to be verbose, even though the stronger meaning is “fated” or “destined.” Following the natural associations with other words through vowel mutation, we also note that wyrd and word are also

related to “ward” and “world.” This makes sense because old English ‘weard’ means protection or guardianship of a warden. But “weard” also has connotations of direction as in “backward” or “forward.” The word “werod/werod” means “clothed, covered or protected.” Thus, “ward” means that which is protected actively by warding off. In Chinese this is called “wu chi” -- defensive energy. Its opposite is represented by the words “wierding/wierdan” which both imply “bodily injury or damage.” Thus, by changing the vowel we move from protection to what results from lack of protection. Notice also that “werod/wered/weorod” means “a band of men, people, army, host, throng.” It is precisely by banding together as a group that protection, through defensive energy, becomes possible. It is also the group that projects a unique intersubjectively validated and maintained “world.” In the group the men speak words to build a world that wards off dangers. It is in this ambience that the “wyrd” is made manifest through completion of what is destined by the single source of all causation. It is interesting in this context to note that the Anglo-Saxons tended to adopt an Old Testament-oriented form of Christianity. They emphasized the role of a single god who ruled and destined all the events of the world. This form of Christianity explained the efficacy of the wyrd and allowed the Germanic peoples to accept the role of Jesus as the “word” of God.

Of importance in this context is the fact that the man is called “wer” in Old English. “Werwolf” means man-wolf. That “wer” is part of the wyrd/word/ward/world constellation is no accident. A wer is also a dam or fish trap or catch. On the other hand, “war” means sand or seaweed. “Wearr” means to be callused. “Wir” means wire or metal thread and also myrtle. “Wor” is equivalent to “wos” meaning sap or juice. “Wosa” means a man or being who consumes food. But beyond all these, “Waer” means both true, correct and security; covenant, trust, faith, fidelity, pledge, protection, and keeping. The picture emerges from this constellation of related roots that “man”-wer, as part of the group, must be true and correct in order to be trusted. It is that trust that makes possible the protection of the group. “Wearr” signifies protection. The dam or catching device secondary meaning of “wer” also indicates the protective, enclosing nature of the ward which is simultaneously directed outward as in the hunt. Wier is used to make the armor worn by the armed man. Our word for WAR is traced to Middle English “warre.” It is known to be of Germanic origin. Werian means to be wary, beware, guard, protect; while “warig” means covered, soiled with seaweed, full of seaweed. “Warnian” means to take warning, take heed, warn, caution, guard oneself against. One slowly gets the drift of these constellated words which is that seaweed covers and protects. It wraps around and clings

to whatever gets tangled in it. “War,” in our sense, is only the active outward manifestation of this protective energy that needs to be wrapped around the group for all to survive. The less active manifestation is in terms of waryness and warning. Thus, the “wer” must be fully integrated into the group, ready to wage war or to warn, and he must always be “waer” or true to the group of which he is a part. This secondary constellation of related words fits right in with the first. Both signify an ethos in which each man is fully integrated into the intersubjective reality of the world so as to be able to protect that reality. The waer (covenant) of the wer is through the Word and Deed (wore). In the claims of the words and their embodiment in action, the wyrd is manifest as completion which seals the fate and fame of the warrior. Deeds of glory in war prove that the wer is not merely a “wosa” -- a being that merely consumes food. Wer/waer/war/warn/ wearr/wir is another constellation intimately related to wyrd/ word/ward/world. In these constellations we read an inner logic of the societal ramifications of deep temporality. Each human group is, in fact, a gestalt within the human world within the many worlds of the tree. The human group has its own experience of the wyrd which is laid down in its unique history. It shares its words that are the orlog it speaks. It protects itself as a ward projecting defensive energy. It projects its own world. Within this world are

the wer. Men and women together make up MANN or the humankind. The wer must be true (waer) to the community, and must warn and go to war to protect the community. The wer are the wearr, or callused protective coating, defending the community. So amalgamated are the wer into the community that they are expressed as a sub-root or the higher world constellation wyrd/ word/ ward/ world.

Here the role of intersubjectivity in terms of the world building and the integration of the individual into that project is written in bold and unmistakable terms. The model is cosmic in terms of the orientation of the community to completion, as experienced in terms of the wyrd. It includes symbolic interaction through the word. It shows the closure of the social group and its need to maintain a protective shield. And it contains the essential characteristic of world building or the social construction of reality. The individual is totally integrated into this process as the waer wer -- true man who warns and goes to war protecting the group. In his deeds and actions he experiences the wyrd as events come to completion and either prove his work true or false. Those bound for glory experience a unity of their words and actions with the stamp of completion of destiny.

This picture brings alive the dry concepts of sociology,

giving them them deeper meaning by showing how this constellation of Old English words expresses the inner coherence of our lost heritage. The socio-technical systems we deal with today have their primordial roots in this ancient social reality in which the separation of individual from society, from worldview, was unthought and unthinkable. We need to take this more vital picture seriously. There we are presented with a single temporal gestalt as yet undifferentiated. This single gestalt is signified by the root letters W R D. In Arabic these letters become “warada” which means to come, arrive, to appear, show up, to be found, be met with, be said, to reach a place or arrive. A “wird” is a watering place. “Wurud” means arrival, advent, receipt or appearance. “Maurid” is a place of arrival or destination, a watering place, spring, well, resource, resort, or place of origin. “Warid” means arriving, found, mentioned, newcomer, or arrival. As a second cluster of meanings, “warid” means to blossom, be in bloom (tree), to be red, or to glow.

