To resume, the word ‘πρωτόθρονος’ played a significant and a diverse role throughout many centuries: it was associated with the pagan deities Artemis and Hera, later with the Apostles Peter and Paul. It acquired the meaning of Chief Bishop, also of bishop with seniority to ordain other bishops, and it acted as a cryptic substitution for the term ‘St. Paul’—in one instance at least. Finally, ‘πρωτόθρονος’, though obsolete, still to this day lays claim to its role of significance: it appears in the Liturgy of the Greek Orthodox Church, every 29th June, in honour and commemoration of Saints Peter and Paul: οἱ τῶν ἀποστόλων πρωτόθρονοι.\(^{23}\)

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23. I would like to thank Professor B. Hendrickx (R.A.U., Johannesburg) for his critical reading of the draft, and Mr. N. Maroudas for his assistance in acquiring relevant information for me.

**TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY: ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF ANTIQUITY**

This report aims to set out, as briefly as possible, those findings in the field of transpersonal psychology which appear to have important implications for the study of Graeco-Roman antiquity. Its basic contention is that the dominant psychological conventional wisdom, involving psychoanalysis, learning theory and operant conditioning, does not provide adequate models—frameworks of reference for explanation of transcendental phenomena described by the writers of antiquity. For these phenomena, transpersonal psychology and, in particular, work on bioelectronics, offers major new interpretative insights. The following account will indicate what transpersonal psychology is, and should show something of its promise for those who study antiquity.\(^1\) Work in five areas of bioelectronics will be reviewed.

First, the right-brain hemisphere and the left-brain hemisphere have been shown to function differently.\(^2\) The left brain (which controls the right side of the body) functions in a logical, analytical way; it is rational, sequential and linear; it controls virtually all language, certainly all abstract, propositional languaging. In our culture, if an adult has a stroke which affects the left brain, s/he will likely never talk properly again. The right brain (controlling the left

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side of the body) functions by synthesizing; it assembles bits of data into patterns, by flashes of insight; it thinks appositionally; it also regulates spatial awareness, musical ability, rhythmic movement and so on.

Now it appears that there are right- and left-brain scripts. For example, the Japanese have two scripts, one a syllabary (involving signs with phonetic values), the other pictographic. If you can read both, you will continue to be able to read the pictographic script after a stroke to your left brain. This is presumably because recognizing pictograms involves right-brain 'thinking': seeing in wholes, by associational leaps and so on.

It further appears that there are right- and left-brain languages. Hopi appears to be a right-brain language: it has much to do with 'showing', much less (than a left-brain language such as English) to do with abstract verbalizations, reification, dogma, ideologies, etc. Left-brain languages typically involve huge lexica with many abstract and analytical terms, grammar and syntax with elaborate subordination, strict sequential arrangement, formal propositional modes of expression, etc. A left-brain language can, however, be reorganized so that it becomes a right-brain language, via a process termed 'subcortical linguistics'. To do this, you:

—use basic and poetic (rather than abstract, analytic) diction;
—employ striking images, referring to natural phenomena;
—use apposition in structuring your sentences, with much repetition, cyclical expression and rhythm;
—employ attention-getting devices like onomatopoeia, anaphora and balance;
—use themes that are familiar to anyone in your culture.

Readers will recognize, in the above, the languaging processes of Homeric epic—or of the African drum 'languages' for that matter. Something of the significance of the discovery of the alphabet by the Greeks—a unique breakthrough, incidentally; all alphabetic scripts stem from this, the sole 'invention' of the alphabet—should be evident. The alphabet enormously facilitates one-thing-at-a-time, sequential, analytical thinking (logic and philosophy now first appear). The alphabet also causes its users to think in linear terms, to break words up into their component units (like the breaking up of masses of precious metal into coins), and to categorize and classify things (grammar and syntax now first become possible). For the first time in human history (the concept 'history' being yet another first for the Greeks), people could write anything they could say, easily coin new words, and invent abstract terms.

5. For the term (and a book written in 'subcortical' language) see R. Masters & J. Houston, Mind Games: The Guide to Inner Space, Delta, 1972, 240; the concept is massively developed in P. Watzlawick, The Language of Change (Basic Books, 1978, chapters 2, 6 and 7).
As more people can learn an alphabet, because of its simplicity, and use it for more things—everyday trading, for example—there's much more writing. So lexica grow, and words acquire layers of meaning. 

Language itself changes: left-brain languages appear. So does the first intimation of the left-brain: right-brain split—the Apollonian: Dionysian antithesis—along with the cultural valuation of the right hand, and devaluation of the left.

Second, brain wave states appear markedly to affect cognition. The 4 major states are delta (1 to 4 cycles a second), theta (4+ to 8), alpha (8+ to 13) and beta (13+ to 26). The 'reality' you perceive depends on the brain wave state you are (predominantly) in. In our culture, the only brainwave state most people consciously control is beta, the fast one that occurs when one is thinking hard or calculating. In other cultures, yogins and zen monks—as the electroencephalograph shows—can control all of these states, attaining some most unusual body conditions (to judge by heart beat and breathing rate, etc.)

Rigorous training in analysis and other left-brain activities makes it very difficult indeed to attain the various trance states, such as high amplitude alpha throughout the entire roof brain. The peoples of our culture would have been regarded as psychic cripples in certain other cultures. But it has been possible, by use of psychotropic drugs (‘instant Zen’), to put members of our culture into some very much altered states of consciousness. One surprise result was the discovery of a kind of subconscious substratum of myth archetypes, a form of collective unconscious: persons with no conscious knowledge of Indian and Greek myths began ‘hallucinating’ them.

