

The Transcendent Function of Interculturalism

James Harbeck

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Kathy Foley, in a 1992 article, asks the question, “Are cross-culture drama, dance, and music the ultimate in cultural tourism: Club Med experiences of ‘the real thing’ without any substantive connection to the internal stuff that codes a performance? Or is it the very reality of the arts to allow us to test the boundaries of self and other where the experience stretches us toward realizing the other is only a possibility of self that for cultural reasons is suppressed?” (Foley 1992, 10) From a psychological perspective, each person’s individual encounters with the products of another culture are, like all encounters, part of the individual’s personal development. I would like to suggest that at the optimal end, intercultural encounter¹ may serve as a catalyst for what Jung called the transcendent function, facilitating individuation—in other words, through use of the Other’s symbols one can become more fully one’s self.

Repression.

The course of an intercultural encounter begins with the individual, as yet unaware of the Other. But this is not a sustainable state, nor is it in fact really a beginning, for on a psychological level what *seems* to be the individual has come into being by separating one part of the psyche from the rest. “Consciousness,” as Jung explains, “grows out of an unconscious psyche which is older than it, and which goes on functioning together with it

¹ In this paper I consider intercultural encounter as a unidirectional, nonreciprocal experience: an individual encountering and using the products of another culture and in so doing having an experience which cannot be exactly replicated from the perspective of the other culture. The reason for this is, I hope, made clear in the course of the paper. In brief, the experience of an Other always begins with and returns to the Self. Cases of apparent “mutual” exchange are thus two separate encounters focused on a shared set of symbols.

or even in spite of it” (Jung 1969, 281). What we humans by habit take to be ourselves is only a rather narrow area of focus on the surface of a much larger Self. During childhood every human goes through a process of differentiating an ego-consciousness from the remainder of the psyche, as necessitated by the exigencies of human existence and culture. The remainder of the Self is generally ignored and often not even acknowledged by the ego.² Those parts of the Self which are deemed unacceptable to the ego, for reasons of culture, personal history, or religion, are repressed into the unconscious and as a result are subject to being *projected* on others: the external Other becomes a substitute for an unacknowledged internal Other. The nature of these projections tends to be negative: the ego has gone to lengths to establish its independence from the rest of the psyche and is naturally in fear of annihilation should it be subsumed by an unconscious with which it no longer identifies. Fear, hatred, or contempt of the Other without arises from fear of the Other within. Projection is easiest when the least real understanding or possibility of identification exists, and so cultural Others are viable targets. Intercultural awareness tends to begin with opportunistic use of the Other for projection.³

As I have mentioned, repressions are often culturally-driven. For instance, Western cultures have long perpetuated masculinist, rationalist, empiricist biases, which not only lead to repression of much opposing material but also exacerbate the problem by an extreme valorization of the ego.⁴ These biases were decried by Jung,⁵ as they have also

² Laughlin, d’Aquili and McManus illustrate this with theatrical metaphors: the ego-consciousness is the star who mistreats or even ignores the valuable contributions of the other actors (1992, 259-266).

³ For example, Phillip Zarrilli notes that “[i]n the Western-initiated colonial drama of subjugation and domination, India was cast in several key roles. Most important, as South Asian historian Roland Inden relates, for empiricists and rationalists that role was ‘THE unchangeable’ and/or ‘THE *absolutely* different’ (and therefore inscrutable and dominatable), and, for romantics, the ‘SPIRITUAL or IDEAL’ Other” (Zarrilli 1992, 26-27). We can see that the romantics had a more positive attitude towards the projected contents, which is useful, even necessary, for the transcendent function as I will describe it, although it does not always lead to it.

⁴ For an analysis of this, see in particular Laughlin, McManus and d’Aquili 1992, 263-264.

