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SACRED STAR SONGS OF CONSCIOUSNESS:

Cultural Contexts of Consciousness as Symbolic Transmission

Thesis for the award of Master of Arts,

in

Social Anthropology

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School of People, Environment and Planning

New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

Consciousness is a holistic existential phenomenon. It infuses human culture across personal, social, environmental, and universal domains. Recent interdisciplinary attempts to define consciousness reveal disciplinary divergence and challenge consensual understanding. Anthropological studies attempt to provide deeper cultural insights, but experience issues as contemporary science often dismisses socio-cultural theories as subjective and non-empirical. In neuroscience, the focus on mind, body and brain as internal, biological processes disregards Jungian and other theories on consciousness as external, non-local phenomena, that engage with metaphysics.

This research explores consciousness within cultural contexts, investigating its topography, expression and transmission. I observe its phenomenal influence on human experiences and challenge neuroscience's viewpoint of exclusive internal derivation. I propose a phenomenology of cross-cultural symbolic communication, that is archetypal and metaphoric in nature. I realign Jung's concept of the Great Mother Archetype, self and Joseph Campbell's 'Hero's Journey' to demonstrate a cosmic fundamental source with forces that arise in humanity in processes of alternative consciousness. From review of theoretical literature and visual ethnographies, I apply symbolic anthropology and examine aspects of consciousness, human perceptions and their integral relationships with meaning-making.

My research involves cultural astronomy and identifies the role of neurodiversity in the transmission of consciousness from archaic hominins into contemporary society. I find consistency in the monomyth when applied within a panpsychist model of astronomically bound and interconnected forms. The celestial framework denotes a fundamental essence of forces and operating aspects, responsible for the symbolic messages that interact and constitutively influence humanity. This concept is a deviation from Plato's idea of mathematical forms and Jung's idea of collective consciousness and unconscious as an immaterial and mental repository of symbols.

From research findings, I propose that the intentional and unconscious transmission of primordial symbolism invokes human internal processes, external actions and behaviours. The operations of these cosmic forces and our responsive, human interaction drive the desire for cultural meaning making and explanations of existence in the formation of ritualistic relationships with 'the other'.

I conclude with the reflection of transformation from researching the anthropology of consciousness and describe a forming hypothesis and a conceptual framework for future studies.

- Keywords ["interpretive", "great mother", "phenomena", "archeoastronomy", "symbolism", "consciousness", "cosmology", "affect theory", "anthropology of consciousness", "existentialism", "waters of life"]

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Glossary of Terms

BP	Before Present
BCE	Before Current Era
KA	Thousand Years Ago
Local	Pertaining to the individual.
Non local	External to the individual, usually in social contexts.
The Other	Pertaining to the cultural domain of Nature, Environment, Cosmos, Spiritual, Phenomenal Forces and anthropological contexts of cultural constructs that the individual connects with.
Internal (domain)	Interior realm, psyche, conscious and physiological 'being' of the individual life force.
External (domain)	External realm or reality the individual connects to from the mind and potentially shares with other individuals within context of 'life'.
Qualia	The mind's subjective, conscious experiences. Sometimes equated with phenomena experienced by humans.

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Finally, I present a personal acknowledgement and gratitude to all the Indigenous people and Traditional wisdom keepers who have shared their valuable insights for a more harmonious, sustainable world.

Personal Statement

When deciding on this research topic, I directed my extensive professional computer science and management career in strategic change, communications, and culture. Early in the millennium, I emigrated from Australia to the United Kingdom to manage cultural change for an international corporation. This role included my first officially recognised international expertise as a Design Anthropologist. I spent my earlier career driving transformation in education, multi-cultural governance, and 'user' or 'customer-centred' design. I gained extensive social development skills working amongst tribal cultures. With global society opening to a new era of internet and web commerce, my unique technical skills and multi-cultural experience proved a rare match in the global search for strategic design. I managed the world's first 'real-time' Instant Messenger and global e-commerce platform. Concurrently, I initiated the first customer-centred company

organisation change and cultural assimilation. My consultancy successfully pioneered customer and cultural contexts for organisation and technology design.

My accelerating career moved further into strategic management, corporate and good governance, human rights, and sustainability. However, I never deviated from my original passion for multicultural immersion, alternative learning, and sacred healing traditions. I engaged my personal development with additional vocational activities. These included Arts, Music, Design, and literary publishing. Early in the nineties, I studied natural health, cognitive science, and psychotherapies. I established a community centre that focused on cultural exchange and holistic personal development. I commenced my first professional exploration into metaphysics and the governance 'realm' of the 'Sacred Feminine'. I delivered learning, workshops, seminars, and keynote speaking on personal transformation and featured on international television for my novel success.

In 1997, a 'call' resounded from world Indigenous leaders, elders, and people. This challenge of 'Mother Earth' sustainability incited my mission of global charity work. In 2002, I committed to focus on Indigenous and 'Sacred Feminine' alternative knowledge systems. I travelled from London to South Africa by invitation of a global delegation. Spiritual Leader of Lakota Dakota Native American Nations. Chief Arvol Lookinghorse, PHD, founded a global movement 'World Peace and Prayer Day' with holy leaders, elders, and sustainability influencers. His mission leads change toward preserving Mother Earth. This multi-denominational charity with over eight million followers worldwide promotes the traditional wisdom sharing of Indigenous and Religious leaders. As water caretaker, Sacred Feminine spiritual emissary, and UK-based international coordinator, I strategized the delegation's mission for peace, sustainability and cultural knowledge preservation and exchange.

In 2008, Australian and subsequently New Zealand Indigenous tribes joined and hosted the core delegation of World Peace and Prayer Day. I concentrated on charity work in Southeast Asia until a serious health collapse ended my corporate consulting commitments. I undertook academic studies while recovering from an ongoing medical disability. I initially studied four master's degrees in arts, Writing, Management and Sustainability, Law, and International Relations with a specialisation in International Law and Human Rights. During remission, I travelled to India for two research projects but collapsed in Indonesia on my return journey. While recovering in Asia, I continued academic work. United Nations Foundation and ASEAN representatives asked me to design a transformation strategy for underdeveloped countries undertaking economic transition. My resulting thought leadership in strategic sustainable development propelled my work into multicultural relationships.

Later returning to New Zealand, I consolidated my competencies and professional background with a recent degree major and a Master of Social Anthropology. I perceive the knowledge deficit I identify will benefit from awareness and application of the Sacred Feminine values and cultural consciousness. Three years ago, I started related anthropological research surrounding this topic.

This autobiographical statement explains my trajectory towards qualifying as an anthropologist. I am a professional author, deeply committed to the Sacred Feminine, and cultural astronomy aspects of my research. This thesis underpins my life passion for exploring cultures, cosmology, metaphysics, and creative expression. These desires complement my vocational aspirations to champion Nature and peaceful harmony. I ultimately aim to contribute to our knowledge of origins and transcending codes of existence in culture and consciousness.

part one

THE WAY

”

The Research Design

'In the visions of Zosimos, too, the philosopher is only a bystander, watching. There too the figure of the guide burns himself, to show the alchemist the way. The soul guide appears in the dream and shows him: this will have to happen to bring about what you are looking for.'

—Carl Jung, *Children's Dreams seminar*, page 197.

Document Map Part One

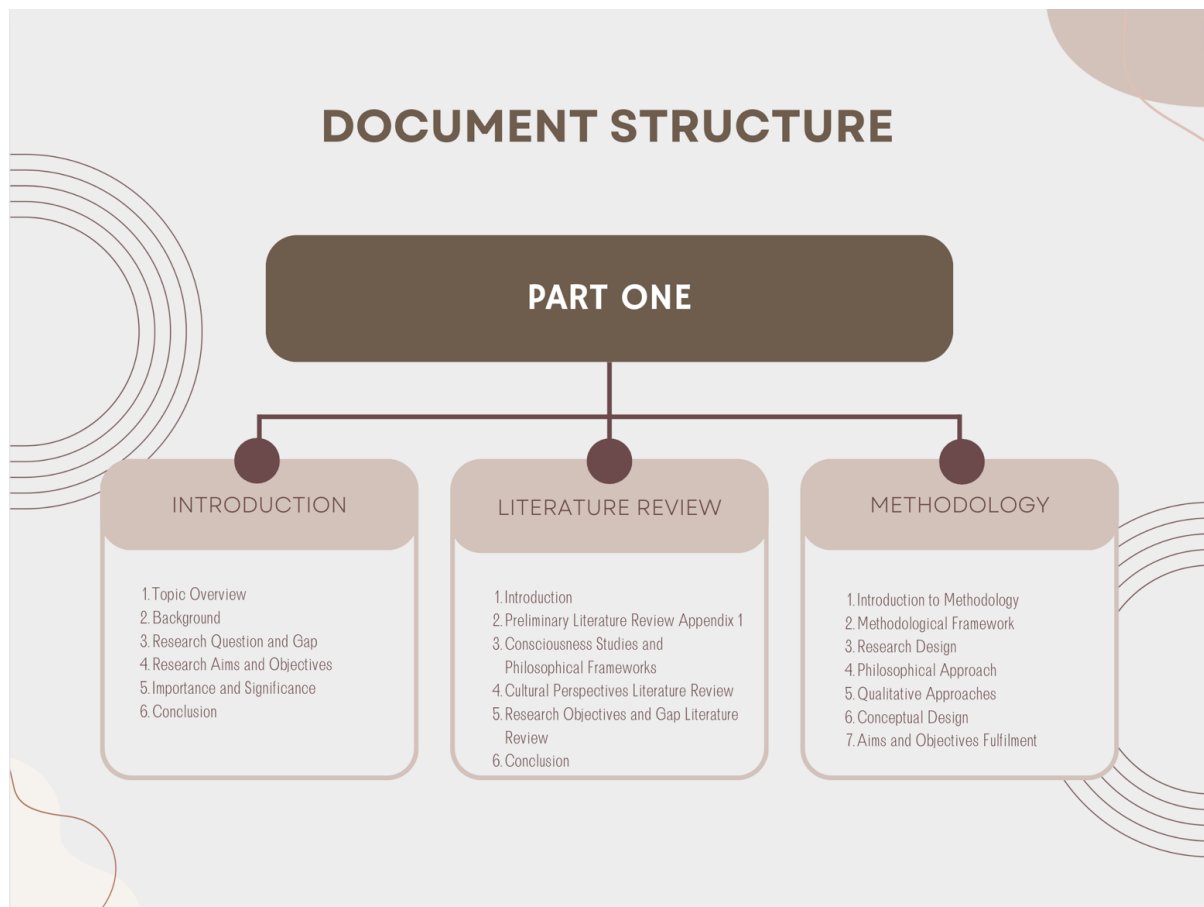


Figure 1: Overview map of thesis document chapters and sub-topics, part one.

chapter one

INTRODUCTION

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

About

This chapter delivers an overview of the research project. In this section, I introduce the field of consciousness, the specific research topic and an initial statement of the research aims and objectives.

In section two I provide a background of the research area and its contemporary establishment. I review the societal debate on consciousness and give anthropological contexts to reveal current trends in this area.

Section three identifies the research question and focus. I introduce key theoretical concepts and terminology. I describe the current state of established research, including issues and a gap found while reviewing the literature. I rationalise why addressing this gap is worthwhile for social anthropology and general society.

