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Gebser's Integral Consciousness and Living in the Real World: Facilitating its Emergence Using *A Course In Miracles*

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This paper discusses certain parallels between the work of Jean Gebser, the European philosopher and student of consciousness, and *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM), a contemporary spiritual system. More specifically, it 1) establishes parallels between Gebser's conception of the ego, especially its basis in anger, and the ego according to ACIM, and 2) shows how a forgiveness exercise may lead to a time-free present, called in ACIM, "The Holy Instant."

In an impressive body of work, Jean Gebser (1985) claims to have identified and explicated nothing less than the foundational structures of consciousness as they have unfolded and become manifest in every artifact and idea of every human culture to which we have access. Upon reading the *Ever-present Origin*, one must immediately acknowledge that it is truly a remarkable achievement that is supported by an immense erudition. This statement finds support from the fact that the value of Gebser's conceptions appear to be receiving increasing recognition in recent times. To cite but a few for illustration, Colin Wilson stated; "[Gebser] seems to me possibly the most important thinker of the twentieth century" (Feuerstein, 1992, p. 9). This is no small compliment coming from one who has surveyed such a vast amount of the literature of the West. Also, Ken Wilber, considered by many to be the leading theoretician and synthesizer in the transpersonal psychology movement, has used Gebser's structures to provide a major framework for his spectrum model of consciousness as applied to cultural anthropology (see Wilber, 1981). Finally, Georg Feuerstein, in his book *Wholeness or Transcendence?: Ancient Lessons for the Emerging Global Civilization* (1992), has found Gebser's conceptions so fertile as to be able to use them to provide defining insights and a new perspective on the great spiritual legacy of the Orient.

Another contemporary work, impressive in its profundity and mysterious grandeur is *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM), a recent set of books designed for self-study that were channelled through an academic psychologist by a "silent voice." These works detail a contemporary system, Christian in statement but expressing the wisdom of the perennial philosophy. Since its arrival in 1975, ACIM has touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, many of whom seriously consider it as a new revelation for con-

temporary humanity, especially Western humanity. This system interweaves in a way unique to the spiritual literature of the world an intricate nondualistic metaphysics with an exquisitely insightful practical psychology. The interplay between ontology and the seemingly most pedestrian of everyday experiences appears to be the basis for its potentially far-reaching effects on its participants (e.g., see *A Course in Miracles, Text, Workbook for Students, Manual for Teachers*, 1976/1992; *Psychotherapy: Purpose, Process and Practice*, 1977; *The Song of Prayer*, 1977; Perry, 1987; Wapnick, 1983a, 1983b, 1989, 1990, 1991).

The purpose of the present paper is twofold. First, the authors were struck by certain parallels between Gebser's notions of the mental-rational and integral structures of consciousness with the treatment given in ACIM to the foundations and activities of the ego and the means for ego supercession. The second purpose of the paper is to suggest that the Course's procedure for transegoic experience, namely the process of forgiveness, provides the necessary ingredient or supplement to Gebser's endeavors, namely a practical procedure whereby integral consciousness may be made manifest. As will be discussed later, the lack of any concrete procedure to effect a concretion and intensification of consciousness seems to be an obvious weakness in Gebser's wonderful enterprise.

Both systems are Western in expression yet both are concerned with effecting or recognizing a universal experience. The Course is explicit, stating that a universal theology is impossible, yet a universal experience is not only possible but necessary. With Gebser, if we are reading him correctly, then it can be inferred, that we of the West, imbued with its values, myths, language structures and culture must address these as they now exist as part of the entire foundational organization of the mental-rational mode of contem-

porary Western consciousness. Georg Feurstein (1992) fully recognizes the magnificent spiritual legacy of the Orient but uses Gebser's insights to provide a caution for a too ready wholesale acceptance of Eastern approaches while neglecting to take account of the unconsciously absorbed dominant structures of the West. He quotes an early influence in his own life, Paul Brunton, the Englishmen who did so much to bring the riches of the East to the popular attention of the West. The following is from Brunton's *Notebooks* (The Orient, 1987, Vol 10, par 152, pp. 27-28):