Jumping from Old English to Arabic may be criticized, but notice how both the well and the tree motifs are carried over in these two sets of meanings of WARID. On the one hand, it is a well as a stopping place on a journey across the desert. On the other hand, it is a blooming as a tree blooms. Both meanings imply a completion of temporal unfolding. In this completion the

emergent eventuality becomes fully manifest. The emergent event takes the temporal gestalt into a new era which is another blossoming, and itself comes to completion, creating another phase of the temporal gestalt. The emergent event is an alien that enters the ward and changes the world by manifesting the wyrd. The emergent event had a deep meaning and its own efficacy that challenges that of the word. The emergent event brings the message of destiny to the community in spite of all its efforts to protect itself. Thus, it is possible to name the Arabic root WARIDA as the heart of the Old English word constellation WYRD / WORD / WARD / WORLD. Because it names the key concept of completion signified by the Norn Urth, it focuses our observation on that completion which indicates a singular obsession with the single source out-of-time that is the source of all causation beyond eternity. That is the primal scene of deep temporality which will have to be explored further as we move from the consideration of time to the modern fascination with the concept of Being.

Briefly, before leaving this arena of our exploration of the primal scene of deep temporality, let us apply our vantage point for the analysis of constellations of Old English words and roots to the well and the tree. It is fascinating to note that “tree” and “true” are directly related in Old English. In fact, these are the only two meanings of the

TR? root.

treo, treow

-- tree, cross, wood

treow, truwa, tryw

-- fidelity, trust, truth, belief, faith, good faith,
covenant, pact

-- n treo

-- treo

treow

-- true, faithful, honest, trustworthy, genuine

truwa

-- confidence, fidelity, faith, trust

The fact that “tree” and “true” are ultimately related in this way is very significant. It identifies the proto-gestalt in some way with the truth. It is the inner coherence of all the worlds. It is what remains as the living foundations on which all the creatures are blossoms. It is the ultimate implicate and intrinsic unfolding core of the pluriverse.

However, we get a true perspective on the significance of the relation between these words when we delve into the

roots related to the well. The root W?L? has many associations within its constellation related to the modern word series WELL / WALL / WILL / WOOL. In Old English this series was even richer in its various aspects.

wael, wal

-- carnage, slaughter, member of dead, slain, corpse, fallen warrior

-- see weill or wel

waaeel

-- eddy, pool, flood, sea, whirlpool, ocean, river

wal, wael

-- body of the slain, slaughter, carnage, battlefield

wala, walu

-- tubular ridge of a helmet, ridge, bank, fib, weal, mark of a blow

weall

-- wall, earthwork, rampart, walled structure, cliff, dike, dam

-- ferbor?

weallau

-- to well up, flow, surge, be agitated, boil, rage,
bubble, seethe, foam, swarm

wela

-- wealth, goods, abundance, prosperity, riches,
happiness, weal

wiel

-- slave, servant

wield

-- control, power

weill, weilla, wielle

-- spring, fountain, well

wiellan

-- to roll, twist, well up, boil

wielle

-- fountain, spring, (water)

weilm

-- boiling, welling, surging, gushing, current,
flood, ardor, fervor

wil

-- wile, trick

wila

-- chains, fetters?

willa

-- purpose, desire, pleasure, mind, good will wish,
delight

-- fountain, spring

willan

-- to wish, to be willing

wool

-- sickness, pestilence, mortal, disease

wull, wyll

-- wool

It is clear that this root W?L? contains a rich variety of related meanings as well as many seemingly unrelated meanings. Our interpretation wishes to see these assorted words as forming a constellation related to the primal scene of deep temporality. The fact that WELL has many meanings related to fountain and spring as in waaeel, weill and weille, relates directly to the imagery of our primal scene. However, unlike Paul Bauschatz, image of a peaceful well in a marsh surrounded by stone walls to let the clean water to collect the image suggested by the

roots is more dynamic. Waaeel can refer to dynamic water sources like eddy, flood, sea, whirlpool, ocean and river. Weallau means to well up, flow, surge, be agitated, boil, rage, bubble, seethe, foam and swarm. Wiellan means to roll, twist, well up & boil. Wielm is boiling, welling, surging, gushing, ardor, fervor. All these words suggest that well is not passive and peaceful, but is an active bubbling caldron full of turbulence. As a contrary moment to this, there is also the meanings of WALL which show up in the words weall and walu. However, the wall can be a cliff. Thus, it seems that the essential characteristics of the well as being a container and a source are preserved. Yet, what is in the container is turbulent and agitated, not peaceful. This brings up an important point concerning the relation of container and contained. The source is discriminated from all other sources by its containing and distinguishing wall. What it contains is essentially the same as all the other wells -- ie. water (the water of life). However, it differs in its turbulence from the other sources of this water. For instance, the well in Hel is especially known for its turbulence. One would expect Mirmir to be less turbulent than Hevergelmer, and Urth's well to be the most placid. However, each well has its own turbulence, thus distinguishing it from all the others in a unique way. Also, each well has its own containing wall which distinguishes it spatially from all the others. It is

interesting that distinguishing by turbulence and by spatial demarcation is in terms of both space and time. This seems to imply that the sources give rise to spacetime demarcations for the temporal gestalts which they engender.