Section four specifies the research aims and objectives and discusses the specific thesis questions. I clarify the scope and outline discussion points.

In section five I describe the study's social, academic, and societal importance, advising the significance of contributing to the field of knowledge.

Section six provides a conclusion to the chapter. I outline the potential research limitations and identify shortcomings experienced during design, conduct, and any steps toward mitigation.

Topic Overview

The anthropology of consciousness involves the study of consciousness phenomena in cultures around the world. This topic is perceived as fundamental to life and cosmic existence by researchers who seek to advance societal comprehension of its features and issues. Scientific and academic methodologies often make experiential, experimental, conceptual, and cross-cultural comparative approaches to address broad and complex inquiries. Positioning research within the anthropology paradigm further supports historical and alternative ways of knowing. The sub-discipline respects cultural traditions, archaic roots, and consciousness expression.

Anthropology fosters interdisciplinary dialogue and inclusivity. It proposes to add insights and questions about the human condition, life and existence. However, historical conjecture continues the debate about whether the source of consciousness is an internal human process or the influence of external phenomena represented in culture, religion and physics. A third perspective integrates both views, fuelling further debates over the source and constitutive driver. This ongoing disagreement creates a knowledge gap when researchers fail to find mutual ground to explain consciousness. The imposed limitations obstruct our engagement in holistic studies that seek the knowledge society needs to resolve big issues such as climate change and artificial intelligence.

This study identifies and examines consciousness under empirical and theoretical frameworks that expose its presence in culture. The research adopts whole systems perspectives, examining consciousness as symbolism. I explore its nature, purpose, exchange and transformation in local and non-local aspects, cognition, and cross-cultural transmission.

Background to the Study

“Adhesion to orthodoxy is always more profitable than dissent, but the future belongs to dissenters.”

—J. Swanton, *Anthropology of Consciousness* 1952²

Defining Consciousness

As a substantially debated topic, studies on consciousness require agreement in definition. I am incited to write this paper, as the obscurity of meaning persists. Several factors contribute to this issue. Principally, consciousness is considered by multiple scientific disciplines, philosophy, and humanities. It is an ephemeral topic that throughout history has challenged society without a comprehensive explanation. To clarify, I cite a popular definition by philosopher Thomas Nagel.³

In 1974, Nagel delivered his influential concept of consciousness, stating: “What is it like to be a bat?”⁴ He implies consciousness is bound in the essence of subjectivity—of individual experience. As a ‘theory of the mind, there can be no theory’. Simply, consciousness is an individual’s self-awareness of ‘being’. Awareness is a personal cognition of what it is like to exist. We have no way of knowing another’s consciousness experience—forming an intangible mental concept of reality. Fundamentally, consciousness comprises awareness of internal and external existence.

² Stephan A. Schwartz, "Boulders in the Stream: The Lineage and Founding of the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness," *Anthropology of Consciousness* 32, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/anoc.12140>, <https://anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/anoc.12140>.

³ J. I. Biro, "Consciousness and Subjectivity," *Philosophical Issues* 1 (1991), <https://doi.org/10.2307/1522926>, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/stable/1522926>.

⁴ Biro, "Consciousness and Subjectivity."

Foundational Understanding

Consciousness explanations have attracted considerable debate. Often classing it with the mind and body, brain science sees it as a state of wakefulness or awareness. Early psychology highlights Carl Jung's⁵ ground-breaking theories on the collective unconscious, archetypes, and symbolism. His cross-cultural studies into dreaming, shamanism, and Eastern religions, have significantly influenced our perspectives. Some perceive his theories as mystical and philosophical opinions and exclude his work from contemporary studies.⁶ However, Jung's insights continue to guide researchers when reassessing traditional concepts with contemporary approaches.

Beyond scientific discrediting, Jung's psycho-social observations and analytic insights have made a prolific impact on our understanding of humanity. Advancing fields of neuroscience, cognition and dreaming now provide supporting scientific correlations to some of Jung's concepts.⁷ Although correlations lack the required scientific 'explanations', they evidence tangible links for expanding research knowledge.

Nagel's⁸ paradoxical statements reflect a sentiment that by facilitating multi-disciplinary collaboration, anthropology has made significant inroads to reveal cultural worldviews, advance knowledge of consciousness, and therefore illuminate 'what it is like to be'.

Anthropological Contexts

Consciousness presents as the essence of human nature but remains enigmatic in societal awareness. Despite recent advances in neuroscience, biological, cognitive science and physics, disparate interests ensure contextualisation remains non-qualified. Humans' controlled access to unique mental states ensures that first-person, subjective experience—or 'self-consciousness'—shapes our measure of awareness. However, we need personally interactive development of theoretical and conceptual frameworks for empirical scientific research.⁹ Contemporary studies are called for to learn more about consciousness from humanity's cultural perspectives.¹⁰ A current

⁵ Carl Jung, *Aspects of the Feminine* (Princeton USA: Princeton University Press, 1983).

⁶ David Tacey, "Jung in the academy: devotions and resistances," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 42, no. 2 (1997).

⁷ J Allan Hobson, "Dreaming," *States of Brain and Mind* (1988).

⁸ Thomas Nagel, "Mind-Dust or Magic? Panpsychism versus Emergence," *Action Theory and Philosophy of Mind*, 1990 (1990).

⁹ Tilo Kircher and Anthony S David, "Self-consciousness: an integrative approach from philosophy, psychopathology and the neurosciences," *The self in neuroscience and psychiatry* 1 (2003). 446

¹⁰ Matthew C Bronson and Tina R Fields, *So what? Now what? The anthropology of consciousness responds to a world in crisis* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009).

deficit in this area occurs despite the early interests of anthropologists including Margaret Mead. Her studies of consciousness in gender studies include responses to the “Nature versus nurture” question, focussing on human developmental factors.

The Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness (SAC) was founded for the recognition of non-local consciousness and cultural practices such as shamanism and psychic sensory phenomena.¹ These topics have important interests for society. The SAC advises consciousness studies need attention outside of reductionist scientific frameworks. In the 1970s, Carlos Castaneda published his doctoral research after writing on altered states of reality. His challenge to anthropological traditions broke institutional constraints. Others have since followed his example and alternative consciousness now receives significant biological study.

The emergent ‘Anthropology of Consciousness’ has thrived with the recognition of two major principles. First, that facets of consciousness exist beyond the constructs of time and space but are subjective to control and regulation. Second, universal and complex interconnection exists between all life forms. The motivation for a greater understanding of this phenomenon advances studies of human impulses, behaviours, and less perceptible features of cultures. Ultimately the field aims to foster transcendent insights and support spiritual maturity.¹¹

Current Situation

The field of consciousness studies has witnessed significant transformations in the past fifty years. Findings overturn traditional models that solely attribute consciousness to the mind and brain.¹² Advances in neuroscience, physics, and biology have led to a paradigm shift, recognising consciousness as a complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon. Quantum physics places consciousness at the sub-atomic level within a unified field, reframing our understanding of cosmic existence and human function.

The rapid pace of information restructuring, fuelled by innovative technologies and artificial intelligence, necessitates an ongoing review of our accepted knowledge. Ethnocentric bias and political divisiveness also influence societal perceptions of truth, prompting the re-evaluation of established theories and factual literature.

¹¹ Ibid, 129-133

¹² Schwartz, "Boulders in the Stream: The Lineage and Founding of the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness."

In 2006, the SAC convened to promote interdisciplinary collaboration in consciousness research, addressing topics such as quantum mechanics, shamanism, and language. This move connects academia with public interests, amid growing concerns about artificial intelligence, global threats and climate change.

Various sectors, including business, the military, and medicine have divested interests in consciousness studies. However, the need to improve multi-disciplinary engagement and public awareness remains. The SAC's commitment to ecological accountability and equity highlights the value of consolidating efforts towards collaborative initiatives.

The Research Problem

Humanity maintains a fundamental quest to understand existence. The intrinsic question of comprehending life and for many, the afterlife intersects with human purpose and action. Since our earliest knowledge of ancient history, societies have struggled with the need for existential explanations of how and why we experience the world around us and identify our presence in the world as a 'self'. This is the definitive question that frames the study of consciousness.

As a study contributed to by multi-disciplinary researchers, the division of interests has resulted in two main positions. One is the widely agreed problem that consciousness is derived from a physical basis but has no compelling explanation of how and why it arises.¹³ Philosopher David Chalmers describes this "hard problem [as] a full accounting of how subjective experience arises from these cerebral processes." The other concern is why and how physical processes should give rise to a rich inner realm in the brain and body—yet extend beyond the person as a phenomenological experience.

A deeper division exists between empirical explanations of science and theoretical frameworks of the mind, prominent in psychology from the theories of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.¹⁴ As science became our benchmark of knowledge legitimacy, the disparity between knowledge schools expanded. New-era scientists were reluctant to apply research foundations that risk reputational damage. However, despite criticism, the Jungian framework of conscious, unconscious, and collective consciousness informs many qualitative and empirical researchers. The framework gives

¹³ David J Chalmers, "The puzzle of conscious experience," *Scientific American* 273, no. 6 (1995).

¹⁴ Hobson, "Dreaming." (1988)

widely accepted explanations of imaginal realms, the psyche, mental states, and alternative ways of knowing.¹⁵

Jung's consciousness model containing archetypes within the human psyche is not scientifically implausible. His theories are based on extensive cross-cultural research and observations conducted alongside his experimental and reflective praxis.¹⁶ However, the need for *testable* 'hard facts' delivered through empirical data drives new research frameworks in brain science.¹⁷ Jung conducted extensive experiments on his clients and introspectively upon himself. However, his observational data is non-provable in a rationalist frame that seeks double-blind control, and experimental quantitative methodologies as the 'gold standard'.

In anthropology, researchers often rely on observational studies, including Clifford Geertz, who interpreted empirical ethnographies.¹⁸ Observation and analysis of behaviours, patterns and colloquial explanations deliver significant insights into unique and shared cultural worldviews.

Additionally, many in the scientific community dismiss Jung's theoretical framework as purely a mental construct lacking physical representation or empirical evidence. Brain science, focusing on measurable elements like brain physiology, posits Jung's ideas about the supernatural and metaphysical as irrelevant remnants of Creationism.¹⁹ However, as neuroscience progresses,²⁰ growing recognition of the connections between Jung's theories and neuroscience indicates that the rejection of his ideas may have been premature.

Today's interconnected world is characterised by complex societal issues and ecological challenges.²¹ The realisation emerges of the need to adopt holistic, interdisciplinary approaches to research. Sustainability and governance frameworks require holistic thinking to address the multifaceted issues regarding humanity and the environment. This paradigm shift highlights the importance of reviewing previously disregarded theories within the greater context.

The SAC has recognised an urgent need to facilitate open ground for academics and researchers to position the big issue of consciousness as multi-disciplinary studies. Driving anthropological

¹⁵ Tacey, "Jung in the academy: devotions and resistances."

¹⁶ Carl Gustav Jung, *Collected Works of CG Jung, Volume 8: The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche* (Princeton University Press, 2024).

¹⁷ Anil K Seth and Tim Bayne, "Theories of consciousness," *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 23, no. 7 (2022).