Because I was once responsible for turning a number of eyes toward India in search of light, I now feel morally responsible for turning them back home-ward again. This is not to be misunderstood, for it is not the same as asking people to ignore India. No! I say that we all should study and digest the Oriental Wisdom. But I also say first, that we should not make it our sole and exclusive diet and second, we should cook, spice and serve it in a form suitable to our Occidental tastes

Before launching into the main content of the paper, however, we would like to add that, in drawing parallels between Gebser and ACIM, we will not in any way be exhaustive, nor do we claim by any means to do full and adequate justice to either system, both of which are extremely rich, intricate, and complex. Instead as we have already stated, we will merely focus on certain narrow yet core aspects of both, namely the ego and its supercession.

The Mental Structure: The Ego

In the *Ever-Present Origin* (1985), as the deficient form of the mythological structure of consciousness with its imaginal constructions of the world collapsed and mutated under the pressing emergence of origin, a new intensity of self-awareness began to become manifest. Among the importantly cited evidence for this emergence was, in the West, the *Iliad* of Homer and in the East, the *Bhagavad Gita*. This structure of consciousness is termed by Gebser the "mental"; a term which is a derivative of "menis", whose accusative form is "menin". To quote Gebser's dramatic pronouncement, "[menin] is the first word of the first verse of the first canto of the first major Western utterance... the opening word of the *Iliad*" (p. 74). This word meaning "wrath" and "courage" comes from the same stem as the word "menos" which means "resolve", "anger", "courage", and "power". To again quote Gebser, "what is fundamental here is already evident in the substance of these words: it is the first intimation of the emergence of directed or discursive thought" (p. 75).

Gebser thus claims to "have discovered the link between thinking and wrath" (p. 76). He explains that it

(i.e., mental consciousness) is "anger- not blind wrath, but 'thinking' wrath [which] gives thought and action its direction. It is ruthless and inconsiderate,... that is, it does not look backwards; it turns man away from his previous world of mythical enclosure and aims forward... It individualizes man from his previously valid world, emphasizing his singularity and making his ego possible" (p. 76). Assuming a correct understanding of Gebser here, we are left to conclude that anger plays a central role in the birth and maintenance of ego consciousness. As will be discussed shortly, Gebser's assertion that the ego is founded upon anger is in close alignment with the view of ego as advanced by ACIM.

When we look more closely at the mental-rational we realize its chief operation is a dominating process of conceptualization, as central to this mode as imaging is to the mythical. Without unduly extending the discussion beyond the scope of this paper, in brief, conceptualization can be seen as a fixation of time rendered so by the definition. Stated differently, it is the delimitation of the object of cognition by virtue of its embeddedness in all that it is not. For example, when we attempt to render "tree" as an object of conceptualization, we implicitly separate it from a bird, a cat or a hat. The very nature of this process, while powerful in its ability to clarify and make precise, simultaneously differentiates, separates, and isolates, entrapping experience in a duality that must of necessity, intrinsic to the act itself, sever the experience of wholeness which intimates origin. We are not saying that concepts are static; clearly they are not. However, while the notes of a concept may change with experience, the results are the same. The newly changed concept again separates, differentiates, isolates. It is the act itself that renders these results by necessity. And we must add that the fundamental concepts which emerge from this mode of operation are the "I" and the other, forever in isolation and separation. We need hardly add that the most clarifying expression of this is found in the works of Descartes, the dominant delimiting structural dualism of contemporary consciousness. The sense of "I" is not only a conceptual construction given spurious ontological status but for many in contemporary society is given a spatial location within the skull a few inches behind the eyes; it is temporally established in linear time by the past saturating and preempting the present and projecting a probable albeit problematic future.