⁵ For example: “It is after all only a tiny fraction of humanity, living mainly on that thickly populated peninsula of Asia which juts out into the Atlantic Ocean, and calling themselves ‘cultured,’

been more recently by theorists of performance such as Victor Turner and Jerzy Grotowski. Turner has said that “Cartesian dualism has insisted on separating subject from object, us from them. It has, indeed, made voyeurs of Western man, exaggerating sight by macro- and micro-instrumentation, the better to learn the structures of the world with an ‘eye’ to its exploitation. The deep bonds between body and mentality, unconscious and conscious thinking, species and self have been treated without respect, as though irrelevant for analytical purposes” (Turner 1991, 111). Jerzy Grotowski’s concern “is not for the African or Asian societies from which he draws the bulk of his research material but for the contemporary Western civilization which he believes has excluded the sacred from the performing arts and therefore impoverished them both in terms of technique and the essential knowledge of humanity” (Amankulor 1989, 161). Such views are not uncommon. The result of the Western bias is an imbalance at the individual level: certain tendencies which are natural to the Self are subject to repression into the unconscious.

When such a repression occurs, the contents of the unconscious must be reintegrated with those of the ego, not only through acceptance but through acknowledgement and incorporation in identification. “Must” may seem a strong word: after all, it is apparent that the process is not fully accomplished in every person. In point of fact, it is not *fully* accomplished in *any* person. Jung points out that “the approximation of the ego to the self . . . must be a never-ending process” (Jung 1959, 23), although the ego can come ever closer through assimilation of unconscious contents.⁶ But the greater the extent to which important parts of the Self are relegated to the

who, because they lack all contact with nature, have hit upon the idea that religion is a peculiar kind of mental disturbance of undiscoverable purport. Viewed from a safe distance, say from central Africa or Tibet, it would certainly look as if this fraction had projected its own unconscious mental derangements upon nations still possessed of healthy instincts” (Jung 1953, 203). See also Jung, 1960, 71-74.

⁶ Susan Sontag espouses a similar position. She has written that “[t]he artist is a consciousness trying to be,” but in her view this is never fully possible; “Consciousness as given can never wholly constitute itself in art but must strain to transform its own boundaries and to alter the boundaries of art” (Sontag 1976, xix).

unconscious, the greater the need for their reintegration with the ego, and the greater the pressure they exert on the edges of the ego, potentially leading to dramatic mental destabilizations (see Jung 1960, 71 f., and Laughlin, McManus and d'Aquili 1992, 264-265). They cannot be fully ignored. In better circumstances they will attach themselves to symbolic media which the ego acknowledges as existing, such as aesthetic products. This will allow them to be reintegrated with the contents of the ego. The process is still initially projective, but, if it is carried through successfully, the final result is positively integrative. "How the harmonizing of conscious and unconscious data is to be undertaken," Jung explains, "cannot be indicated in the form of a recipe. It is an irrational life-process which expresses itself in definite symbols. . . . [I]t is in them that the union of conscious and unconscious contents is consummated. Out of this union emerge new situations and new conscious attitudes. I have therefore called the union of opposites the 'transcendent function'" (Jung 1969, 289). The transcendent function will most readily come, and with least disruption, to those who already sense that there is a lack in their personae which must be redressed. This lack may be projected onto their culture, particularly if the lack is due to a culturally-driven repression. In this case, their culture becomes a proxy for the ego, and the Other will most surely be a cultural Other.⁷

Transcendence.