¹⁸ Clifford Geertz, *The interpretation of cultures*, vol. 5019 (Basic books, 1973).

¹⁹ Seth and Bayne, "Theories of consciousness."

²⁰ *Ibid*, 440

²¹ Schwartz, "Boulders in the Stream: The Lineage and Founding of the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness."

research is the question to be answered by both hard science and non-empirical researchers. As a necessary step towards reunifying a holistic knowledge view, we ask: *Is consciousness an internal, or externally driven experience or both?*

Anthropology upholds that consciousness is experienced in the external 'other' or cultural domain. This generic question may be reduced to a central research problem asking: *How and why have existential explanations by cultures been transferred as consciousness and reinforced cross-culturally throughout time and place?*

This research question forms the foundation of my study. Consciousness transmission has various features. However, SAC publicity highlights the requirement for studies focused on cultural phenomena specifically as a mechanism of consciousness. This examination will support our contemporary understanding.

Research Aim, Objectives, and Questions

Research Aim

This research thesis examines consciousness with an emphasis on cultural perspectives. It examines the lack of contemporary, holistic approaches that study phenomenological, and cultural links with scientific theories.

Research Objectives

In this study, I examine elements of Jungian transpersonal theory involving consciousness, archetypes, and symbolism. I review its tribal customary succession and cross-cultural transmission. The central premise of my study is that the 'Great Mother's' archetypal mystery of the collective unconscious has played a fundamental role in shaping human values and culture. Expressly, I propose an alternative language transmission, communicated in symbolic messages.

I validate the authenticity of this research statement and examine the implications. I case study symbolism that is commonly found in archaeological records, cosmology, and cultural astronomy.

By correlating associations with other theories of consciousness, I develop a conceptual framework that explores and clarifies transpersonal and cultural dimensions of consciousness as alternative explanations for human existence.

Research Questions

The scope of my research is delimited to seven apposite inquiries designed to extract insights into the aim and objectives of researching the anthropology of consciousness.

First, I examine the themes and elements connecting Jung's theories and other relevant discourses to the cultural expression of traits, values, and symbolism. I explore the intersection between Jungian transpersonal theory and cultural meaning. I identify thematic cultural elements aligning with Jung's theories on archetypes, symbolism, and consciousness. I seek to gain insights from empirical research into how certain cultural traits, values, and symbols reflect universal and local aspects of consciousness.

I secondly analyse the general factors defining symbolism in the study. This phase interrogates the deeper elements of cultural symbolism and meaning-making. The approach identifies external factors in 'the other'. I commonly use this term throughout my discussion, referring to the societal, psychological, environmental, and spiritual factors contributing to semiotics. My inquiry considers the existential forces that shape cultural symbolism, revealing how consciousness is interwoven in customary culture.

In the third stage, I trace the origins of symbols. I analyse what they 'speak to' and how they reveal the relationship of consciousness with our early ancestors. I build comprehension of the cultural and cognitive dimensions in which these symbols emerged. My examination adds a temporal component to research, revealing the diachronic nature of consciousness in culture.

My fourth step analyses the implications of the case-studied symbolic communications and their transmission in human lineages.²² I focus on a specific example, to extract the cross-cultural significance of the symbolism. I examine in detail how these symbols have been exchanged and transformed within various cultural scenarios. My analysis aims to expose patterns of cultural continuity or change. I adopt this approach towards a more comprehensive view of the role and value symbolism has in influencing the generational transmission of consciousness.

²² Appendix 1 and 2, Vivienne Tobassa Eggers

In the fifth stage, I probe the concept that humans have passed on symbolism as a mode of conscious awareness. I examine the mechanisms through which symbolism is socially shared. I analyse the cultural processes and dynamics involved in the transmission of symbolic meaning. I inquire into the ways cultural knowledge and meaning are perpetuated. I consider how symbols are affecting or being affected by phenomenological forces.

My sixth action assesses what values and meanings are connected to the represented symbolism. I identify cultural variations and similarities. I analyse the relevance of cultural diversity, interpretations, and dynamic relationships with individual and cultural consciousness.

As the final step, I synthesise and examine my findings concerning consciousness as a constitutive driver of culture. I consider responses to these objectives to support a transformational understanding of the research.

I share a holistic perspective on the dynamic relationship between cultural symbolism and consciousness. My trajectory is toward clarifying internal and external driving factors, leading to comprehensive insights into how culture influences and reflects human experiences. Ultimately, I aim to contribute additional perspectives toward developing a holistic definition of consciousness and expand our understanding of its nature and presence.

Scope

I apply the research framework to one specific instance of symbolism transmission, based on my findings from an earlier research project. I conduct a comprehensive examination of a culturally shared consciousness scenario that connects existential meanings and lived experiences through alternative mechanisms. I discuss the findings of my research and a case example of primary symbols. Case study discussions, additional research literature reviews and supplemental projects formulated during my three years of research are promulgated in Appendix 1²³ and Appendix 2.²⁴

Attempts to directly answer the greater questions on the agreed definition of consciousness, fall outside the scope of this research. Research delimitations are imposed from the current state of

²³ Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review* (Massey University, 2024 2021).

²⁴ Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials* Massey University (New Zealand, 2024).

academic knowledge that is historically established on a platform of traditional literature. Many scholastic articles discuss the subjectivity, ethnocentrism, and anthropomorphism of past researchers. This research acknowledges that it is now widely known these conditions exist in the foundations of contemporary knowledge systems.

My thesis discussion takes the position that the reader will have prior scholarly anthropological knowledge and familiarity with established terminology. My reflexive position is that rapidly changing knowledge systems do not need to anchor on fixed and outmoded thought. Therefore, I aim to apply contemporary knowledge perspectives and insights to robust historical research by reviewing literature with alternative and perhaps expansive insights.

Significance

This study will contribute to our knowledge of consciousness firstly by expanding anthropological discourse on cultural features. Secondly, by linking consciousness theories and contextual issues that may support further collaborative research. The research is important to improve understanding of traditional and alternative knowledge systems. I therefore focus examination of consciousness as a phenomenon connecting cultural 'lived experience'. The findings may additionally support scientific studies examining internal 'local' and external 'non-local' features of consciousness.

Cultural representation of consciousness as a communication implies human adaptive survival and resilience traits embedded in cross-culturally binding transmission—an enduring legacy throughout time and place. The anthropological study may therefore hold important insights towards recognising reinforced values. I target an ideal of holistic frameworks navigating toward resolving global problems for developing artificial intelligence technology, wellness, and general sustainable living in peaceful harmony.

Limitations

This study recognises several potential limitations of the research project. Firstly, the scope of this thesis narrows a conceptually broad topic into a segmented view. While this is a necessity in all research, I transparently acknowledge the findings are insufficient to prove or find 'hard' explanations of consciousness. Consequently, there is also a risk of making generalised

assumptions from a small example. To reduce the risks of overstating the findings and unfounded speculation, the research is designed as a concise second stage in a greater inquiry. It builds insights as stages and indicates rather than fully transcends the illumination of knowledge as a predominating new theory. However, it does propose new concepts and alternative frameworks as a forming hypothesis.

Secondly, the research methodology is conducted on existing literature within a conceptual scaffold. The study is positioned in a cultural anthropological paradigm. Results will benefit from future ethnographic field inquiry. Future stages of research may use this thesis research objectives and conceptual model to explore phenomenological lived experience and deeper interpretive meanings. Richer contexts focused specifically on the research problem and objectives can be derived from directly engaging cultural interactions with symbolism and alternative knowledge systems. Future ethnographic projects using this thesis research as a comparative base model may mitigate this limitation.

chapter two

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

About

This chapter introduces and discusses a review of critical texts and theorists. The review is structured according to the topic organisation.

The initial phase comprises a summary and discussion of texts addressing consciousness. The longitudinal review spans ancient philosophies to contemporary discussions. I provide a concise overview of theories and perspectives that contextualise my research within the wider field of consciousness studies. My review examines cultural perspectives on consciousness as the central theme of my research.

In subsequent sections, I discuss foundational texts informing my analysis of the research goals. I examine theories and comparative analyses of consciousness transmission within culture, particularly through archetypal and celestial symbolism.

The discussion is structured into three main themes: the foundational theoretical framework, existing empirical research, and discourse addressing the identified research gap. By synthesising these categories, I demonstrate the cultural dimensions of consciousness transmission.

Before conducting this research, I carried out extensive literature research and longitudinal analysis to build the necessary background for this thesis. This preliminary literature review project identifies, evidences, and traces the source of a 'Celestial Mother' cosmology. It anchors the current research by linking key symbolism transmission with archaeology, cultural records and Ancient DNA identified migrations. I cite references to the texts of the earlier review as Appendix 1.²⁵ I cite references to the detailed discussions of cultural astronomy and a case example of symbolism as Appendix 2.²⁶

²⁵ Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review*.

²⁶ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

THE STUDY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

'What it is like...' Finding a common definition: Film debate review

The intellectual journey to understand what consciousness is and how it connects with our known universe is a deep and complex question that has challenged thinkers since the classical philosophies. In a 2023 debate at the Royal Institute of Philosophy, Philip Goff stated:

"The mystery of Consciousness continues to be one of the most puzzling intellectual challenges of our time despite great progress in our scientific understanding of the brain, we still don't have an explanation as to how electrochemical signalling could somehow produce the inner world of colours and sounds and smells and tastes that each of us embrace every second of waking life."

—P. Goff, Royal Institute of Philosophy November 2022²⁷

Goff expands his opening statement by describing a situation that he sees as a 'miscategorisation' in the set-up of studying consciousness. That is, the 'hard problem of consciousness' is a bid to explain how brains produce conscious awareness. Goff's point alludes to the generally supported idea that consciousness is purely a physical problem and that any study should focus on this context to be of significant value. However, he perceives the root of the problem as philosophical rather than purely scientific, and aptly renames the 'hard problem' as the 'mind-body problem'. He is unsurprisingly ensconced in the philosophies camp that reinstates the issue as a 'philosophical challenge' seeking to fuse these mind-body aspects in a single unified theory of reality.

In the debate of the Royal Institute of Philosophy, the need for an anthropological 'cultural' viewpoint was not completely overlooked. However, it was not represented in the multi-

²⁷ Royal Institute of Philosophy Debate published March 2023 Chair Riula Shar BBC, Annual Lecture of Philosophers of International Standing. <https://youtu.be/vjvLQ7GKxBE?si=rImjPm9NPtANpuFy> see also <https://royalinstitutephilosophy.org>

disciplinary speaker panel. After the discussion, the moderator noted the need for cultural perspectives and many audience members asked culturally oriented questions.

Many may have sympathised with Thomas Nagel's²⁸ 'What it is like' comment to know the experience of 'being' something. However, by default, the anthropological 'home' for the study of consciousness is indelibly connected with a culture and environmental context that may also represent cross-cultural features. In this domain, the study may involve phenomena, experience, and 'qualia'. These form the nature, content, subjective and inter-subjective experiences of life and existence as culturally connected interactions.