Yet, consider the relation of contained and container implied by the turbulent well with its surrounding wall. The container renders the source unique, while the contained is rendered unique by its turbulence. This uniqueness must be both in terms of quality and quantity. Qualitatively it is the turbulence of the water. Quantitatively it is in terms of the countable spatially located forms created by the wells Urth, Mirmir, and Hevergelmer. Qualitative and Quantitative discrimination of the well. However, something more is implied. There is a sense in which the container and the contained merge together. We can see this in the structure of binary systems. In a binary system there is only one distinction between off and on, or true and false. Boole showed through the development of Boolean algebra that this distinction is enough to build a formal system. In fact, almost all computers are based on this formal system which is represented in terms of the states of electric current in computer circuitry. Binary systems are built into greater and greater complexity by using sets of binary elements. Most computers are based on the byte

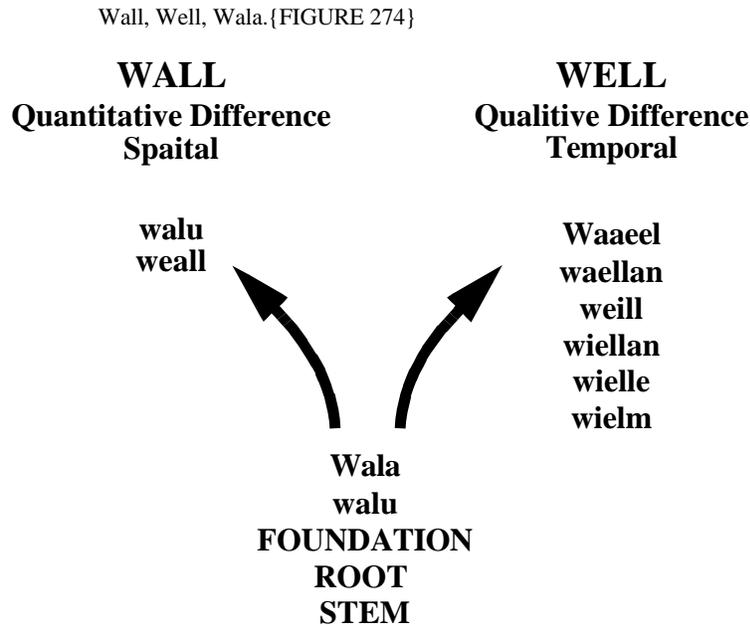
which is a set of eight off/on bits arrayed together as a location in computer memory. What is of interest is that each stage of further complexity of the binary system (ie. 2^1 , 2^2 , 2^3 , 2^4 , 2^5 , 2^6 , 2^n) has an inner structure which is more complex. We may also mention the interesting threshold of complexity of 2^6 at which isomorphic transformations form 2-dimensional to 3-dimensional forms may take place. It turns out that the DNA code is also at this threshold of complexity. Further, the I Ching operates at this threshold of complexity. The chess set is an interesting example of this threshold because it needs exactly 2^6 bits to differentiate its solid black and white peices which set upon a board that thanes exactly the same amount of infomation to describe. Each hexagram of the I Ching represents a binary pattern of off/ons which is given a meaning. In computers binary patterns are arbitrarily assigned significance as in the ASCII code or the EBCDIC code. The I Ching attempts to show that the binary patterns have a deeper intrinsic meaning that flow from the diacritical relations between the hexagrams. Of interest to us in the current context is the fact that the group structure of the hexagrams has a peculiar characteristic. Each group operation applied to any two hexagrams yields another hexagram. But that transformation takes us through a hidden intermediate hexagram which stands in the place of the operator. What is significant here is that any binary system of

distinctions can function as a group which allows transformations between group elements. These transformations make use of another binary element as the operands which effect the transformation. This is similar to our situation of the merging of the container, and the contained in terms of the wells. Each hexagram is spatially distinct in terms of its position in relation to all other hexagrams. Also each hexagram can function as an operator transforming any two other hexagrams into a third, through group operations. Thus, each hexagram has both a spatial and temporal aspect, just like the wells which are spatially and temporally unique.

However, this metaphor of the binary formal system, such as the I Ching, leads us to a further level of insight. In the transformation of any two hexagrams into a third via a fourth operator hexagram, we see that a hexagram can function as both the container and the contained. Each operator which effects the transformation acts as a wall through which you pass to get to another hexagram location within the diacritical system of all hexagrams. Thus, each hexagram acts as a place within the system and as the containing wall between places in the system. Thus, there is an intrinsic internal relation between container and contained. This is important because it reveals the significance of the multiplicity of wells. Each well is distinguished by its walls and turbulence. Each

well is also a wall which separates it from all other wells. The fact that well and wall are related words of the same root can be seen to be of import. Each well is a separate source with its own quality. It is separated from all others by its quantitative aspect as a countable distinguished entity. Quality and quantity are interrelated fused aspects of the same source. Each well is both source and separator between other sources -- both container and contained. In fact, there is a word in our constellation which means exactly that merging: WALA/WALU means stem, root, base, or foundation. The place where well and wall merge is the foundation or pure source beyond time and space distinctions. Each well, like the tree, has its root out of sight beneath the earth from which the water of life comes. Going back to the I Ching, it is possible to see this source by taking each hexagram and grouping it with other hexagrams on the basis of mirroring and substitution. This reveals twelve groups of four and eight pairs of hexagrams.