The phenomenon of 'speaking in tongues' would appear to be similar: glossolalia does not involve speaking in exotic languages, but rather speech cast in a form remarkably similar to the Homeric metre (it is the rhythmical cadence

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7. On the lexical structure of tribal, pre-script languages see M. Swadesh, The Origin and Diversification of Language, Aldine Atherton, 1971, 110–113; cf. 44-48 and 74-76. Modern world languages have swollen to their gargantuan, one-million-word-lexica size as result of the high speed press and electronic media coming atop the alphabet and the printing press, both of which vastly increased lexical size. But Homeric Greek, though a descendant of Mycenaean—a pictographic script brings minimal increase to the lexicon because of the difficulty of establishing the meanings of written symbols—has a tiny lexicon compared with Hellenistic Greek, vehicular language of empire (something like 20 000 as compared to 100 000 word lexica are involved). On how the means of communication influence the languaging processes in tribal, scribal and alphabetised societies, see T. F. Carney and B. Zajak, From Fable to Cable, Natural Resource Institute, University of Manitoba, 1975, chapters 1 to 3.


which gives bystanders the impression that an alien language is being spoken.\textsuperscript{11}

Altered states of consciousness appear to result in the appearance of behaviour, or of ways of viewing reality, that have occurred earlier, in markedly different times and cultures. A new dimension of the working of the human mind is thus beginning to be mapped.

Third, powerful new medical rescuscitation techniques have begun to bring large numbers of people ‘back from the dead’. Their accounts of their experiences—and these people come from different cultures and different classes—contain remarkable similarities: the hearing of a loud buzzing/ringing noise; travel through a dark narrow place (the valley of the shadow of death); looking down upon one’s body; meeting with dead kin/friends; the approach of a luminous entity, etc.\textsuperscript{12} Resemblances to the age-old wisdom of many cultures of antiquity can be made out.

Fourth, reincarnation experiences are being increasingly reported. The drug-induced altered states of consciousness described above quite frequently produce such experiences. Increasingly, psychotherapists are regressing patients, under hypnosis, back to previous lives to deal with neuroses affecting their present lives. Again, there’s a weird uniformity in the data such psychotherapists are turning up. Most of the persons so regressed (68%) report they were living the hard, inglorious life of a commoner (statistically, of the number regressed, the proportion reporting such origins tallies with the high proportions of commoners in the epochs involved). People describe common, everyday artifacts with an amazing accuracy. And some very unlikely-seeming descriptions have proved, on investigation, to have been correct.\textsuperscript{13}

It is now possible to engineer ‘out of body’ travel experiences: the electronic technology has been developed.\textsuperscript{14} A strange array of experiences is being reported, some involving detailed descriptions of distant persons or places with an accuracy that is difficult to explain. The phenomena of shamanism are coming to be looked at in a new light as result.

Fifthly and lastly, the human aura appears to have been rediscovered. It is now possible, by a process known as Kirlian photography, to photograph the electrical force-field around the human body (usually the hand is photographed to do this). Data banks of such photographs exist. The significance of the


\textsuperscript{14} The major book on the subject is probably that by R. A. Monroe, \textit{Journeys out of the Body}, Doubleday ed., 1977; the new electronic technique has been pioneered by his Monroe Institute of Applied Sciences (P.O. Box 57, Afton, Virginia 22920, U.S.A.). For an appraisal of what is scientifically known as OOBEs (out of body experiences), see Tart, \textit{PSI}, chapter 9.
patterns which are thus revealed is gradually emerging. Psychiatrists can spot incipient schizophrenia this way, or a forthcoming nervous breakdown, and so on.15

One particularly spectacular experiment involved measuring the minute electrical discharges emanating from the human body while it was being 'Rolfed' (subjected to very heavy massage, to realign long-standing postural deficiencies, etc.) A psychic with the ability to 'see' auras was simultaneously describing what she saw. In case after case there was an amazing congruence between the colours and configurations she described and the discharge patterns recorded by the instrument (an electromyograph).16

Apparently, a psychic healer can see faults in the electrical force field around a sick person's body: a gap, maybe, or an unusual discharge—the sort of thing a Kirlian photograph shows. Such healers seem able to remedy these aberrations by their 'laying on of hands'. In one case an electroencephalograph has shown how a healer's (very distinctive) brainwave pattern takes over the sick person's brainwaves and establishes a pattern similar to the healer's therein.17 With these kinds of data coming from modern research, it becomes increasingly more difficult simply to dismiss accounts of such healers in the literatures of antiquity.

We are by now at a stage where a companion volume to Dodds' The Greeks and the Irrational could helpfully be written. Transpersonal psychology currently lacks historical depth. This lack could in large measure be remedied by reviewing the evidence afforded by Graeco-Roman antiquity in regard to the above reported findings and doings of the transpersonal psychologists. Such a

15. R. L. Steiner, Psychic Self-Healing for Psychological Problems. Prentice-Hall, 1977. e.g. Part Two. Steiner's work is with black and white Kirlian photography only. The Soviets, with more advanced colour (and TV) technology, can do even more discriminating analyses: Brain/Mind Bulletin 3(10), 1978, 1.

16. First reported in Brain/Mind Bulletin 3(9), 1978, 1-2; for a fuller account see A. Nietzke, 'Portrait of an Aura Reader', in Human Behavior 8(2), 1979, 28-35.

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