Positioning within a Methodological Frame

Goff highlights three potential frames to situate consciousness studies. Option one is 'materialism.' This approach is favoured by 'hard problem' scientists who believe that consciousness arises from physical brain and bodily processes. The second option is 'panpsychism', which turns the materialist statement around by stating that consciousness is the pre-existing foundation of existence from which the physical world arises. Option three is dualism, where proponents perceive 'special laws of Nature called 'psychophysical laws', connecting consciousness and materiality as co-existing, equal constructs. Goff asserts that "the only logical choice that can potentially accommodate all studies regardless of material, mental, or dualistic approaches is panpsychism."²⁹

Panpsychism

The literature in this review involves the examination and discussion of the historic and contemporary development of panpsychism. The texts involve various theories, models and methods that form the holistic context of panpsychism as a metatheory that claims a fundamental feature of the universe is consciousness.

In "*Panpsychism, The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness*"³⁰ Goff, William Seager and Sean Allen-Hermanson describe panpsychism as "the view that mentality is fundamental and ubiquitous

²⁸ Thomas Nagel, "What is it like to be a bat?," *Theories of Mind: An Introductory Reader* (2006).

²⁹ Royal Institute of Philosophy Debate published March 2023 Chair Riula Shar BBC, Annual Lecture of Philosophers of International Standing. <https://youtu.be/vjvLQ7GKxBE?si=rJmjPm9NPtANpuFy> see also <https://royalinstitutephilosophy.org>

³⁰ Philip Goff, "Panpsychism," in *The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness*, ed. Velmans (Blackwell, 2017).

in the natural world.” In contemporary revival, this statement describes the fundamental fabric of existence as consciousness. Everything else arises out of this formation and is interconnected.

Goff et. al.³¹ describe the rich history of panpsychism rooted in the philosophies, where it was inherently connected with Greek philosopher Thales. Later, it connects to notions of the ‘soul’ by proponents including Aristotle, who Goff cites as saying: “Some say a soul is mingled in the whole universe, which is perhaps why Thales thought that everything is full of gods”. The history of this thinking requires deeper consideration.

During the 1700s, panpsychism was challenged by the introduction of mechanistic theories rendered by Descartes, Newton, and Galileo’s mathematisation of Nature and human experiences of her qualia. In place of Newton’s total denial, Descartes found a place for secondary qualities to exist within the soul. This step gave rise to a radical Cartesian Dualism. Its theme is that there are fundamentally two distinct and separate substances in the person of mind and body. Spinoza and Leibniz advocated for a metaphysical separation between the body and soul, and their many qualities.

In “*Panpsychism Reconsidered: A Historical and Philosophical Overview*”³² David Skrbina writes “in the coming of analytic philosophy and logical positivism in the early 20th century, panpsychism was driven down, and then largely forgotten for nearly a century.” Skrbina’s observation refers to the popular rejection of panpsychism but also to the theory’s resurgence in recent history.

Seager (Ed.) in *The Routledge Handbook of Panpsychism*³³ consolidates contributors who reflect similar discussions surrounding the topic. A wide range of ideas related to panpsychism are discussed by contributors in twenty-eight chapters. Discussions are divided into several themes, including historical reflections, various forms of panpsychism, critical alternatives to panpsychism, and viewpoints on panpsychism’s feasibility. The historical accounts cover ancient Greek philosophy, Buddhist thought, Early Modern philosophy, and the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The work discusses the panpsychist view of many forms of consciousness in the universe. It explores differing worldviews and theories including subjective physicalism, cognitive pluralism, Russellian monism, and neutral monism. The literature also addresses questions about causation, quantum mechanics, and the combination problem. Overall, this work reveals the

³¹ *ibid*

³² David Skrbina, “Panpsychism Reconsidered: A Historical and Philosophical Overview,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Panpsychism* (Routledge, 2019).

³³ William E Seager, *The Routledge handbook of panpsychism* (Routledge, 2019).

extensive adoption of panpsychism belief throughout history. The meta-theoretical framework's sub-variety features are discussed in Appendix 2.³⁴

In the philosophy debate,³⁵ Louise Antony, who is a specialist in epistemology and feminism, responded with valid points advocating functional and 'top-down' strategies to undertake consciousness studies. Antony suggests an initial functional analysis of the 'higher order' role of consciousness. She submits a broad examination of what it does and how it is integrated at the psychological functional level with factors such as perception, attention, and memory reason. She believes this panpsychism framework may facilitate studies on lower-level structures as individual research projects building towards performing higher-level functions.

Debate on these theories also reveals some willingness by multi-disciplinary researchers to engage in holistic collaboration for overarching themes found in consciousness studies. Thomas Nagel proposes the adoption of panpsychism to avoid "emergent properties of a complex system—fundamental macro-level properties which may not be intelligibly derived from the properties of its parts."³⁶

David Chalmers³⁷, renowned for describing the study of consciousness as a "hard problem", is an advocate of panpsychism. The term refers to failing to make empirical explanations about human experience and 'why' it is 'like to be that' of Nagel's bat analogy.³⁸

This research significantly agrees with Goff's panpsychism sympathies. However, not for the sake of a viewpoint in the ongoing debate. Instead, for the seemingly frequent omission of anthropological discussions concerning the definition, shape, and nature of consciousness in its external expression—that is, in *culture*. My research clarifies the agreement with associating panpsychism in Goff's discussions³⁹ and the consensual perspectives of contemporary scholars whose literature has informed my analysis.⁴⁰

³⁴ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

³⁵ Royal Institute of Philosophy Debate published March 2023 Chair Riula Shar BBC, Annual Lecture of Philosophers of International Standing. <https://youtu.be/vjvLQ7GKxBE?si=rImjPm9NPtANpuFy> see also <https://royalinstitutephilosophy.org>

³⁶ Nagel, "Mind-Dust or Magic? Panpsychism versus Emergence." 2-4

³⁷ David Chalmers, "The hard problem of consciousness," *The Blackwell companion to consciousness* (2017).

³⁸ Nagel, "What is it like to be a bat?."

³⁹ Goff, "Panpsychism."

⁴⁰ Godehard Brüntrup, "Emergent panpsychism," *Panpsychism. Contemporary Perspectives. Oxford* 48 (2016).

THE RESEARCH POSITION

Societal discussion continues to debate an agreed definition of consciousness. My research focuses on anthropological discourse to pivot the study of consciousness within socio-cultural contexts. My position may be likened to Husserl's description: "pure phenomenology with its emphasis upon returning to the things".⁴¹ This statement observes that anthropology has its segmented interests in the topic of consciousness. These specific 'things' are connected but expand beyond philosophical origins and personally bound psychology, which may account for being overlooked in societal representation. I next give more context to how the field has sought to address this issue.

Situating a Methodological Framework for Anthropological Study

The anthropology of consciousness has an array of perspectives involving relevant studies. In *"Introduction: Anthropologies of Consciousness"*⁴² Michael Winkelman provides a systems perspective overview of the contexts of explicit consciousness studies and implicit anthropologies—such as altered states of consciousness. He highlights concerns relevant to other terms, including perception, cognition, thought, and cultural worldviews.

Winkelman highlights ways that the development of consciousness is facilitated by social forces that drive awareness. He discusses issues encountered with altered states of consciousness, the therapeutic applications of psychedelics and the potential roles of shamanic ritual in addressing drug addiction, contemporary soul loss, and other conditions. He describes the biological bases of altered states of consciousness when associated with religious rituals and their adaptive effects. These often transition studies of the occult and conventional anthropologies of consciousness.

⁴¹ Charles D. Laughlin, "Intersubjectivity, Empathy, Life-World, and the Social Brain: The Relevance of Husserlian Neurophenomenology for the Anthropology of Consciousness," *Anthropology of Consciousness* 34, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/anoc.12171>, <https://anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/anoc.12171>.

⁴² Michael Winkelman, "Introduction: Anthropologies of consciousness," *Time and Mind* 3, no. 2 (2010).

Winkelman's introduction provides examples of studies and theorists who undertake external anthropologies of consciousness. He refers to Throop and Laughlin⁴³ who comprehensively engage with the history and progression of anthropological consciousness studies. Subfields in anthropology study consciousness related to cognition, thought, perception, and other internally related processes. Winkelman describes a 'five-field anthropology' that addresses critical areas: "Palaeontology, archaeology, linguistic anthropology, cultural anthropology, and applied anthropology."⁴⁴

Each subfield has diverse approaches to consciousness studies. For example, palaeontology relates to the evolution of consciousness in general and specifically to human consciousness. Linguistic anthropology features the role of language in the formation of experience, perception, and consciousness. Archaeology connects material culture with different forms of consciousness in human history, and social or cultural anthropology is concerned with human relationships and explaining the cultural worldview, customs, and roles of shamanistic traditions for altering consciousness. Included are ethnic, social, class, political, historical, and other variant forms. The fifth field of applied anthropology undertakes ethnographic research of technologies for altering consciousness concerning contemporary issues. Winkelman states that a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of consciousness and its relationship to human evolution, culture, and social context is achieved when involving five-field approaches. I note these may be carried out as specialist contributions to broader studies and collaborative multi-disciplinary frameworks.

Winkelman's introduction to the interdisciplinary nature and the various ways in which anthropologists have engaged with the concept of consciousness gives a grounded view towards how the field may approach future studies. He emphasises the importance of examining the broader questions of self, identity, and social contexts. His theme is consciousness as a 'knowing system'.

I identify two additional subfields of the anthropology of consciousness as critical to this research. The first is phenomenology, primarily founded by philosopher Husserl and innovated by his counterpart Heidegger.⁴⁵ Phenomenology, meaning 'that which appears' is a thought school emphasising subjective experience and intersubjectivity as the way individuals perceive and interpret consciousness.

⁴³ C Jason Throop and Charles D Laughlin, "Anthropology of consciousness," in *Cambridge Handbook of Consciousness*, ed. Moscovitch and Thompson Zelazo (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁴⁴ Winkelman, "Introduction: Anthropologies of consciousness."

⁴⁵ Richard Schacht, "Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenology," *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 23, no. 5 (1972).

Husserl's alternative philosophy to truth aligns more with Eastern traditional systems than Western traditions. It concerns understanding consciousness in its raw form, taking first-hand subjective experience as the starting point, rather than the objective world of Nature. Phenomenology provides a robust framework to explore the lived experiences of individuals within specific cultural contexts. The method of approach involves the concept of 'bracketing' as a phenomenological reduction to set aside our filters and judgements and perceive the essence of experience. Experience may be interior or exterior, within the dreaming or imaginal realms. Alternatively, it may be a 'real' physical experience, as the significance returns to the intentionality of consciousness and its 'aboutness' in its relationship to the phenomenon. The process includes eidetic reduction as an imaginal variation to consider possible attributes and identify its essence as 'truth'.

Heidegger alternatively theorises the 'knowledge' of essences that is founded on the philosophical tradition as a way of knowing. Phenomenology significantly influences anthropologists including Michael Jackson.⁴⁶ His ethnographies and discourse meaningfully inform my research in this way. His work is discussed in the research gap section of this review.

The second and primary subfield is symbolic anthropology. It focuses on the role of symbols, rituals, and myths in shaping cultural meanings. By exploring cultural contexts of symbolic phenomena, I highlight alternative perspectives that transition to meaning-making. My research is supported by the founding symbolic theory of Clifford Geertz,⁴⁷ and I am further influenced by Maurice Bloch's⁴⁸ discourse concerning the materiality of symbolism. I discuss their theoretical positions in the empirical research section of this literature review.