FIGURE 28



Taking out mirroring and substitution symmetry operations, lays bare twenty sources beyond space and time from which the actual sixty-four hexagrams ultimately stem. These twenty sources correspond to the twenty Mayan daynames. They are the foundations or roots of the manifest hexagrams. All of these hidden roots ultimately go back to a single deeper root of which they are aspects at a level closer to the surface. That root is signified by the emerging difference between Yin and Yang. Each more complex binary system has a different root structure which manifests the merging of wells at different depths as one moves back toward the single source. The merging of qualitative and quantitative differences of well and wall is the first step on this progression toward a single source of the lattice of

differentiation.

Wall and well emanate from the “WALA” (stem or root) in which container and contained are no longer separate. The wala expresses the WILL of the single source of all causation. “Will” is another very important word in this constellation. What is destined by the single source is understood as the Will of God. Fate is that which is willed by the single source and becomes manifest in the speaking of the ORLOG by the fates. “Willa” means both purpose, desire, pleasure, mind, wish, as well as fountain or spring. Thus, the Will is tied directly to the Well. Notice the word “Wiel” meaning slave or servant, and “wila,” perhaps chains and fetters, also appear in the constellation. The human is a slave to the work of destiny and is forced to submit. Submission is either willing or unwilling, but inescapable. We borrow our will from the Will of the single source. If what we will is in harmony with that greater will, we are happy. If, on the other hand, we are not in harmony then we are ultimately unhappy. Our will is broken by the greater Will manifest by the single source that brings things to completion as it Wills, not as we will. Our will is illusory, while its will is absolute. This is why the wyrd is so important. It is an attempt to come into harmony with the greater will emanating through the sources from beyond eternity; to experience what is laid down and

completed by that overpowering will as our own completion. If we are out of harmony, then the words “wool” and “wael” come into play. The carnage of battle with its fallen warriors is an expression of the work of the Will that has gone against some and for others. There is a moment when the battle is over, but before the outcome has become obvious. That is the point of completion where the live, wounded, and dead have been separated. This moment comes after the welling up of the chaos of battle which is a thick haze of turbulence in which the outcome is completely obscured. At the moment of completion that turbulence, within the unfolding of battle subsides, and the work of destiny has been done. From the wael of the battlefield one discerns the necessity or meaning in the pattern of what has been destined. Some are victorious, others are dead, still others, while alive, have been ruined. Out of this necessity which will determine the future, comes a glimpse of the truth. The truth is the inward part of necessity. That inner truth is ultimately that the single source has decreed and worked its will, bringing about the enduring necessity out of the chaos of battle. The truth is attained when the human takes back the necessity and meaning he receives by surveying the battleground to the single source. What is destined wells up and constructs the walls, distinguishing the living from the dead. The human who observes this and returns the destiny to its ultimate cause has isolated

and experienced fully the meaning of truth. Within the manifested necessity is a secret pointer back to the source of what has been destined. Pestilence and mortal disease is similar to war in its effect of starkly separating the living from the dead.

The final major word in this cluster is WOOL. It is interesting to note that SHAPE and SHEEP are related in Old English. The forms of things are referred back to the animal that provides clothing and food for the community. The sheep is the primal thing with shape. The sheep gives wool as one of its many bounties. Wool forms a protective covering which protects from cold winds and foul weather. Wool covers the sheep and hides its shape until shorn.

Anyone who has read this far will surely have sensed that the word shape as it has been used throughout these essays is not merely a metaphor. Everything that has preceded has attempted to articulate a peculiar shaping impulse to Germanic activity that creates configurational similarities in their various manifestations within that culture. Shape is a cogent term; it presents to us at once the relational aspects of an entity that renders it perceivable, both as physical substance and as conception. As a verb, it expresses directly the creative aspect of human activity; as a noun, it

gives us the realized forms themselves as they have been created. Thus, shape expresses both process and fact, impulse and act, form and substance. It is consonant with both any concept and our perception of it.

Underlying it are all of the relations that organize and predicate human activity and that give structure to the whole of a culture and render it both intelligible to itself and observable to others. Man acts only within a context that makes action possible; such contexts are recognizable and understandable through the configurational possibilities they present. Such configurational possibilities live, both within the mind and within the nature of things. The shaping structures all.¹

Going back to the Old English words that cluster around the root SH?P? we find some interesting features. In Old English the root is actually SC?P?. The “sc” has become permuted into an “sh” sound.