How then are we to allow—for it is an allowing, origin being always/already—an openness which can intimate wholeness and an integral consciousness? And further, what will the nature of this integrality be like? These are questions which we must now pose, for "if a new mutation does not take effect—and only a completely new attitude will guarantee the continuation of the Earth and [human]kind,... then the consequences of the deficient, will soon assume

forms, will necessarily assume forms that will make the previous events of our time look like mere child's play" (Gebser, 1985, p. 96), for humanity "will be compelled to emphasize [their] ego[s] ever more strongly because of the isolating fixity, [humanity] faces the world in hostile confrontation and [is] faced with growing isolation. Isolation is visible everywhere, isolation of individuals, of entire nations and continents... and in everyday life" (Gebser, 1985, p. 94).

The Integral Structure of Consciousness

The integral is beyond but incorporates the mental as the mental is beyond but incorporates the mythical as this is beyond but incorporates the magical. As can be gleaned from not only Gebser but from most discussions of transpersonal or transegoic consciousness, this presents us with a major problem. As already stated, the integral is beyond the mental. However, most of us are operating out of mental-rational structures of consciousness (this paper itself, of course, is an example). Given this context, how can we discuss, using a symbolic communication system borne out of perspectivity, a mode of consciousness which is clearly beyond any perspectival structure? The answer to this question is that we cannot, at least not without reducing the integral to the level of the mental. It is extremely difficult to communicate a structure using a prior structure as the chief basis and instrument of expression. In fact, any attempt at describing the integral must, out of necessity, be a reduction of this higher structure to the level of consciousness out of which the describer is operating. Gebser was clearly cognizant of this fact as is evidenced in his discussion of aperipectivity; he is forced to suggest, intimate, hint at or approach the emerging structure from many, many points of view, while simultaneously preventing the entrapment of the integral within the realm of the mental-rational. This is an important point to note since what we are advancing in this paper is a means by which we can go beyond the simple description of transpersonal consciousness to a direct experience of it. In response to this, we will forego any discussion of the nature of integrality and its experiential texture, since we are bound to fail miserably in our representation of it. For the purposes of this paper, let it suffice to assert that, at least as far as Gebser and ACIM are concerned, the transcendence of the ego and its accompanying mental structures is a desirable goal since it has the positive effect of uprooting many of the deeply entrenched mental-rational bases of human suffering.

Gebser provides a powerful argument in support of his notion of integrality or integral consciousness and for the necessity of its emergence for the welfare of humanity. Gebser has emphasized that we must all somehow take responsibility and make a self-commitment to allow this structure to manifest itself in ourselves. But what does this

personal commitment or responsibility mean in the concrete living of daily life for the willing individual participant? Moreover, what concrete form or forms would such a responsibility take?

As we already mentioned, Gebser does not provide any explicit answers to these questions and, in fact, does not seem to have dedicated any meaningful thought to the problem of how to facilitate the transformation of human consciousness from the mental-rational to integrality. This seems to be a serious omission, for although integrality seems to be a movement of origin becoming more and more transparent, there remains on the individual level a responsibility to participate in this movement. Nevertheless, he does provide a few hints, though none of which present us with a concrete means of promoting the possible mutation. For example, he implies that integral consciousness is something like the satori experience of Zen. However, he makes no recommendations to practice a technique, such as openness meditation, which can engage the mental-rational to effect at its roots a sudden shift in consciousness. He also states that Meister Eckhart, the major Rhineland mystic of the 15th century, is an example of one who enjoyed integral consciousness long before the deficient mode of the mental appeared and became dominant. Yet he makes no suggestions as to opening forms of prayer or any other procedure which would facilitate "the concretions of time", one of the necessary preconditions for integral manifestation. In addition, he does not propose any way of occasioning the conditions necessary for the various structures that constitute the person to become transparent and conscious in any singular, concrete act of awareness.