In summary, this discussion reveals anthropological perspectives towards studying consciousness. I perceive that situating these approaches within the panpsychism metatheoretical frame facilitates holistic assessment. It may also accommodate future related studies. This strategy recognises the interconnectedness of diverse cultural dimensions where transpersonal experiences are expressed. My research draws on the earlier basis of Sacred Feminine as a persistent transmission of symbolism from a celestial origin and explores the experiential facets of archetypal metaphors.

⁴⁶ Michael Jackson, "'Myths/Histories/Lives'", in *Minima Ethnographica* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

⁴⁷ Clifford Geertz, *Myth, symbol, and culture* (Norton, 1972).

⁴⁸ Maurice Bloch, "Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation Is religion an extreme form of traditional authority?," *European Journal of Sociology/Archives européennes de sociologie* 15, no. 1 (1974).

CONSCIOUSNESS CULTURAL TRANSMISSION

Foundation of Theory

In the next sections, I discuss founding theories informing my research on consciousness transmission. These focus on the cultural domain, connecting archetypal and celestial symbolism.

The Great Mother Archetype

In "*Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*," Jung⁴⁹ explores the dimensions of the collective unconscious. His insights into archetypes, such as the self and the anima, support my inquiry into the archetypal Great Mother. The research is positioned to examine meaning-making out of phenomena derived from celestial symbolism.⁵⁰ Jung's concept of the collective unconscious facilitates insights into the cultural transmission of symbolism involving a universal 'collective consciousness.'⁵¹ Despite the scientific controversy, I observe from reviewing the volume of related studies that his psychological concept finds wide agreement. However, his work endures significant criticism. It relies on subjective conclusions to make the connection between the mental world and cross-cultural belief systems. The latter have been empirically revealed with extensive ethnography. Two significant critics are La Barre and Herskovits. Drake⁵² advises La Barre has some appreciation for Jung but describes his work as "pretending that archetypes are inherited phylogenetically, whereas ethnographic evidence supports they are ontologically inherited."

This point of non-biological inheritance through social processes is a pivotal motivation for my strategy of research. Herskovits' criticism is more related to Jung's psychological portrayal of cultural archetypes. He reminds the profession that Jung, in the shadow of Plato, is not the inventor of archetypal forms. I examine Jung's mix of empirical and subjective theories in this and

⁴⁹ Carl Gustav Jung, "The archetypes and the collective unconscious " *Trans. RFC Hull. Princeton: Princeton University Press* 9 (1968).

⁵⁰ Jung, "The archetypes and the collective unconscious ".

⁵¹ CG Jung, *The Symbolic Life: Miscellaneous Writing*, vol. 18, Bollingen Series XX, original ..., (USA: Princeton University Press 1977).

⁵² Carlos C Drake, "Jung and his critics," *The Journal of American Folklore* 80, no. 318 (1967).

subsequent works under another context. My object is to address the fundamental elements and review the possibility of alternative explanations, or an additional system involved.

Jung⁵³ proposed that archetypes are in the collective unconscious as a deep layer of an individual's psyche. These are universal symbols and patterns commonly shared, regardless of upbringing. Jung proposed that people innately carry archetypes as evolutionary phylogeny.⁵⁴ The common forms are shared across place and time as aspects of human experience. Jung believed a mentally derived framework holds these motifs comprising myth, religion, dreams, and art that support an individual to understand their reality. Archetypes may include characters, themes, and motifs as symbolism. The central archetype of 'The Mother' arises with both positive and negative attributes.

The Mother archetype signifies the image of feminine life-giving, nurturing, and protective qualities. The archetype is not exclusively the individual mother of personal relationships. It carries a deeper, universal depiction of the tending and cultivating qualities that humans find essential for development and survival. This archetype identifies a person's perception and relationship to mothering experiences.

The 'Great Mother'⁵⁵ is the primordial progenitor expression of the 'Mother' archetype defined by Jung. His psychoanalytical perspective saw her as a collective cultural experience of motherhood and influence on childhood development.⁵⁶ But Jung also understood her as the symbolic manifestation of the Mother Goddess—although he was careful to clarify this primary aspect as a widespread cultural observance. In this regard, she appears more as a duality extension of the 'Mother' archetype. Jung described her as "nurturing and loving, but also capricious, and mysterious".⁵⁷ Her deific projection arises throughout human experience in the many cosmologies, myths, and narratives of Sacred Feminine. The primaeva goddess gives birth to the universe and all life out of formless essence or chaos.

The Great Mother is of cosmological origins, beyond the inner psychic representation allocated by Jung's archetypal descriptions. Her motif is entangled with the celestial life-giving waters. She represents the creation of salt and sweet waters divided by the firmament. Her procreative powers

Hobson, "Dreaming." 322-324

⁵³ Jung, C, 'The Archetypes, and the Collective Unconscious', 2014.

⁵⁴ Drake, "Jung and his critics." 323

Hobson, "Dreaming." 322-324

⁵⁵ Jung, C, 'The Archetypes, and the Collective Unconscious', 2014.

⁵⁶ David Waldron, "Great Mother," in *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion* (Springer, 2020).

⁵⁷ Carl Gustav Jung, "The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. Bollingen Series XX," *Trans. RFC Hull. Princeton: Princeton University Press* (1968).

over chaos and energy ensure cosmic order as she oversees the spiritual dimensions and mortal life, where she guides the souls of those departing Earthly existence. She transforms into the Earth Mother, where she holds the biosphere and all species within as a form of exchange from the Sacred to the profane.⁵⁸ In her new state, she connects fertility, birth, and the cycles of Nature to human life. These traits of the Great Mother archetype shape her metaphorical role in symbolism, central to the research of cultural consciousness.

In "*The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype*,"⁵⁹ Erich Neumann explores the Great Mother as the primordial image of the Sacred Feminine. He makes clear that analytical psychology is not speaking of her in "any concrete image existing in space and time but to an inward image in the human psyche". However, this "psychic phenomenon" is expressed in iconic figures, myths, and artistic culture. Neumann reveals her paradoxical cultural representation as the maternal goddess and the fearsome monster.⁶⁰ These are aspects of her awesome power over life and destruction that perpetuates in eternal cycles. Her representation as the "uroboros" or circular snake biting its tail, symbolises these cycles from origins, where human consciousness and ego were undeveloped and then grew into eternity. Paradoxes are binary oppositions contained within the central meaning. Neumann describes matriarchal and patriarchal principles and the associated interaction between personal and transpersonal realms as a dialectical relationship of growth. Neumann states the Great Mother represents eternity as unconscious that is unknown. The 'self' archetype represents the child's growing consciousness. Neumann's deep insights on the internal psychic nature of spiritual symbols support my understanding of the archetypal Great Mother as she presents within the '*Celestial Waters of Life*' cosmology and the collective feminine unconscious.

Joseph Campbell⁶¹ adopts many of Neumann and Jung's ideas when exploring cross-cultural mythology. Campbell associates the 'Mother' archetype with the Goddess, particularly concerning myths and religions where the feminine is revered as a source of life. Campbell expands upon Jung's archetypes in the collective unconscious of 'themes'. He describes the Goddess in the epic theme 'Hero's Journey'. He proposes this 'monomyth' is a story of common symbols and cyclic events marking a universal narrative that every person, in every culture experiences.

⁵⁸ Mircea Eliade, *The sacred and the profane: The nature of religion*, vol. 81 (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1959).

⁵⁹ Erich Neumann, *The great mother: An analysis of the archetype*, vol. 14 (Princeton University Press, 2015). 9-17

⁶⁰ Erich Neumann, "The Great Mother, an Analysis of the Archetype, Bollingen Series XLVII," (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955).24-38, 89, 176, 210

⁶¹ Carl G Jung, *The Portable Jung* (New York: Penguin, 1976).

Marija Gimbutas in "*The Language of the Goddess*"⁶² shows her extensive research on ancient goddess traditions. Her work offers integral insights into cultural expressions of the Great Mother archetype. Her theory of a generative and destructive representation of the Sacred Feminine empowers deeper perceptions of symbolic transmission and meaning-making. By analysing artefacts, rituals, and myths associated with the Great Goddess, Gimbutas' archaeological lens gives discerning views into diverse cultural studies. However, she has attracted controversial debate and criticism for making subjective assumptions.⁶³ The application of her work has become unpopular with non-feminist scholars for its systemic discreditation. Recently, one of her most prominent contenders, Lord Colin Renfrew, offered a public apology for being 'wrong' about her migration theories—now proven with Ancient DNA technologies.

In "*The Hero with a Thousand Faces*"⁶⁴ Joseph Campbell describes a cross-cultural approach comparing symbolism, in the universal motifs and archetypal patterns found in mythology narratives.⁶⁵ His concept of the monomyth proposes a common thematic narrative of symbolic metaphor that presents as cultural cosmology and mythology. Campbell states the motif gives variant but consistent explanations of human experiences. These involve deeper symbols contained within the psyche that often relate to cosmology and its transmission.⁶⁶ Campbell's wealth of cultural insights offers deeper perspectives of the Great Mother archetype embodied within the collective consciousness.

I extensively discuss Campbell's motif of comparative mythology and share an alternative perspective throughout this research. I will further expand upon the significance of his monomyth concerning cultural astronomy, cosmology, and psychosocial connections.

The founding literature and relevant contributions provide a conceptual understanding of the archetypal Great Mother and her primordial significance within the "*Celestial Waters of Life*" cosmology. This literature review gives a basis for further analysis of the transpersonal relationship between the self, the socio-cultural domain, and the universal collective consciousness. Here, symbols of the Great Mother archetype may present within the panpsychism meta-framework that encapsulates the research.

⁶² Marija Gimbutas, *The language of the Goddess: [unearthing the hidden symbols of Western civilization]* (Harper & Row, 1989).

⁶³ Charlene Spretnak, "Anatomy of a backlash: Concerning the work of Marija Gimbutas," *The Journal of Archaeomythology* 7, no. Special Issue (2011).

⁶⁴ Joseph Campbell, *The hero with a thousand faces*, 3rd ed., Collected works of Joseph Campbell., (Novato, Calif.: New World Library, 2008).

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 89.

⁶⁶ Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers, *The power of myth* (Anchor, 1991).

Empirical Research

Symbolic Anthropology

The foundations of symbolic anthropology can be traced back to the work of Neo-Kantian philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey.⁶⁷ Dilthey is renowned for his contribution to the "Nature versus nurture" debate, which positions a distinction between the traditional natural and human sciences. He contends that while universal explanations may be feasible for natural phenomena, they can only partially explain the complexities of human history and experience. In *"The Rise of Hermeneutics,"*⁶⁸ Dilthey emphasises the importance of understanding lived experience. This concept holds internal and external perspectives. He proposes that true self-understanding requires a person's mediation from external factors. He perceives human sciences assist our analysis of the interactions between individuals and non-local systems that shape society.

Dilthey's work inspired Edmund Husserl. Husserl also favoured existentialism, deconstruction, poststructuralism, and postmodernity. He perceived that Natural Sciences were actually "unsuitable for the study of cultural life". This belief incited his development of 'subjectively' observing the human behaviours of 'lived experiences'.⁶⁹ He favoured the empirical study of 'outward' human behaviours. He saw these influenced by human perceptions and actions.