This phenomenon may call to mind Brecht and Artaud, who found in the East (China for one and Bali for the other) the perfect antidote to the gaps they saw in their own cultures, gaps which they felt hampered their own self-expression. It is commonplace now to point out that neither Brecht nor Artaud really understood the cultures in which they had found their artistic messiahs: the Chinese do not really experience a *Verfremdungseffekt* from watching their actors (in fact, Chinese theatre often tends towards the "culinary theatre" which was a *bête noire* of Brecht's), and the Balinese

⁷ This does not mean that any cultural Other will do; the object of projection, the symbol of transcendence, must be a suitable vehicle for the meaning which it is to carry.

theatre, while undoubtedly more metaphysical in inclination than most Western theatre, does not produce the dizzying effect on Balinese audience that was present in its epiphany to Artaud.⁸ But it is also commonplace to point out that these misunderstandings had enormous heuristic value, and to that observation I would add that the material *had* to be utterly foreign, transcendent, apparently numinous even, in order for it to effect the transcendent function. Jung notes this fact in regard to another aspect of twentieth-century interculturalism, religious borrowings: “Though the Christian view of the world has paled for many people, the symbolic treasure-rooms of the East are still full of marvels that can nourish for a long time to come the passion for show and new clothes. What is more, these images—be they Christian or Buddhist or what will you—are lovely, mysterious, richly intuitive. Naturally, the more familiar we are with them the more does constant usage polish them smooth, so what remains is only banal superficiality and meaningless paradox” (Jung 1969, 7-8). He adds later: “At least one couldn’t understand the Asiatic symbols, and for this reason they were not banal like the conventional gods” (14). In order for a symbol to serve as a reasonable vehicle for the transcendent function, it must be as free as possible of associations that would tend to divert it into the realm of the merely already known. For instance, Grotowski avoids the use of Christian texts in his workshops because of their immediate associations (Amankulor 1989, 159). Brontis Jodorowsky, of the *Théâtre du Soleil*, similarly justifies borrowing from *kathakali* to perform *Les Atrides*: “when you deal with a universal text like Aeschylus you can’t just

⁸ Among examples of intercultural transcendence Antonin Artaud, due to his psychological tribulations, is both salient and problematic. His life was steered by his felt inability to construct a unified and reliable self or even to have control of his own mind. In his quest for a transcendent function he embraced a variety of religious perspectives and traditions, all of them tinged with the dualism/transcendence of Gnosticism, and in the world of aesthetics he looked to the East. His theatrical reforms were projections of his inner struggles, as Susan Sontag notes: “Whatever Artaud’s wishes for ‘culture,’ his thinking ultimately shuts out all but the private self. Like the Gnostics, he is a radical individualist. From his earliest writings, his concern is with a metamorphosis of the ‘inner’ state of the soul” (Sontag 1976, xlvii). Others have been less striking, most likely because their maladjustments have been minor compared with Artaud’s, meaning that their readjustments have also been less spectacular.

borrow through your own culture. That would be to reduce it. So you borrow through something larger, something that makes you travel, something on a mythical level” (Salter 1993, 68). In order to represent the Other, the symbol also must be Other; to be transcendent, it cannot be merely part and parcel of the user’s own world.

This “Otherness” leads us to another important characteristic of the transcendent function, its typically religious or quasi-religious character. It involves an Other which is seen as *absolutely* Other and yet is recognized and understood and which has the potential either to bring to fulfillment (fuller selfhood) or to destroy (feared disappearance of the ego). The level beyond the transcendent function, immediate contact of the ego with the unconscious, dispensing with ego-preserving symbolic mediation, is absolutely central to mystical experience and meditation techniques. The very ideas of “expansion of consciousness” and release of ego into something larger (which is usually identified as divine) point directly to integration of the ego-consciousness with the unconscious (an admirably thorough resumé of this is given in Laughlin, McManus and d’Aquili 1992, 296-333). From the point of view of the experient, one transcends the bonds of materiality and comes in touch with one’s soul, which is the means to know the divine.⁹ The tamer transcendent function such as is involved in interculturalism preserves the integrity of the ego, but the entity lurking on the other side of the sign is the same. Religious experience involves the integration of unconscious contents with the ego-consciousness; what remains subject to dispute is whether this integration is the full extent of the experience or whether it is a tool or side effect of something much greater. But the transcendent function is, in all its avatars, at least quasi-religious, and its more effective occurrences tend to have the psychological characteristics seen in religious revelation or conversion: everything falls into place, meaning is found. In cultures with strong religious content transcendence tends to be mediated by religious symbols. In cases where the culture’s own metaphysical tradition is devalued, the symbol comes most