A further example of Gebser's hints includes a fertile passage in the *Ever-Present Origin*, which implies several key characteristics, in addition to openness, intensification and self-transparency, as demonstrable in any individual manifesting integral consciousness. In this passage lies a clear description of a mind-set which not only reverses cause and effect as it is normally viewed by mental-rational consciousness, but fully recognizes the role of the victim and the victimizer in the composition of the ego, themes prominent in ACIM's view of the ego. To quote Gebser;

We have, then, an indicator as to whether a given person has attained this awareness or not: someone who has learned to avoid placing blame or fault on others, on the world itself, on circumstances, or "chance" in times of adversity, discension, conflict and misfortune and seeks first in himself the reason in its fullest extent- this person should be able to see through the world in its entirety and all its structures. Otherwise he will be coerced or violated by either his emotions or his will, and in turn will attempt to coerce or violate the world as an act of

compensation or revenge. The adage that “how we shout into the woods is how the echo will sound” is undoubtedly accurate- and the woods are the world.

Everything that happens to us, then, is only the answer and echo of what and how we ourselves are (Gebser’s emphasis). And the answer will be an integral answer only if we have approached the integral in ourselves. One path toward this goal is for us to try for once to take the blame (responsibility) ourselves in a given instance in its entirety; after a dispassionate examination we will see to what extent we are to blame, and the equalization and equilibrium appropriate to wholeness (to the extent that anything can be appropriate) will restore themselves. We will be surprised at the conclusion of this frequently difficult process to discover that our perceptions—and this includes self-perception of the world as well as ourselves—have become a few degrees more transparent. (Gebser, 1985, p. 141)

Gebser can also be found in many other instances to supply illumination, though minimal, on the concrete nature of integrality. For example;

The integrator, then is compelled to have not only concretized the appearances, be they material or mental, but also to have been able to concretize his own structure. This means that the various structures that constitute him must have become transparent and conscious to him... There are two important consequences that indirectly result from these observations. One is that consciousness is not identical with intelligence or rational acuity. The other is, that the completion of integration is never an expansion of consciousness as spoken of today particularly by psychoanalysis and certain “spiritual” societies of a quasi-occult kind. The expansion of consciousness is merely a spatially conceived quantification of consciousness and consequently an illusion. Rather, we are dealing here throughout with an intensification of consciousness; not because of any qualitative character which might be ascribed to it, but because it is by nature “outside” of any purely qualitative valuation or quantitative devaluation (pp. 99-100)

In an earlier part of this century, another sensitive observer of contemporary times, the Irish poet Yeats, wrote, “the best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity...Surely some revelation is at hand. Surely the Second Coming is at hand” (Yeats, 1921). It appears that Gebser is not alone in his profound concerns over the fate of humankind. However, as our discussion has suggested,

Gebser clearly indicates the necessity for the emergence but does not provide the means that could serve as the pragmatic catalyst to promote the manifestation of integral consciousness. Could there be a new revelation designed for the end-times which Gebser indicates and which we now witness with increasing clarity? Many believe so.

A Course in Miracles

Perhaps the best way to introduce ACIM is to let the Course speak for itself. The following is an extended quote from the preface of the main ACIM text:

A Course in Miracles began with the sudden decision of two people to join in a common goal. Their names were Helen Schucman and William Thetford, Professors of Medical Psychology at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City. They were anything but spiritual. Their relationship with each other was difficult and often strained, and they were concerned with personal and professional acceptance and status. In general, they had considerable investment in values of the world. Their lives were hardly in accord with anything that the Course advocates. Helen, the one who received the material, describes herself: “Psychologist, educator, conservative in theory and atheistic in belief, I was working in a prestigious and highly academic setting. And then something happened that triggered a chain of events I could never have predicted... The head of my department (Thetford)... unexpectedly announced that he was tired of the angry and aggressive feelings our attitudes reflected, and concluded that, “there must be another way.” As if on cue I agreed to help him find it. Apparently this Course is the other way.