sceap, scaaeep, scep, scip

-- sheep

sceap

-- genitals

1. Well & Tree pp 189 - 190

sceop -> scop

sceoppa, scoppa

-- booth

scieppan, scippan, scyppan

-- to create, shape, destine, form, make order,
arrange, judge, assign

scieppend

-- creator

scip, scyp

-- ship

sciip -> sceeap

scipe

-- pay, wage, position, rank

-- fate

scop, sceop

-- singer, singer of tales, poet

scyp

-- patch

-- scip

scypian

-- to take shape

What comes to completion under the hand of destiny takes shape. The active shaping of everything, through active causation by the single source, results in the shapes of creatures and things. The sheep is the primordial shaped thing because it is most familiar, and the community draws its life from the sheep. What is important about the sheep is that it reproduces and provides abundance of wool, food, milk, etc. In traditional societies every part of the sheep was used for something essential in life. The reproductive capabilities of the sheep made it a continuing resource for all these essentials. Thus, the words scep (genitals) and scep (sheep) are directly related. We know that within the genitals lies the DNA patterning which makes the sheep give rise to other sheep in perpetuity. It is by manipulating the breeding that the different characteristics of the sheep are emphasized or de-emphasized in succeeding generations. The reproductive energy arises from Helvermir. The DNA patterning is, however, only the software used by the cells to create the patterning of the sheep. The active formative and morphological energy arises as Chi from the source Mirmir to cause the DNA software to be read so that the sheep actually takes form correctly. Ultimately, the sheep

plays a particular role in the web of life which is its destiny. This destiny expresses the angelic energies of the well of Uthr which, by the very existence of the sheep, shows the compassion toward humans pouring out from the single source. Without the sheep as a central resource, life would be very different. The fated interrelation of Man and Sheep shows a codependence setup in a realm totally outside man's control. In other words, in another culture the place of the sheep would be replaced by something else, but the necessary codependence of man on the source of his livelihood is an important aspect of the shaping of the world.

In this light it can be seen that shaping takes place from all three sources or wells. Reproductive shaping springs from the work of the genes and the workings of DNA patterning. Bodily shaping of the growing animal or human unfolds the possibilities in the DNA. Angelic shaping fits the particular created form into the symbiotic relation with all the other creatures in the world to make an overall unified pattern. All of this shaping is captured in the word "scieppan" which, as Bauschatz says, is both the action of bringing into a particular shape and the final form itself that has been shaped. The wool of the sheep is its outer covering which becomes the covering of man. Thus, the wool signifies the symbiotic relation between the two shaped creatures. The wool is the exchanged

resource. In this way, the wool might be seen to be a metaphor for the interlocking relations which arise from the well/wall to be manifest in the world as particular exchange relations which point to a unity of design in the pattern of the overall world gestalt. This exchange pattern is also highlighted by “sceoppa” from which the word shop derives. “Sceoppa” is a booth in which an exchange occurs. Thus, again there is a highlight of exchange between humans as well as exchange between humans and the primal creature, the sheep. SHEEP/SHOP signifies the importance of exchange between creatures within the world.

Within this word cluster two other important words exist. One is SCOP. The scop is the poet who sings the glory of the warriors who protect the ward. The scop thus signifies the exchange between the warriors and their leader that binds the group together. Of course, the scop does this by weaving the glories of the warriors and their king into wonderful words that are passed down thorough the tradition within the group. The other important word is SHIP. Bauschatz points out the importance of the ship as the site of burial which stands in place of the well as a container for the glorious dead. The image of the ship is crucial because it signifies at once wholeness of men working together under a captain, and the protective container of the ward against the chaos of the world.

Here it is realized that the one ultimate source of all the waters from the wells is the sea. We are, in fact, adrift on that vast turbulent ocean which is the source of all life. Our small vessel is at the mercy of that source of the waters of life, just as a ship is ultimately at the mercy of the sea. The ship is made of timber from the trees. So the image of the ship draws together the tree and the well as close as possible. The ship is our gestalt world within the vast ocean of all the worlds. We are that fragile bark engulfed by the ocean upwelling from the single source. But amazingly, the fragile bark contains the whole ocean, because when we take back everything that takes shape to the truth of the single source, we unify our world and all the worlds. By knowing the truth of unity and actively unifying what comes to completion, we see that all the worlds are contained in our own gestalt patterning.

The conversion of the WILL from the well/wall through the unfolding -- completion -- necessity into the Truth of the tree, is a fundamental cycle in human existence that leads directly to wisdom. The image of that wisdom is the ship on the face of the vast ocean which, in turn, is realized to contain that ocean. The dead return to their source by being set within the ship, either on the sea or in the earth. In the skeleton of the ship is the impression of the whole community within a whole world inhabited by the whole individual who has achieved glory by being

fully aligned with destiny. Wholeness is another important concept from the Old English. In order to complete our foundations for the exploration of the fragmentation of Being, it is important to understand this word cluster as well.

halig

-- holy

haaeel

-- welfare, salvation, well-being, safety, good fortune, omen

haaeelan

-- to make whole, heal, cure, soothe, save, castrate, greet, salute

haele, haeleth

-- warrior, man, hero

haaele, haaelu

-- health, prosperity

-- safe

Haaeelend, Helend

-- savior, Christ

haal

-- hale, whole, sound, uninjured, healthy, intact,
entire, well, safe, genuine, straight forward

hala

-- afterbirth

-- counselor, confidant, supporter

heeala

-- hydrocele (accumulation of serous fluid in some
part of the body usually the scrotum)

healh

-- corner, nook, secret place, small hollow inside a
hillside or slope

healic

-- high, exalted, glorious, eminent, arrogant,
elevated, lofty, sublime, deep, profound, intense,
lordly, noble, great, illustrious, distinguished,
excellent, proud, haughty