Max Weber is another advocate of hermeneutics whose writings featured a literary resurgence during the 1960s. In 'Selections in Translations'⁷⁰ he conveys an 'anti-positivist' position in the social science tradition of hermeneutics, saying: "Sociology attempts the interpretive understanding of social action to arrive at a causal explanation." Weber engages hermeneutics as the study of meaning, particularly in literary texts that apply both interpretive and post-modernist cultural explanations.

Another founder of symbolic anthropology was Arnold Van Gennep. *"The Rites of Passage"* is his pivotal work on ritual that details the framework of 'preliminal, liminal and post-liminal states of

⁶⁷ Rudolf A Makkreel, "Dilthey and universal hermeneutics: the status of the human sciences," *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 16, no. 3 (1985).

⁶⁸ Wilhelm Dilthey, *Wilhelm dilthey: selected works, volume iv: hermeneutics and the study of history*, vol. 4 (Princeton University Press, 2010).

⁶⁹ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas pertaining to a pure phenomenology and to a phenomenological philosophy: First book: General introduction to a pure phenomenology*, vol. 2 (Springer Science & Business Media, 2012).

⁷⁰ Max Weber, *Max Weber: selections in translation* (Cambridge University Press, 1978).

consciousness.⁷¹ The importance of his legacy was reinstated by British anthropologist Victor Turner, after the acclaim of Levi-Strauss' structuralism and the revivalist period.

Turner was an early symbolic anthropologist. He was greatly influenced by Emile Durkheim's proposition that human cultures form out of a psychological need for togetherness and therefore organically achieve social cohesion. Turner conducted ethnographic field research amongst the Ndembu people in Zambia, undertaking comparative research in ritual and cultural performance.⁷² He established the centrality of ritual symbolism in maintaining social order—a point that has further significance to this research. Turner believed social order naturally wants to break down and return to chaos, but the installation and reinforcement of social rules, symbolism and mediation with 'the other' in states of consciousness, provokes the reinstatement of social order and longevity of cultural worldviews.⁷³ Turner later wrote "*Schism and Continuity in an African Society*".⁷⁴ This is another significant work expanding his structuralist and structural functionalism background into symbolic anthropology's emergent frameworks.

Turner was informed by structuralist views including those of Levi-Strauss. However, he viewed social unity as a problem and a struggle for societies. His belief that maintaining social values is not an innate trait of human behaviour, justified the reason to have social constructs of symbolism. In this paradigm, symbols are used as tools by societies to construe and reinforce social meanings and 'lived experience'. Cultural reinforcement conveys the idea that humans are otherwise vulnerable to natural phenomena. Turner believed symbols may hold complex, multiple representations and metaphors that individuals experience internally and non-locally. Despite these multi-faceted features, symbolic significance always intrinsically links individuals to the social worldview.

Rites of passage are enacted and participated in groups to engage and mediate between dimensions of the material worlds and other realms of conscious existence. Liminal states in ritual eventually realise a state of 'communitas' where participants arrive at a transcendent state of awareness, which blends a collective unity. Turner expresses ritualistic liminal states are "chaotic 'anti-structure' necessary to bring transcendence into a new state of being". Turner's research covered the linguistic and cognitive anthropological nature of symbols.⁷⁵ Influenced by Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, Turner saw semiotics relate to symbolic relationships and their

⁷¹ Arnold Van Gennep, *The rites of passage* (Routledge, 2013).

⁷² Victor Witter Turner, *The forest of symbols: Aspects of Ndembu ritual*, vol. 101 (Cornell University Press, 1967).

⁷³ Victor Turner and Roger D Abrahams, *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure* (Routledge, 2017).

⁷⁴ Victor Turner, *Schism and continuity in an African society: A study of Ndembu village life* (Routledge, 2020).

⁷⁵ Victor Turner, "Symbolic studies," *Annual review of anthropology* 4, no. 1 (1975).

representation. He identifies the activities, behaviours and processes involving signs or iconography that are important when studying symbols in 'communication'. This area forms a major intersection with my research and the depth psychology of Jung's⁷⁶ semiotic comprehension in his study of archetypes.

"One way to narrow the scope of culture ... is to focus on the complex networks of meanings that are both the products of thinking and provide the contexts for thinking."

*—Maurice Bloch, quoting Clifford Geertz in "The Interpretation of Cultures."
1973*

Clifford Geertz is the founder of Interpretive Anthropology. This system emphasising 'meaning' rather than 'structure' in cultural studies, is a movement away from Levi-Strauss' traditions. Inspired by the Boasian writings of Clyde Kluckhohn, Geertz followed in the intellectual lineage of Max Weber and was influenced by Dilthey when he presented "*The Interpretation of Cultures*".⁷⁷ In this work, Geertz identifies the central theme of Interpretive Anthropology as the core of culture is a set of moral values. Geertz describes his rationale behind this system: "study of culture is not an experimental science in search of law, rather an interpretive one in search of meaning". He was moving away from the materialist approach in the study of the culture. Anthro has always been a dialectic between materialist and meaning-based approaches.

This lens corresponds with the world "as it is" and the world being "as it should be" which is the observable part of the world. In this work, Geertz describes the Balinese Cockfight.⁷⁸ which conveys multiple messages within the society. It conveys a cultural ethos which demonstrates competition and status amongst high-ranking males who put their prized cocks into the village arena in a 'fight to the death'. The ritual of the cockfight forms a metaphor for social relations, in which Balinese people "tell themselves about themselves". Participants may settle their social debts through this ritual which is symbolically performed for 'public force' and reinforcing social cohesion. In this work, Geertz states "Man is an animal suspended in webs of significance, that he himself has spun".

⁷⁶ Jung, "The archetypes and the collective unconscious".

⁷⁷ Geertz, *The interpretation of cultures*, 5019. 1973

⁷⁸ Clifford Geertz, "Deep play: Notes on the Balinese cockfight," *Daedalus* (1972).

Geertz maintains the system of semiotics but stipulates that meaning is not found in the individual but is a network of 'significations that are on public display'. In "*Thick Description*"⁷⁹ Geertz gives more detail into the process of interpreting culture as text. Here, the societal expression of symbols, rituals, and behaviours can be studied. Ethnography is the central feature of this method. Immersion into the culture, participating in the culture and then using a literary process of correlating 'textual piles of meaning' analyses the themes and patterns of the culture to convey their deeper meaning through vivid ethnographic writing. The literary approach to analysis involves very descriptive and immersive writing as a life-like manuscript to unravel the various layers or webs of meaning performed in rituals.

Geertz's symbolic interpretive method specifies local cultural ethnography but offers links to Jung's universal phenomenon of consciousness⁸⁰ In his many cultural observations, Jung⁸¹ also acknowledges the societal practice of connecting with archetypal symbolism and ritualistic sharing of social meanings. However, Jung does not systematically examine the symbolism in its group relationship and meaning.

Maurice Bloch may have been influenced by many of Geertz's ideas. However, his exploration of symbols, rituals, and the interpretive nature of anthropology, provides additional perspectives. Bloch has made significant contributions towards anthropology's understanding of symbolism as it relates to physical elements in culture. His major criticisms of Geertz relate to concerns that the interpretive process developed may overlook these material aspects.

In "*How We Think They Think*"⁸² Bloch shares detailed insights into the interpretation of symbols, their meaning, and the symbolic enactment of cultural practices. He emphasises the aspects of culture that are material and discusses an active embodiment and manipulation of symbolism for individual and social expressions of power. Bloch connects consciousness with cognition when he approaches cultural expression in the material world. Therefore, he adds a layer of explicit meanings in social practices to the deeper, implicit layer of metaphor. He establishes that material culture is dynamic and not purely a record of fixed objects and their utility.

In Bloch's view material culture imbibes the life and forces of social relationships, through primary, and active components in the creation and communication of meaning-making. Cultural physical

⁷⁹ Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture 1973," (1973).

⁸⁰ Carl Gustav Jung, *The archetypes and the collective unconscious* (Routledge, 2014).

⁸¹ Jung, *The archetypes and the collective unconscious*.

⁸² Maurice EF Bloch, *How we think they think: Anthropological approaches to cognition, memory, and literacy* (Routledge, 2018).

artefacts signify social power, status, and prowess within the complexities of social organisation. Possession of certain ritual artefacts conveys symbolic privilege and social abilities to perform roles of power connection and mediation with 'the other' to construct and reinforce meaning-making. The artefacts alone become symbols of embodied power and force. They form mechanisms to transfer and exchange cultural consciousness via relationships to social values.

My research references the insights of anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss surrounding symbolism, shamanism, and totems in traditional tribal societies.⁸³ Lévi-Strauss has made significant contributions to the study of culture and human societies. His work is particularly in the field of structuralism, which is not a central methodological focus of my research. However, his extensive insights connect to other lenses in cultural study. When discussing material culture and symbolic representation, his insights into symbolism, myth, and cultural structures thematically relate to the personality masks humans wear in social contexts. These masks are associated with ritual and enactment of the Hero's Journey.

To Lévi-Strauss, the concept of a 'mask' is symbolic.⁸⁴ It represents a form of material culture explored further by Bloch, and a social construct rather than exclusively a physical face covering. Structuralism concerns analysing cultural phenomena as systems of binary oppositions. Rituals, cultural narratives, and performances with masks may contextually represent binary structures through which Lévi-Strauss⁸⁵ proposes societies make sense of the world. In this context, whether physical or conceptual, masks and their use carry deep symbolic meanings and the 'lived experiences' of individuals and specific cultures. As a cultural artefact, the mask may also act as an intermediary between the individual, spiritual forces, and society. Lévi-Strauss' focus is the understanding of how these contribute to the overall structure of meaning.

The anthropological lenses of Geertz and Lévi-Strauss⁸⁶ take a divergent path. However, there are certain areas in phenomenology and symbolic anthropology where their concepts of cultural meanings intersect. Both perceive consciousness in the symbolism embedded in cultural meanings and the symbolic embodiment in rituals and social expressions.

In his structuralist approach, Lévi-Strauss proposes that masks infuse phenomenological experiences with cultural value. He views cultural phenomena, including rituals and symbols, as

⁸³ A De Ruijter, "Levi-Strauss and symbolic anthropology," in *Symbolic Anthropology in the Netherlands* (Brill, 1982).

⁸⁴ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Way of the Masks*, trans. Douglas and McIntyre Modeleski, Vancouver, Canada (Seattle: Washington Press, 1982).

⁸⁵ Lévi-Strauss, *The Way of the Masks*.

⁸⁶ De Ruijter, "Levi-Strauss and symbolic anthropology."

structured systems of meaning. The use of masks within this framework becomes a symbolic expression that holds significance within the larger cultural structure.

In contrast, Geertz⁸⁷ emphasises the intersubjective nature of culture, where masks are seen as a cultural 'text' that requires interpretation. Geertz's views on phenomenological experiences associated with masks are not restricted to ritualised acts. They are symbols with deeper meanings, relative to cultural contexts.

In both cases, the emphasis is on cultural meanings, symbols, and the way individuals interpret and make sense of their experiences. Masks serve as cultural artefacts and a medium through which deeper meanings are expressed, shared, and ritualised within a cultural framework. Within the structure, their utility serves as a mnemonic way of remembering. People share personal, ancestral, and social knowledge across time, space, and place.