⁹ Jung *et al.* prefer to remain on ground more acceptable to the Western academic, and so they speak only in terms of the unconscious, avoiding implying an asomatous plane of existence.

readily from a cultural Other, and if the metaphysical is denied existence (as with Brecht), the symbol of transcendence will have to be some human cultural product. In such a case it will rely very much on the paradox of being both immanent *and* transcendent, the problems of which I discuss below.

Eugenio Barba has given an excellent example of intercultural experience as transcendent function. In his book *The Paper Canoe* he charts the course of his life, crossing through various “cultures” (which, however, are not in my terms cultural Others). “The first of these,” he tells us,

is the culture of faith. There is a boy in a warm place full of people singing, fragrant odours, vivid colours. In front of him, high up, is a statue wrapped in a purple cloth. Suddenly, while bells ring, the smell of incense becomes more pungent and the singing swells, the purple cloth is pulled down revealing a risen Christ.

This is how Easter was celebrated in Gallipoli, the village in southern Italy where I spent my childhood. I was deeply religious. It was a pleasure to the senses to go to church. . . . (Barba 1995, 1)

From this environment he was thrust into military school and what he calls “the culture of corrosion,” which ate away at his faith, hope, and imagination. He responded to it by venturing off into “the culture of revolt,” of rejection, of escape. This led him, denuded of the beliefs of his childhood, to Denmark and Poland, and ultimately to his study of physical expression in performance. He had put childish things away (to borrow a phrase from St. Paul), but he felt a drive to encounter the Other. Ultimately, he found it in products of cultural Others, Asian theatre styles, which he immediately adapted to his own ends. He feels that he is thoroughly Western; “[h]owever,” he writes,

it is true that some forms of Asian theatre and some of their artists move me deeply, just as do the actors of Odin Teatret. Through them I find again the culture of faith, as an agnostic and as a man who has reached the last stage of his journey: the count-down in reverse. I rediscover a unity of the senses, of the intellect and of the spirit, a tension towards something which is both inside and outside myself. I find again the ‘moment of truth’, where opposites merge.

In every one of the Odin Teatret’s productions, there is an actor who, in a surprising way, divests her/himself of her/his costume and appears, not nude, but in the splendour of another costume. For many years I thought this was a *coup de théâtre* inspired by *kabuki*, the *hikinuki*, in which the protagonist, with the help of one or more assistants, suddenly divests himself of his costume and appears totally changed. I once believed I was adapting a Japanese convention. Only now do I understand this *détour* and return: it is the moment of Life when, in Gallipoli, the purple cloth fell and I saw, in a statue, the risen Christ. (7-8)

What he had put aside found its way back into his life via the roundabout route of the transcendent function. That the content in this case is derived from religion is a separate issue from the nature of the process, which is the same whatever the content. In some contexts and by some people it is taken as spiritual; in intercultural aesthetic contexts it tends not to be. But the epiphany of Mei Lanfang to Brecht had the same functional qualities as the epiphany of Balinese theatre to Artaud, who was looking for a metaphysical theatre, or even as the discovery of Eastern religions by Westerners as described by Jung. The difference lay in the framework of interpretation.¹⁰

Individuation.

¹⁰ The above-mentioned Western bias *has* led to the Other often having a metaphysical quality. To cite two recent examples, Lee Breuer finds in bunraku “the metaphysical experience of illusion and theatricality” (Cody 1991, 214), and Peter Sellars says that “[p]art of what is valuable about Noh drama is the absolute sacrosanct quality of the private life of a spirit” (Flynn 1991, 189).