heall

-- hall, common room, residence, dwelling, house,
palace, temple, law-court

-- healh

-- rock

heela, haaeela

-- heel

helan

-- to conceal, hide, cover

heelan

-- to calumniate

-- haaeelan

helle

-- hell

heolan -> see helan

hiilaa -> higla = alas

hol

-- hollow, concave, depressed, lying in a hollow

-- cave, hole, perforation, aperture

hool

-- vain speech, calumny, slander, malaise, envy

hulu

-- husk, pod

hylu

-- a hollow

This word cluster is crucial because it brings together many concepts which are fragmented in our current vocabulary for describing the world and the shapes in the world, as well as how they interact. The ship on the sea is like the hall on the land. In *Beowulf* the hall is built around a single big tree which provides shade. The hall is the center of the community where the *SYMBEL* takes place.

Clearly the *symbol* was some kind of solemn occasion at which the participants significantly sat down. Within the rather strenuous active contexts of most Germanic texts, sitting suggests inaction, rest, order. Order seems especially important, because to sit requires a place to sit, and a place suggests some apportionment of positions, and the apportioning suggests *Urth*. The *symbol* is also a joint activity; one never read of someone at *symbol* alone. Those participating come together and sit, usually within a chieftains' hall.²

The elements of this typical *symbol* bear a close relationship, not only to those already described by Tacitus but also to those isolated in the myth of *Urth's* well. The cup, for example, is the enclosure, in many ways like the "brunnr." It

2. Well & Tree, page 73

collects and holds the intoxicating drink, one that is clearly beyond the ordinary. The presence of the noble woman at the drink of the intoxicant adds the additional element of female nature. The act of drinking takes place in the presence of the act of speech, each partaking of the fact of the other; in such activity, the power of all other actions is brought to bear upon the ritual moment and fixes it within the ever-evolving interrelation of all present actions with the past. This combination of words, their denoted actions, and the semantic elements of the drink and cup repeat the whole act of the continual speaking of the ORLOG and the nurturing of the tree of Yggdrasil, the central activities of the Norns. If this action is indicative of the power and presence of the past in the world of men, then here also the ritual words spoken become part of this past. They disappear into the drink; as it is drunk, the speaker of the speech, his actions, and the drink become one, assuring that all now have become part of the strata laid down in the well.³

The making-one in the hall of the community through the ritual of the symbol exhibits many aspects of oneness. This oneness is haaeel in the sense that it constructs a safe zone in which the whole community experiences well

3. Well & Tree, pp 77 - 78

being. The symbol is also a haela, or healing, or cure for all who participate in it fully. The center of the symbol is the haele or hero and warrior who has proved himself through his deeds. Through those deeds, haaeele, or health and prosperity are assured. The great healer is, of course, the embodied word, Jesus, who represented to the later Germanic peoples the destiny from God. The view of Jesus from the point of view of the Germanic peoples is embodied in the poem Haelend. It sees Jesus as a wise lord among his warriors. The healing makes whole -- as hale and health. It renders all who participate haelic, glorious and holy. When this wholeness is absent, then everything turns into its opposite. The hall becomes hylu or hollow thorough the prevalence of hool, vain speech. The hall becomes its opposite -- a hell on earth where even the generative powers are cut off by the heeala.

WHOLE/HOLY/HEAL/HEALTH. These various words work together to give a complete picture of the outward unity that takes shape in the world and ward when the whole of the community experiences and is in tune with the wyrd. George Leonard calls this the experience of resonance in which everyone in the community is working together, expressing the same rhythm. Leonard, in the Silent Pulse, cites Dr. W. S. Condon's research into micro-movements between people in conversation [p 15]. Condon discovered that as people talk, they are

moving in harmony with a whole series of micro-movements that amount to an invisible dance. It was discovered that not only do all adults participate in this invisible dance, but even babies, when exposed to speech, perform a micro-movement dance. Leonard sums up by saying:

Our ability to have a world depends on our ability to entrain with it⁴

The entraining of everyone within the community through the speeches at the symbol, produces this rhythmic resonant wholeness which is both holy and healthy. The symbol is a primal kind of symbolic interaction in which the Hell of dissonant interaction is avoided, and the common world is constructed again and again. We have obviously lost this art within our own culture, except in special circumstances. The global dominant culture, our culture, is fragmented, and thus unhealthy as well as unholy. It has become empty and hollow -- a hell on earth: a Kakatopia. The two possibilities that can be seen within the word cluster are clear. We long to regain wholeness, but do not know how to go about it as we experience the hell of global dissidence.