To continue Helen’s first-person account:

Three startling months preceded the actual writing, during which time Bill suggested that I write down the highly symbolic dreams and descriptions of the strange images that were coming to me. Although I had grown more accustomed to the unexpected by that time, I was still very surprised when I wrote, “This is A Course in Miracles...” That was my introduction to the Voice. It made no sound, but seemed to be giving me a kind of rapid, inner dictation which I took down in a shorthand notebook. The writing was never automatic. It could be interrupted at any time and later picked up again. It made me very uncomfortable, but it never seriously occurred to me to stop. It seemed to be a special assignment I had somehow, somewhere agreed to complete. It represented a truly collaborative venture

between Bill and myself, and much of its significance, I am sure, lies in that. I would take down what the Voice “said” and read it to him the next day, and he typed it from my dictation. I expect he had his special assignment, too. Without his encouragement and support I would never have been able to fulfil mine. The whole process took about seven years [from 1965 to 1972]. The [622 page] text came first, then the [478 page] workbook for students and finally the [88 page] manual for teachers. Only a few minor changes have been made. Chapter titles and subheadings have been inserted in the Text, and some of the more personal references that occurred at the beginning have been omitted. Otherwise the material is substantially unchanged.” (1976/1992; pp. I-II)

As you may have gathered from this quote and earlier references to ACIM, the Course is a contemporary spiritual system which utilizes a hands-on instructional model. It makes no claim to finality stating it is a beginning, and not an end. Nor does it make any claim to exclusiveness, asserting that it is only one of many thousands of systems that are part of the universal curriculum. Although unambiguously Christian in statement, it is not a theology. “A universal theology is impossible but a universal experience is not only possible but necessary” (Manual, 1992, pp. 77). Its statement is Christian because Christianity is the dominant myth of the West. The voice never identified itself but, upon reading the ACIM, the Voice clearly belongs to Jesus. Many now believe this may be the “revelation at hand” which Yeats predicted.

The basic premise of ACIM is that reality is spirit. The system is founded upon a nondualistic metaphysics which views the physical universe, including the body, as an illusory fabrication of consciousness, or, more exactly, a construction of an aspect of consciousness based on scarcity, deprivation and separateness called ego. The primary aim of ACIM is in rendering transparent our true origin, a seeing through the condition the ego has established so that an awakening from a “nightmare” to a “happy dream”, or the real world, is occasioned. From this happy dream, a full awakening to unity in God or Spirit may be realized but this is relatively rare, and efforts should be consolidated on relating, especially to other people, to a possible condition of consciousness which goes beyond the ego’s attempts at isolation, threat and attack, to one which, through a decision to see the other person or situation in “another way” and thus “to choose once again”.

To elaborate on the nature of the mental-ego, ACIM asserts that the ego is a conceptual/imaginal construction of consciousness, a fictitious belief formation, which arose

from and maintains the illusion that the person is separate from the world and that he/she is the author of oneself. From the original condition of spiritual oneness to one of fragmentation as manifested in the birth of the ego, there arises simultaneously with the separation, fear and guilt, or more precisely, a prototypical fear of punishment based on the ego’s guilt in effecting the illusory separation. In reality, however, the separation never occurred, so the guilt of the ego is unfounded. Yet, in its hold on to its own false autonomy, the ego uses guilt to maintain its own self-constitution. Distress through guilt and its many forms is the chief means the ego has in confirming its illusory existence.