But is not use of the cultural Other as a catalyst of one's own transcendent function a selfish, purblind appropriation, acting against rather than aiding cross-cultural understanding? Only if the symbols are not truly integrated and remain projections. When the transcendent function is genuinely effective, the result is precisely the opposite. As Laughlin, McManus and d'Aquili explain,

[i]n transcendence, . . . the result is growth; a displacement of ego from center stage and a clear vision of both self and world. With this change comes a more separate and integrated being, a being more at one with its world. Over time and with success awareness dawns of how much "out there" is really "in here," still projected unknowingly on the world-out-there. . . . Potentially, the field of being may reveal itself and the illusion of a separate subject in an objective world is replaced, not by merely a unitary view of the world, but by a unitary being-in-the-world. (266)

The process which the transcendent function fosters is *individuation*. Individuation, Jung explains, is the means by which "the individual becomes what he always was" (1969, 40): a good deal more than the ego. Jung describes three levels of the psyche: the ego-consciousness, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious. The collective unconscious is that part of the mind where the archetypes are to be found, that level which all humanity has in common, a level of "primordial images, . . . symbols which are older than the historical man, which are inborn in him from the earliest times, and, eternally living, outlasting all generations, still make up the groundwork of the human psyche" (1960, 402). These provide the basic matrix and guide for experience and action, and are thus, like chemical elements, the roots of all that we are and do. This does not mean that we are all identical, for we are differently elaborated, different experiences shape our egos and personal unconsciouss; but our individual entities are really pathways and gateways between the collective unconscious and external reality. To be

fully oneself, therefore, is to be fully situated in the context of humanity as a whole; any insistence on separation from the whole is an act against fullness of identity, like a fence across a path. Jung puts the matter as follows:

Now in so far as the human individual, as a living unit, is composed of purely universal factors, he is wholly collective and therefore in no sense opposed to collectivity. Hence the individualistic emphasis on one's own peculiarity is a contradiction of this basic fact of the living being. Individuation, on the other hand, aims at a living co-operation of all factors. But since the universal factors will always appear only in individual form, a full consideration of them will also produce an individual effect, and one which cannot be surpassed by anything else, least of all by individualism. (1953, 172)

The implications for intercultural awareness are fairly clear, and in fact Jung did not leave them unstated. “[S]ince there is only *one* earth and *one* mankind, East and West cannot rend humanity into two different halves. Psychic reality still exists in its original oneness, and awaits man's advance to a level of consciousness where he no longer believes in the one part and denies the other, but recognizes both as constituent elements of one psyche” (1960, 354). Thus, when Gautam Dasgupta asks “why so many artists in the West, particularly in the past few decades, have drawn upon Oriental themes and myths to spur their own creativity? Is it because, in all honesty, they do see the world as an organic whole, or is there implicit in their cross-fertilizing instincts a recognition of their own paucity of ideas?” (Dasgupta 1991, 77), we can reply that it is both—their paucity of ideas comes from repression, and the wholeness of the world allows remediation. In fact, it is not only *desirable* for individuation to occur in order for intercultural processes to be effective, it is absolutely *necessary*. We cannot know or understand the Other until we understand ourselves, for it is always on the basis of oneself, the contents of one's own psyche, that one understands anything. Any dark corners of ourselves that we leave

uninspected will shape our understandings of others without our being aware of it. Since our egos never fully comprehend our selves, we—our ego-consciousnesses—can never *fully* understand anyone or anything else. But increase of self-understanding is always possible, and with it can come increased understanding of the Other.

The encounter with the Other will be met with resistance by many, as the ego will fear that the Other may eliminate it. Carl Weber notes the cultural reflection of this fear in “AC/TC: Currents of Theatrical Exchange.”