4. SILENT PULSE, p 19

From the material above it is clear that the Celtic peoples -- at least the Irish -- have taken a number of cultural elements that they have inherited from Indo-European source and turned them their own unique way. In this, the development is much like that already examined, of the voyage motif. The idea of confluence, as we might call it here, has been adapted to express the confluence of forces generating fecundity and plenty within the world of men. Much of the Celtic material is turned to that concern directly: How may man turn the powers of the earth to his continued good fortune? Seen from this perspective, the Celtic festival is much more like the Greek libationary ritual, with its desire for good fortune, than it is like the symbol. Rather than trying to control the flow of WYRD, an ideal whose time will not come till well after the Christianization of the Germanic world, the Germanic drinker -- speaker controls only himself, directing his own actions to place them most advantageously within that flow.⁵

At the symbol two kinds of speeches are identified:

There seems to be at least two important kinds of “fact establishing” speech utilized in the poem (Beowulf, Widsith, Deor): the BEOT or gilp (speech that binds the present to the past) and, for

5. Well & Tree, p 83

want of a better term, the “account” (speech by which the past is brought forward into the present). The account is best exemplified by the form of most Germanic poems themselves: *Widsith* and *Deor* are good examples; so are most other Old English “historical” poems, and so is the Norse Edda. There are, within *Beowulf*, a number of these set “accounts:” the lay of Sigemund, for example, and the battle of Finnsburg. Having looked at two of these in some detail, we know pretty well what they are like. The other kind of speech, the BEOT or GILP, differs in significant ways from the account. “The words *gylpword* and *beotword*. . . seem to mean the same thing; but it is probable that *gielp* -- stresses the glory of the adventure, something to boast of, whereas *beot* -- stresses the fact that it is a promise, a vow. Both words, with their derivatives, recur again and again . . . [in] heroic poetry” (Einarsson 1934: 976). The BEOT places its “promise” of action within a closely defined course of events from which the speaker will be unable to extricate himself without showing himself to be a fool or a coward. Thus, the utterer of the *beot* places himself at the confluence of words and deeds; the outcome is the direct association and involvement of the speaker in the unity of the two where the deed is found to be at one with the *beotword*.

Otherwise, he will be at variance with the course of events (proving him to be a fool) or his inability to act honorably within it (proving him to be a coward). Thus, the beot links foreseeable events with words representative of them. In the BEOT the word precedes events, and statements become facts; in the “account,” on the other hand, the actions precede words; however, in both the act of speaking and the fact of occurrence is linked.⁶

BEOT has two meanings: it is a boast, boastful speech, threat, or vow on the one hand; and on the other hand, it can mean to “beeaten” or beat, strike, pound, thrust, dash, hurt, injure. What is of interest is its relation to the imperative of the verb “to be” which is either wes/beo (singular) or wesath/beoth (plural). BEOT is a boast that says a specific action will be in the future. The saying of the beot is meant to bring the state of affairs into existence. The warrior says “be!” and then goes out to make that state of affairs come true. The boast is based upon the attempt to create a self-fulfilling prophecy. If the warrior is in tune with the wyrd, his boast will occur. If he is out of tune, he will be dishonored. The beot is a projection of destiny by the individual; an attempt to reach into the cloud of becoming and foretell completion. Just as necessity takes a step back from the position of completion to discern inner meaning, the beot attempts to

6. Well & Tree, p110

take a step forward into becoming and state the necessity before completion occurs. The warrior describes a completed state of affairs and then says “BE!” imperatively to that state of affairs. Action follows, attempting to live up to the self-fulfilling prophecy. The beot is a thrust at fate, a challenge which substitutes the will of the warrior for the will of the single source of all causation. However, if the warrior is in harmony with the wyrd, then the beot is the saying of what will surely come to completion. It is an oracle or reading of the configuration of events. It is the seeing of completion in what is still incomplete. Thus, the beot has two aspects. For the one who throws his will against fate, it is a challenge to destiny. For this one, beot is a bet. The word bet has an unknown etymology, and this may be the real source of this word. For the one who is aligned with the wyrd, it is a reading of Being in becoming. In either case, the inner dynamic of the symbol which makes whole is directly related to the concept of Being. What is whole is the temporal gestalt in the complete process of manifestation. The completed temporal gestalt passes through the moment of the present toward its completion. Becoming is the passage of the temporal gestalt through the moment of the present. Being is the coincidence of completion with the moment of the present. At that point the completed shape has its full Being. When completion becomes an extended experience, then the wyrd is

present. Every act in the process of unfolding is then complete. Extended completion exists as wholeness which is holy and healing. The view of becoming as incomplete and inchoate leading to completion, is a narrow view. In fact, each instant of becoming is whole and complete when one is in rapport with the wyrd. This is signified by the other meaning of symbol which used as an adjective means ever, forever, always, constantly, continuously, perpetually. When becoming is seen as complete, then completion is perpetual. This means that in some way the whole of the temporal gestalt is present in each instant of its unfolding. This is like the ship which contains the ocean. Each moment contains the whole of the complete temporal gestalt. From this perspective in harmony with the wyrd, the beot is the declaration of the whole within the part. The predictive speech is part of the whole. If that predictive speech is the orlog, then it must be in harmony with the whole of the unfolding of the temporal gestalt, including the final state of affairs and the actions which lead to that state of affairs.