Furthermore, the ego is characterized as isolating and isolated, threatened by a hostile world in which it is both victim and victimizer, and chooses to maintain itself through “guilt” (i.e., a blanket term for any experience individuals have of themselves of self-hate, feelings of inferiority, unworthiness, shame, inadequacy, etc.). Although we find these negative conditions aversive, at a deeper level of the ego, it is strongly attracted to them to maintain its fictitious identity. The reason for this is that the very guilt that seems so aversive is the mortar that holds the structure of the ego intact. Without the guilt there would be peace, and the ego would dissolve into the nothingness from which it arose. This does not mean that what is popularly called ego functions would no longer operate, but they would no longer be in the service of the structure of isolation; instead in the service of joining. However, the negative conditions mentioned above, although secretly attractive to the ego, are aversively experienced. Therefore, the chief psychological operations the ego employs are the common defense mechanisms of denial and projection. In utilizing these “protective” techniques, the ego places its own guilt onto the environment, sees itself as a victim of the environment and now feels justified in victimizing the environment in turn. Thus, the ego attacks (murderous rage or mild annoyance are equivalent here, since they are both ego operations of separation).

What is necessary to go beyond the ego structure is to become transparent to it in an act radically open and transparent to all available structures and denying none so as to intensify the present moment and effect what the Course calls the “Holy Instant”. This is accomplished by becoming conscious of the fact that, as Gebser also called attention to, we are the author of what happens to us in our daily lives, that the world is the “echo” of our own voice. This reversal of cause and effect is virtually identical, it seems to us, to what Gebser described as a person with integral consciousness.

To change the metaphor, what we experience in daily life is a mirror of the condition of our own minds. We have choice, and can choose in every instant to find ourselves as guilty or innocent and to project either choice onto our

bodies, personalities, and/or the world. It is this awareness of our own active role in establishing agency in our life experiences that makes possible a state of consciousness very similar to the integral state of Gebser.

What is needed is a “little willingness” to allow a shift in consciousness from the ego state to one that transcends it. This is the process of forgiveness, the Course’s central activity in daily life, as projecting guilt is the central activity of the ego. Forgiveness is the primary means provided by ACIM to undo the fictitious structure of the mind and confront the illusion of time.

The usual way of viewing forgiveness is to see it as an act that overlooks some fault or misdeed of another person, so that a prior condition of relationship is resumed. This usually implies that the other person committed some sin that the forgiver acknowledges but virtuously dismisses, instead of punishing in some manner. It is a “gracious lordiness” which disguises arrogance. Also, forgiveness as commonly exercised can become a bargain in which the aggrieved will overlook the sins of the offenders if the offenders accommodate to the needs of the offended; in effect, establishing a form of slavery. Finally, forgiveness can take the form of the forgiver recognizing the guilt they both share equally, thus making both “sinful” and deserving punishment (Song of Prayer, 1977).

ACIM views forgiveness in a very different manner. What someone sees in another that would normally generate some experience of separation (e.g., anger, condemning judgement), which could occasion forgiveness in the conventional senses as discussed above to maintain the separation, is, according to ACIM, my own self-hate or guilt, disowned through denial and projection, and then placed outside. The disowned can now be viewed as an available choice for either attack or forgiveness in the present, as now is the only time that is real. In either event, it is my own condition that I am viewing, as if in a mirror, and my anger or my judgement is really an indictment of myself. Therefore, forgiveness when it is effected through ACIM is really self-forgiveness; an undoing of the guilt upon which forms the basis of my entire ego. In seeing past the “faults” of others, I render them guiltless because I have undone them in myself. Stating this in a slightly different way, when I lift my denial and reown my projection and then choose to forgive myself as an available choice in the moment, what I witness in the other is simply behavior which I observe, which informs me but which arouses no separating anger or judgement since through self-forgiveness I am “sinless” of what I see. It is only through my own guilt that I can see another as guilty. Others can be seen as behaving in error that may require correction but never in “sinning” that demands an isolating punishment. I can always choose to see past the error to an original condition of oneness. I can always

choose to join in an act that dissolves separateness. It is through the practice of this undoing and my decision to release the knot of the ego that my consciousness can intimate its true condition of both myself and the other, namely the always/already unity. Thus, ACIM in general, and the notion of forgiveness in particular, can be understood as espousing a yoga of interpersonal relations).