One surprising phenomenon, which may have been effected by the growing communication network and the “global village” it fosters, is a proliferation of plays and performance projects which are grounded in native traditions, deliberately ethnic, often even stubbornly parochial in content and form. Like an immune system which responds to invading pathogenes, theatre cultures increasingly appear to develop “anti-works” that battle the influx of foreign models which are invading the video screens. (Weber 1991, 35)

Some, however, do embrace the Other, and among these we find practitioners of intercultural theatre. Through their encounters with the Other they may even realize that it is themselves that they are learning about. Compare Jung’s statement about East and West with this viewpoint expressed by Peter Brook: “Each human being carries within him/her all the continents, but each only knows one of them. So when a person with one known continent and a mass of dark continents meets someone else whose condition is the same, and they communicate, there is an illumination for each” (Schechner *et al.* 1986, 54).¹¹ Eugenio Barba’s conception of “Theatre Anthropology” is based upon the same general assumption: “Theatre Anthropology is the study of the pre-expressive scenic

¹¹ One reader of this paper has asked whether this implies that the Balinese benefit from our pirating of their work. The answer is that they can benefit from *their* use of *our* cultural products. This may include our mutations of their cultural products, but because these mutations will at least *resemble* the Balinese “already known” they may prove of little use for their transcendent functions.

behaviour upon which different genres, styles, roles and personal collective traditions are all based” (1995, 9). In effect, the “pre-expressive” level corresponds to the archetypal (and is perhaps based on it).¹² It lies at the base of a three-tiered profile of the performer’s work which Barba has constructed, the other two levels being 1) “the particulars of the theatrical traditions and the historical-cultural context through which the performer’s unique personality manifests itself” and 2) the personality of the individual performer (10). The correspondence to Jung’s structure is rather tidy. Richard Schechner, too, has mapped out a structure which seems to echo Jung, in this case to map human action in the nascent world information order. His levels are:

PAN-HUMAN, EVEN SUPRA-HUMAN, COMMUNICATIONS
NETWORKS.

information from/to anywhere, anyone

CULTURES, CULTURES OF CHOICE.

ethnic, individualistic, local behaviors

people selecting cultures of choice

people performing various subjunctive actualities

PAN-HUMAN BODY BEHAVIORS/DREAM-ARCHETYPE NETWORKS

unconscious & ethological basis of behavior and cultures (Schechner 1982, 124-125)

¹² Barba also uses the terms “animus” and “anima”—which for Jung are two of the most important archetypes— to refer to two types of energy, but he disclaims any Jungian reference in them (Barba 1995, 62-63).

The level of personal consciousness is not on Schechner's chart because it is a chart of connections between individuals. Effectively it is Barba's (or Jung's) schema with an extra level added, and the individual is in the dotted lines.

Problems and reservations.

The theories of Barba, Brook and Schechner may raise questions as to whether intercultural encounter appears to have a Jungian aspect because its conduct is *guided* by Jungian conceptions. This is likely partly true; the extent to which it is is effectively inaccessible to analysis. It is at least as likely, however, that quasi-Jungian perspectives have been adapted by Barba, Brook, Schechner, *et al.* precisely because they correspond to experience.¹³ In any case, we have the psychological framework set up by Jung and others, including the understanding that experience of the world without starts and ends with experience of the world within. What remain are questions regarding the frequency and thoroughness of completion of the transcendent function in interculturalism. How often does the encounter remain on the projective level, and what are the effects of this incompleteness?

One important problem is that it is difficult for cultural products to *remain* transcendent. Metaphysical entities are by nature and definition utterly transcendent of the physical.. Cultures are not; they are, or at least may appear to be, composed of empirically inspectable and thus comprehensible parts, readily reducible to the ego's "already known." Artaud and Brecht were lucky: they never had to face having the numinousness stripped away. But, at the same time, they also never came to the awareness that it was really their own selves that they were embracing with such quasi-