I address this functional way of sharing consciousness as spatially structured knowledge systems in my discourse of contemporary research by Lynne Kelly.⁸⁸ Her work on cross-cultural Indigenous and alternative memory techniques is discussed in the research gap section of this review. It is representative of the niche field of cultural astronomy, Indigenous and traditional knowledge involved in this research.

The identified research gap highlights that the cultural value of masks is not primarily a memory device for survival. It is a phenomenal symbolism. The mask goes beyond utilitarian or practical functions. It becomes an integrated part of a broader symbolic language that conveys and reinforces consciousness as individual and cultural norms, beliefs, and experiences. This is an area that my research also connects to Jungian⁸⁹ archetypal theory and collective symbolism found in personal and cultural paradigms. In this context, the mask may also have direct associations and mediate between the psycho-social dimensions of personal identity and symbolism mirrored in celestial cosmology and sky lore.

⁸⁷ Geertz, *The interpretation of cultures*, 5019. 1973

⁸⁸ Lynne Kelly, *Knowledge and power in prehistoric societies: Orality, memory, and the transmission of culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

⁸⁹ Jung, *The archetypes and the collective unconscious*.

Research Gap

Phenomenology and Indigenous Transmission

“No life is sufficient unto itself. A person is singular only in the sense in which astronomers use the term: a relative point in space and time where invisible forces become fleetingly visible.”

—Claude Lévi-Strauss, 1990

Phenomenological anthropologist Michael Jackson quotes Lévi-Strauss in *“Myths/Histories/Lives”*,⁹⁰ as a post-ethnographic reflection of his fieldwork in central Australia with ‘First Nation’ people, while living on an outstation in the rainforests of Cape York. Jackson’s existentialist thought connects to his notion that humans have an external and social ‘belonging’ or ownership as well as individual autonomy. He states: “Just as the stars at night are set in imperceptible galaxies, so our lives flicker and fail in the dark streams of his history, fate, and genealogy.” In this statement, he reveals a personal connection of existence to the astral heavens and a reflection of ‘what it is like’ to be a human in a conscious incarnation between life and death. That state of existence co-exists in the hearts and minds of others who ‘know’ us and in the afterlife, those who ‘remember’ us. Jackson extends our ‘third state’ of existence in the afterlife, where we seemingly dissipate into the realms of ‘myth and legend’ as symbolic reconstructions of ‘lived experience’.

In *“How Lifeworlds Work: Emotionality, Sociality, and the Ambiguity of Being”*⁹¹ Jackson discusses the social order as a ‘force field’ comprising affective and cognitive elements that impact both subjective priorities and shared cultural needs. His writing synthesises anthropology theory, ethnography, and philosophy, with insights from psychology, neuropsychology, and classical literature. From this multi-disciplinary approach, Jackson proposes that cultural forms and social order run parallel to ‘emotions, moods, and feelings, impulses, desires and dispositions.’ He explores the interplay between affect and social order encountered during Kuranko society fieldwork in the seventies—case studying life crises and kinship. This work marks Jackson’s

⁹⁰ Jackson, *“Myths/Histories/Lives”*.

⁹¹ Michael Jackson, *How Lifeworlds Work: Emotionality, Sociality, and the Ambiguity of Being* (University of Chicago Press, 24 May 2018, 2017). <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226492018.001.0001>.

innovative quest to bring an additional lens of ‘aspect anthropology’ to his established legacy of phenomenological subjectivity in existential anthropology. The essence of his writing is the interaction between personal and social dimensions. Reciprocity of relationships is featured in the inner and the outer world where social life worlds are mutually organised.

Aspect anthropology is an embryonic subfield of the anthropology of consciousness. Its influences reach back to seventeenth-century philosopher Spinoza.⁹² He saw the body as capable of affecting or being affected. He saw affects as constants in humanity. These comprise fear, hate, desire, and hope, and love. Anthropological interest in the senses, the body and other non-discursive or pre-discursive forces impacting social life emerged in the mid-nineties, with Brian Massumi’s *“Parables of the Virtual.”*⁹³ Eve Sedgwick applied the theory to reference the affective conditions, mostly emotions, provoked by the AIDS epidemic in *“Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity.”*⁹⁴

Although aspect terminology has been liberally referred to in many disciplines, its application as an anthropological theory has remained within mostly uncharted territory. One prominent exception is Charles Hirschkind’s *“The ethical soundscape: Cassette sermons and Islamic counterpublics”*.⁹⁵ His work approaches affect as an autonomous power or force associated with aspects of sound and voice, creatively adapted into ethnography. I apply this notion in my research.

Jackson’s⁹⁶ affective turn to explore the emotions, sociality, and ambiguity of existence is applied to his ethnographies in Africa, Australia, and those of other anthropologists. He juxtaposes the affects with order. These include social norms, traditions, customs, rules, and values. He describes relationships between these dimensions—including the tension between affect and order that is revealed through the Kurankos’ narratives. Tension is a notable presence in the spaces of the social forces. It is found in the subjects of the storytelling, as a way of processing unresolved tensions in their minds. The stories as they are told, have the power to change the human experience of the world, regardless of any fixed, unchanging structure.

In his chapter ‘Crossing the Water’⁹⁷ Jackson describes water as a ‘geopolitical boundary’ where ‘crossing a river suggests a movement from one state to another’ as his observations of Kuranko

⁹² Baruch Spinoza, *Spinoza: complete works* (Hackett Publishing, 2002).

⁹³ Brian Massumi, *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation* (Duke University Press, 2021).

⁹⁴ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching feeling: Affect, pedagogy, performativity* (Duke University Press, 2003).

⁹⁵ Charles Hirschkind, *The ethical soundscape: Cassette sermons and Islamic counterpublics* (Columbia University Press, 2006).

⁹⁶ Jackson, *How Lifeworlds Work: Emotionality, Sociality, and the Ambiguity of Being*. 152, 157

⁹⁷ *Ibid* pp 16-37

initiation rites. He draws on Jungian⁹⁸ symbolism within the psyche of 'anima as feminine' and 'animus as masculine' as an intra-psychic shift of psychological transformation that takes on a physical manifestation when the male foreskin or the female clitoris is severed.⁹⁹ The social switching of male and female roles in their initiation rites is marked by a passage of ritualised, theatrical behaviour used to bring about emotional affect transformation and enable the transition into a new adult state of being.

Jackson's poignant ethnographic descriptions are loaded with discursive connotations and underlying threads of deeper complexity for further thought. But the simplicity of his telling through the aspect lens, reveals both implicit and explicit tenets of consciousness in culture. He signifies both local and non-local aspects and phenomenal forces shaping the lives and behaviours of these people. Within this passage, I find hints of a deeper, primordial symbolism that is being 'spoken' by the Kuranko in their liminal rites of passage. The universal motif of crossing the water and associations with an arcane archetypal way of being are subject to more research discussion.

As Jackson continues to expand his use of existential theoretical constructs, I note the approaches are valuable lenses to study an anthropology of consciousness. Existential and aspect anthropology—although in its infancy—is a valid means to extract and examine the subtlety and interaction of pre-discursive 'forces' on the phenomena of symbolism as it transcends consciousness in personal, social, and environmental situations.

In 'Role Reversals and Mimetic Rites'¹⁰⁰ Jackson discusses aspects of behaviour found in the Kuranko's actions towards death and mourning. He refers to the 'danger' of personal and uncontrolled expressions of grief in the Kuranko worldview. Jackson correlates this practice as a masking behaviour that requires the same "conscious control as simulating or feigning emotions" to prevent the deceased person's spirit from recognising loved ones. The phenomenon of 'mourning disguises' reconnects with my earlier review discussions on the symbolic nature of the mask explored by Lévi-Strauss¹⁰¹ and in symbolic interpretations by Geertz.¹⁰² Jackson's¹⁰³ ethnographic descriptions of mimetic rites associated with death also obliquely associate aspect behaviours and performances that serve a 'mockery' way of 'remembering' the deceased and filial relationships that

Hobson, "Dreaming." 322-324

⁹⁸ Jung, C, 'The Archetypes, and the Collective Unconscious', 2014.

⁹⁹ Jackson, *How Lifeworlds Work: Emotionality, Sociality, and the Ambiguity of Being*. 152, 157

¹⁰⁰ Jackson, *How Lifeworlds Work: Emotionality, Sociality, and the Ambiguity of Being*. 82-86

¹⁰¹ Lévi-Strauss, *The Way of the Masks*,.

¹⁰² Geertz, *The interpretation of cultures*, 5019. 1973

¹⁰³ Jackson, *How Lifeworlds Work: Emotionality, Sociality, and the Ambiguity of Being*. 82-86

perhaps allow the participants (both living and dead) to navigate the transition of respective states of existential 'being'.

In her published dissertation "*Knowledge and Power in Prehistoric Societies: Orality, Memory, and the Transmission of Culture*"¹⁰⁴ Lynne Kelly explores the use of memory aids and symbolism in the temporal transmission of practical knowledge from pre-agricultural cultures. Kelly's research includes reviewing other ethnographies including the Nunamiut and Tareumiut people of Northwest Alaska. She proposes evidence of how cultures utilise ritual and mythology to pass down ecological knowledge about plant species and animal behaviour.¹⁰⁵

Kelly's thesis¹⁰⁶ is extensively supported by studies of mythology and collaboration with Indigenous First Nation communities and experts in alternative knowledge systems. Cultural practices have allowed for the transmission of taxonomic and cartographic knowledge among tribes. Kelly also examines the role of mnemonic technologies, such as rock art, landscape features, and portable objects like Aboriginal tjuringa boards and message sticks. These material mnemonic devices serve as locations featuring sequenced rituals and features that symbolise episodes in myths. They aid in the accurate memorisation and transmission of knowledge.

Kelly significantly describes the Indigenous experience of 'songlines' in her discussions of memory devices. Also known as 'dreaming tracks', these walking routes geographically cross the environment and link places of importance. Songlines trace astronomy and geographical elements through time and place as cosmology and ancient stories. I note as relevant to my current research, that the intentional walking of these creation symbolic narratives, brings to current life consciousness a synergy of aspect personal, social, and phenomenal forces, irrespective of dimensional space and time.

Kelly's multi-disciplinary study centres on social science and the fields of neurological science and cognition. With less anthropological background to support her extensive ethnographic interpretations, archaeologists and anthropologists may find significant elements of her work without substantive evidence. In places, she makes generalist assumptions—as pointed out by Denis Byrne.¹⁰⁷ In other areas, such as her literature review on memory, her background evidence is comprehensive.

¹⁰⁴ Kelly, *Knowledge and power in prehistoric societies: Orality, memory, and the transmission of culture*.

¹⁰⁵ Denis Byrne, "Knowledge and power in prehistoric societies: orality, memory and the transmission of culture," (Taylor & Francis, 2016).

¹⁰⁶ Kelly, *Knowledge and power in prehistoric societies: Orality, memory, and the transmission of culture*.