The Course presents a three step procedure which has been also been developed into an exercise by Holland, MacDonald, and McCabe (2005) that can be used to facilitate forgiveness and to promote the emergence of integrality. To summarize the procedure, it begins with the necessary condition that the ego recognizes that its major approach to maintaining itself is through anger.

The first step is an attempt to recognize that the occasion for anger I see (and this may be occasioned by other people, myself, the world, fate, God, and the like) is really an obscure self-indictment that I have made based on my own lack of self-acceptance or guilt. Recall that guilt, the mortar of the ego, underlies anger. I must now try to become transparent to what I am indeed doing by lifting the denial and reowning this projection. (In a brilliantly perceptive passage in Gebser is the story of St. John and the partridge—which anticipates the Course in shocking precision, “In this scene, where he rebukes a priest for being annoyed by a partridge running ahead of him, St. John demonstrates his sovereign knowledge of the soul; he says to the priest; ‘The partridge, you know, is your own soul’” p. 91).

The next step is recognition of an availability of choice to forgive what I see in another is my “own soul” and thus jointly forgive the other and myself. All that is required here is a “little willingness” to release the ego structuration of the situation.

The third step requires no activity at all. It simply consists of letting oneself enter a still point of experience. It is here in the “Holy Instant”, “the pure present, the quintessence of time” (Gebser, 1985, pp. 25), when the intensification of consciousness and “that which is both origin and present” (Gebser, p. 281) is allowed to manifest. It is here that the ego, the fictitious belief in our own separation and autonomy, dissolves into the nothingness from which it arose and what supervenes, in the terms of the Course, the activity of the Holy Spirit. Very simple, very powerful, often very difficult.

Carl Jung, father of Analytical psychology and considered by many to be one of the founders of transpersonal psychology has stated;

[A] mood of universal destruction and renewal... has set its mark on our age. This mood makes itself felt everywhere, politically, socially, and philosophically. We are living in what the Greeks called the “*kairos*”—the right moment—for a “*metamorphosis*

of the gods,” of the fundamental principles and symbols. This peculiarity of our time, which is certainly not of our conscious choosing, is the expression of the unconscious man within us who is changing. Coming generations will have to take account of this momentous transformation if humanity is not to destroy itself through the might of its own technology and science... So much is at stake and so much depends on the psychological constitution of modern man... Does the individual know that he is the makeweight that tips the scales? (1970, pars. 585-586)

Awareness of the increasing global human crisis has forced us, as individuals as well as a society, to reevaluate our values, assumptions and priorities, and begin to take responsibility, in whatever way possible, to initiate the necessary changes to maintain the simple survival of the species. The Course says we must question every value we hold [author's emphasis]. Gebser reveals his genius not only in the development of his structures of consciousness, but also through his insightful perception of the nature of the mental, and especially, its deficient form, and his recognition of the need for human consciousness from the level of the individual to develop beyond "wrathful thought" to a form which is compatible with the continued evolution and growth of humanity. Nonetheless, Gebser, while important and definitive in terms of theory, only points to the possible. He only suggests the real and simply intimates the concrete form it may take. The transformation that Jung is referring to concerns a radical shift in how we actually live in the real world. It concerns how we experience ourselves and our reality in our daily lives. Gebser, as we have already stated, does not address this practical level of concern. As Gebser acknowledged and Jung stated, each individual is responsible for this transformation. As this paper suggests, ACIM provides each of us a concrete means of transforming our consciousness and our lives in a way that can occasion a direct influence on our day-to-day functioning, or hopefully minute-by-minute functioning.

We would like to end this paper with a quote from the brilliant work of Richard Tarnas, in his critically acclaimed book entitled *The Passion of the Western Mind* (1991, p. 413):

Our moment in history is indeed a pregnant one. As a civilization and as a species we have come to a moment of truth, with the future of the human spirit, and the future of the planet, hanging in the balance. If ever boldness, depth, and clarity of vision were called for, from many, it is now. Yet perhaps it is this very necessity that could summon forth from us the courage and imagination we now require.

Author Note

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