¹³ Non-psychological descriptions of the experience are also amenable to translation into Jungian terms. Take as example the Indian reaction to John Higgins, a Westerner who became a master of Carnatic classical music: "Indians, prone to think very proprietorially of their music and dance, diagnosed it as a case of *Vaasana*, a Sanskrit word which, among its other meanings, also refers to the lingering flavors of a previous birth that, despite cultural gaps, finds expression" (Venkataraman 1994, 81). From "lingering flavors of a previous birth" it is a short step to archetypes.

religious fervor. Barba, Brook and Grotowski claim such an awareness, at least to an extent, and this makes their individuation process more sustainable. As long as users of intercultural material realize that they are first of all learning about *themselves*, the numinous quality is superfluous. Without acknowledgment of the role of the self in this process, the result may be disillusionment and the intercultural material may be devalued, perhaps discarded like an old toy. Another possibility, especially if the material has been endowed with a less numinous quality, is that assimilation to the self simply will not occur, and the Other will remain a projection unacknowledged, not necessarily feared but not treated as equal. This gives us orientalism and Kathy Foley's "Club Med experiences of 'the real thing.'"

Another possibility, and an increasingly common one, is that the Other may be allowed—even forced—to remain Other, frozen in its alterity, its symbolic media untouchable in quotation marks. This is the problem of postmodernity. "Hidden in the agenda of postmodernism," writes Daryl Chin, "is, I think, a rebuke, an insult, a devaluation. Instead of recognizing the status of 'the other' as an equal, there is the undermining of 'the other' by a declared indifference to distinction, while attempting to maintain the same balance of power" (Chin 1991, 85). On a personal psychological level, this parallels the nativist cultural reaction described by Carl Weber above: a fear of the Other's subsumptive power. Abetting this response is a cultural admonition against appropriation, an admonition which likely originates with "others" reacting to *their* fears of subsumption. And yet even Edward Said states in his book *Orientalism*, the virtual *fons et origo* of "othering" angst, that "[t]here is nothing especially controversial or reprehensible about such domestications of the exotic; they take place between all cultures, certainly, and between all men" (Said 1979, 60). The point, in his view, is simply to acknowledge its occurrence. Likewise, while Patrice Pavis has suggested that "every (especially linguistic) translation is an *appropriation* of the source culture by the target culture" (Pavis 1989, 37), he does not mean "that the Western director acts like an imperialist *expropriating* (and destroying) oriental traditions, transforming them into

Westernized by-products that no longer owe anything to their origins. In fact, the opposite is true: a *reelaboration* of gestural and choreographic materials within a new frame” (38).

Even cases which seem on the road to transcendence may produce undesirable results. The very awareness that the intercultural material is potentially a tool for learning about oneself can lead to an egocentric use of it, which is the opposite of what should occur. In effect, the ego will have hijacked the process. Some assert that this is what Peter Brook has done, especially with his *Mahabharata*. His conduct in gathering material in India was seen by many as remarkably insensitive (see Hiltbeitel 1992), and, while some such as Richard Schechner applauded the end result (Schechner *et al.* 1986, 54), others such as Gautam Dasgupta deplored it as “orientalism” (see Dasgupta 1991). In Dasgupta’s reaction, there is the question of presentation of the material: does it not claim to be Indian, and yet is it not very Western? As consumers of cultural products we should heed Edward Said’s warning that “any and all representations, because they *are* representations, are embedded first in the language and then in the culture, institutions, and political ambience of the representer” (Said 1979, 272). But the diversions of the transcendent function do not speak against its proper use, and we have already seen that self-understanding must precede real understanding of anyone else.

Conclusion.

Given the existence of the collective unconscious or a functional equivalent, it follows that, as Kathy Foley says, “the other is only a possibility of self that for cultural reasons is suppressed.” In transcending our cultures, then, we are, or at least can be, transcending the rift between our egos and the rest of our Selves. The more fully we complete the process, the more we become fully ourselves. Near the end of “Four Quartets,” T.S. Eliot wrote:

We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time. (Eliot 1974, 222)

To this we might add: it will be at that point that we will truly begin to understand all else that we have seen.

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