The unfolding of the temporal gestalt by this logic has four parts. A situation occurs in the world that effects the group. The men gather at a symbol and exchange boasts. Then they leave the symbol to perform actions aligned with their boasts. The situation is changed by actions and

is brought to completion as decreed by destiny. The new state of affairs may or may not be the same as the beot predicted. If it was in harmony, then glory accrues to the one who was in tune with the outcome that actually occurred. This structure may be compared with the structure of the four states of emergence.

situation >>> something out there

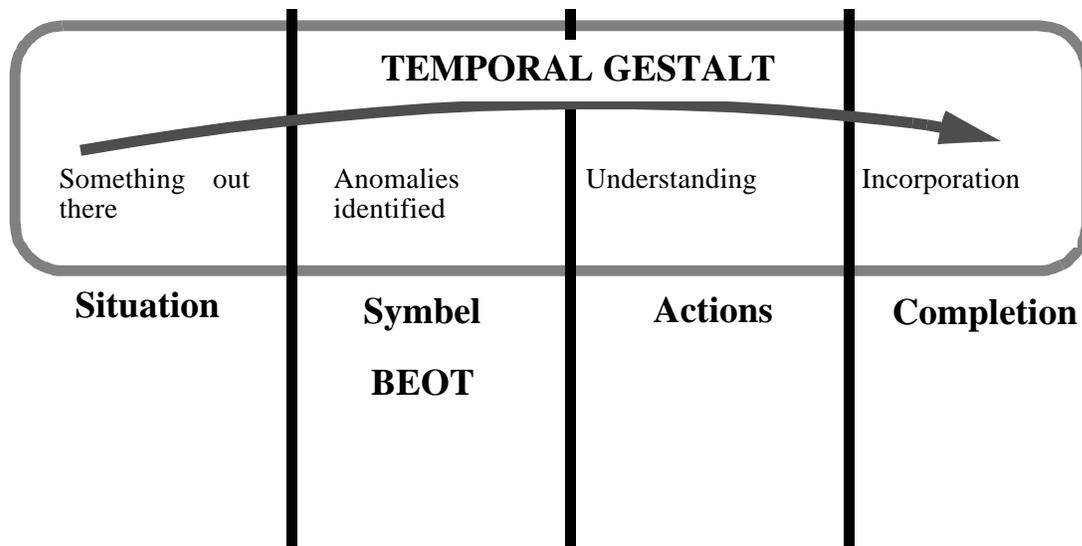
symbol - beot >>> anomalies identified

actions >>> understanding anomalies

completion >>> incorporation of anomalies

FIGURE 29

Four phases of action surrounding the Beot in the Symbel. {FIGURE 298}



The situation must be a threat to the group in some way to be of significance. The threat is a discrepancy between group goals or needs and the way the world is at the

current time. In the symbol the discrepancy is identified, and a theory proposed. The theory contains a hypothesis as to what actions will ameliorate the discrepancies. The actions are like experiments based on the best hypothesis which are then tried by the boasters. At the end of the experimental action, the results are seen in the new state of affairs. The success or failure of the experiments are evaluated.

This comparison shows the interesting isomorphism between the structure of the scientific method and the “situation/boast/action/result” structure which is discovered in the Old English and Germanic tradition. This suggests that the template for gestalt change is very old. It suggests that the Old English culture attempted to change its group gestalt by this means. It also indicates that the precessing of the proto-gestalt may have its roots in the old Germanic social structure. It appears that the difference between entrainment with the wyrd, and the boast which challenges destiny, may be a crucial difference that causes the proto-gestalt to precess if entrainment is not achieved. To the non-entrained social group there is vain speech, and the hall becomes hollow because it is no longer whole. The vain speech corresponds to excrescence of artificial emergence. Within this vain speech there is a continual attempt to hypothesize the outcome of future events. This making

of oracles leads directly to self-fulfilling prophecy through the attempt to apply a praxis that makes the hypothesis come true. As hypotheses are proved true, others are proved false, and emergent events begin to be recognized. An emergent event is seen as an isomorphism between the hypothesis and its outcomes, which is new. When the emergent event occurs, it causes the gestalt within the world to change. Thus, the world is periodically transformed by beots that succeed. The hollow hall or “hel” on earth is continuously going through fundamental revolutions as emergent events rise above the banter of vain talk. Vain talk amounts to a myriad of unsuccessful beots. This begins to look just like our own social structure and culture as it makes “progress” through acts of hubris.

The opposite of this picture is one where wholeness has been achieved through harmony with the wyrd, and the beot is an example of the speaking of the ORLOG. It is a state of continuous completion where the group is in harmony with the decree of the single source. We must be driven to wonder if this opposite state of society where emergence, society and intersubjectivity are whole, and healthy is still possible for us.

Publisher:

Apeiron Press

PO Box 4402,
Garden Grove, California
92842-4402

714-638-1210
palmer@exo.com
palmer@think.net
palmer@netcom.com
Thinknet BBS 714-638-0876

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Draft #3 940629

Special Editorial Copy. Rough Draft
Manuscript

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This book was typeset using Framemaker document publishing software by the author.

Publication Data:

Library of Congress
Cataloging in Publication Data

Palmer, Kent Duane
(aka Abd al-Alim al-Ashari)

THE FRAGMENTATION OF BEING AND
THE PATH BEYOND THE VOID:
Speculations in an Emergent Onto-mythology

Bibliography (tbd)
Includes Index (tbd)

1. Philosophy-- Ontology
2. Sociology -- Theory
3. Mythology -- Indo-european

I. Title

[XXX000.X00 199x]
9x-xxxxx
ISBN 0-xxx-xxxxx-x

Keywords:

Being, Ontology, Sociological Theory, Indo-
european Mythology, Plato's Laws, Emergence,
Technology, Worldview, City Form

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