¹⁰⁷ Byrne, "Knowledge and power in prehistoric societies: orality, memory and the transmission of culture." 87

Despite the divergence of approaches, there are correlations between the literature in this review and the transmission of symbolism in local and non-local contexts, that significantly link Kelly's work to my research.¹⁰⁸ Her interdisciplinary discussions of alternative and traditional memory systems reveal a physical, embodied mechanism for archetypal symbolic transmission. I find anthropological correlations between Jackson's¹⁰⁹ mimetic discussions and those of Kelly¹¹⁰—who also suggests that mnemonic techniques, such as repetition and alliteration in songs and formulaic repetition in dance, are used in initiation rituals to remember.

However, Kelly's major premise rests on her claims that memory is the 'primary' function of cultural ritual spaces and practices. She proposes that the cultural symbolism transmission and these sacred places are primarily functional mechanisms to remember and transfer adaptive survival values and traits for resilience. This assumption significantly ignores or negates the extensive anthropological evidence the profession provides. This oversight is somewhat akin to Le Barre's criticisms of Jung.¹¹¹ Remembering is a fundamental process for transferring survival knowledge as Kelly coherently proposes. However, her ethnographic evidence does not support that remembering is the exclusive or primary function of ritual and customary practices. One of Kelly's case studies with the Yolgnu people even describes their destruction of a painting as a ritual act in death rites. This seems to contradict her assertion that these paintings are used as mnemonic devices for 'remembering'. Many anthropologists' ethnographies on cultural cosmologies reveal that humans have focused attention on matters concerning death and the afterlife beyond acts of remembering. However, Kelly's knowledge involves extensive Indigenous collaboration and gives valuable insights. The facets of this form of consciousness transmission will be explored in more detail in my discussion.

¹⁰⁸ Lynne Kelly and Denis Gojak, "The Memory Code: The traditional Aboriginal memory technique that unlocks the secrets of Stonehenge, Easter Island and ancient monuments the world over - A Review," *Proquest Canberra* 40 (2016).

¹⁰⁹ Jackson, *How Lifeworlds Work: Emotionality, Sociality, and the Ambiguity of Being*. 82-86

¹¹⁰ Kelly, *Knowledge and power in prehistoric societies: Orality, memory, and the transmission of culture*.

¹¹¹ Drake, "Jung and his critics."

Conclusion

In this literature review, I have identified and discussed key texts and knowledge contributors informing my research. Within the described delimitations, and constraints I conducted the review on a key topic basis. Within each of these areas, additional literature critically evolves my study, and the additional literature is applied within the body of this thesis.

My next actions are to discuss the research design and methodology.

chapter three

METHOD AND DESIGN

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

About

The challenge to insight and transcend the meanings of consciousness is marked by cultural symbolism, complex relationships, perspectives, and diverse worldviews that form an intricate network of beliefs, established knowledge, human experiences, and existential phenomena.

A research problem of the complexity I have identified requires a comprehensive methodology—even in the absence of ethnographic fieldwork. The perspectives and implications discussed in the introduction and literature review chapters of this thesis inform the methodological frame, and anthropological position to situate the research project. The need to engage interpretive philosophy, qualitative approaches and a multi-dimensional concept is critical to my exploration of consciousness as a whole systems model.

In this chapter, I describe how I designed and conducted my research. This entails the research philosophy, approach, strategy, design, and execution.

Research Philosophy

Philosophical exploration and interpretation are core approaches to this research. My strategy engages the inter-subjectivity and examines lived experiences, symbolic metaphors and idioms as meanings, and qualities of cultural forces. Through deep longitudinal research, my analysis focuses on understanding and interpreting behaviours and social phenomena through anthropological approaches. This philosophical paradigm recognises the importance of individual experiences, values, and interpretations. These factors involve observations, textual analysis, and grounded visual ethnography to explore the nature and complexity of social worldviews.

As anthropology of consciousness, the exploration of phenomenology requires reflection, relationship analysis and conceptualisation of empirical data that often parallels and intersects classical literary and traditional viewpoints. The nature of literature impacts the implicit and explicit perceptions found in the cultural domain—where consciousness is observed in experiences and existential explanations.

Research Approach

My research focuses on understanding and interpreting the meaning, context, and inter-subjective experiences of individuals and social groups in cross-cultural and culturally specific scenarios.

Chosen for the capability to incorporate diverse requirements, the method primarily assesses literature relevant to my study. I carry out an additional review of media content that explores the complexities of social reactions to the topic. My approach includes listening and observing to correlate the links and implications to my research problem, aims and objectives.

Research Strategy and Design

My research is a theoretical review strategy that incorporates conceptual design. Figure 2 illustrates the research concepts, issues identified and the deeper analysis processes I mapped to devise a strategy. There are no positive or quantitative methods in this research. However, the research method may be repeated to independently review the results from conceptual design processes and literature synthesis.

Conceptual design

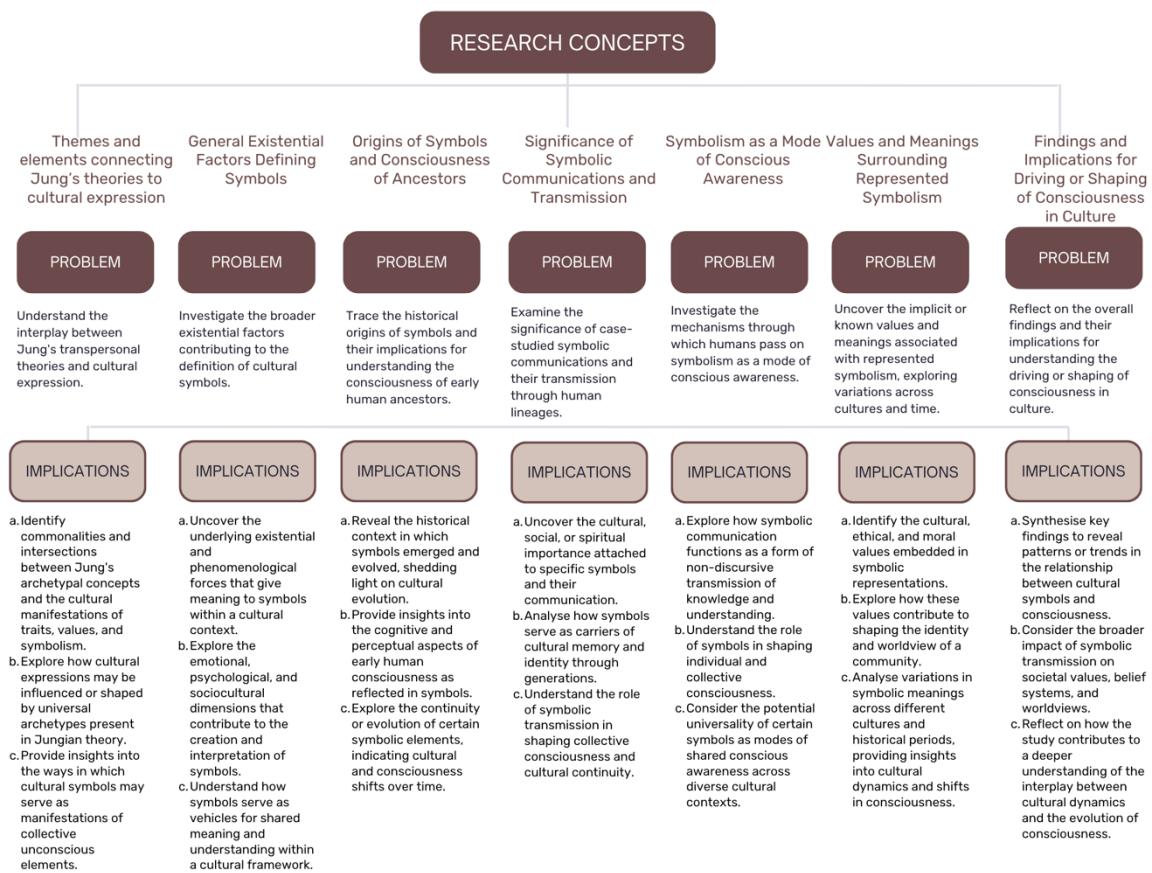


Figure 2: Research Conceptual Map.

Research Design Strategy

I adopt a multi-approach research design to capture multiple facets of consciousness and enable a more holistic examination. This model includes four major strategies.

The first strategy is 'grounding theory' as 'visual ethnography': I 'watch and listen' to observe, analyse, and review film media debates, symposia, and knowledge seminars relevant to the topic of consciousness. I examine intricacies and consider deeper implications concerning my identified research problem. Through this action I form concepts from the data, group these concepts into categories and synthesise the results to identify themes, patterns, and anomalies.

From this approach, I form a general interpretation of the topic, its background, situation, issues, and implications that arise. I next consider their significance to society. This assessment builds a

contextual background of knowledge. I perceive anthropological, academic, and societal awareness of the topic. My motive is to fully identify and explore a comprehensive understanding of the problem and the implications of its nature and relationships. With this basis, I then re-examine the contextual assessment to identify and explore the anthropological paradigm and how needs, trends, and approaches 'fit' or 'don't fit' with the big problem and its tenets.

The second strategy is 'ethnography': I review, assess, and interpret existing ethnography conducted by anthropologists as relevant to my study. I conduct several visual ethnographies of film.

The third strategy is 'phenomenological design': I conduct an examination and analysis to reveal the nature of consciousness through the lens of cultural worldview and experience. I interrogate the meanings of people's interactions, social actions and 'lived experiences.' I examine symbolic meanings, phenomena, and aspect theory 'forces.' I identify deeper and transcending insights into consciousness and alternative perspectives.

The fourth strategy is 'case study': I research celestial phenomena. I examine an example of Great Mother archetypal symbolism found locally and non-locally in a tripartite relationship of cultural astronomy, symbolic culture, and temporal transmission. I connect these common denominators with research of consciousness in the cultural domain.

I have designed this funnel-like methodological strategy to scope a research design that may be likened to a 'functional design' approach. This action recognises the broad scope of consciousness definition and understanding as a 'big question inquiry'. The design strategy empowers resolving 'hard problem' solutions, positive systems, cultural phenomena, and resilience initiatives.



Figure 3: The position and strategic approach applied to research.

I have adapted this strategic approach to ensure it meets the needs of anthropological theory and inquiry. It may address high-level issues and then narrow to reveal detailed inquiry. This design supports my intention to use the meta-framework in future related research projects. It facilitates a conceptualised view of the 'big picture' and its many linked but often disparate parts, features, and complex relationships.

Data Sampling

I adopt a broad and longitudinal data sampling approach, combining literature review and synthesis. I use targeted non-probability sampling, focused on Indigenous and traditional lineages. This sampling strategy aims to capture the universal and specific nature of a wide but concisely defined cross-section of cultural inquiry.

Data sampling involves cross-cultural research comprised of empirical literature, accredited films, peer-reviewed, scholarly articles, and ethnographic records that connect to the research aims and objectives. Synthesis investigates non-local and universal findings. For example, consciousness as a phenomenon, Jungian concepts of the collective unconscious, and cross-cultural thematic prevalence of symbolism.

Due to study limitations, the research emphasis is on non-probability sampling that is targeted as non-representative of the full population. I instead focus on data collection most relevant to the research design and strategy. This includes Indigenous and traditional lineages that profile linkages with the research project conducted and described in Appendix 1.¹¹² Specifically, the case study sample relates to a tripartite relationship between astronomy, cosmology or symbolic culture and phenomenological temporal transmission, as shown in Figure 4.

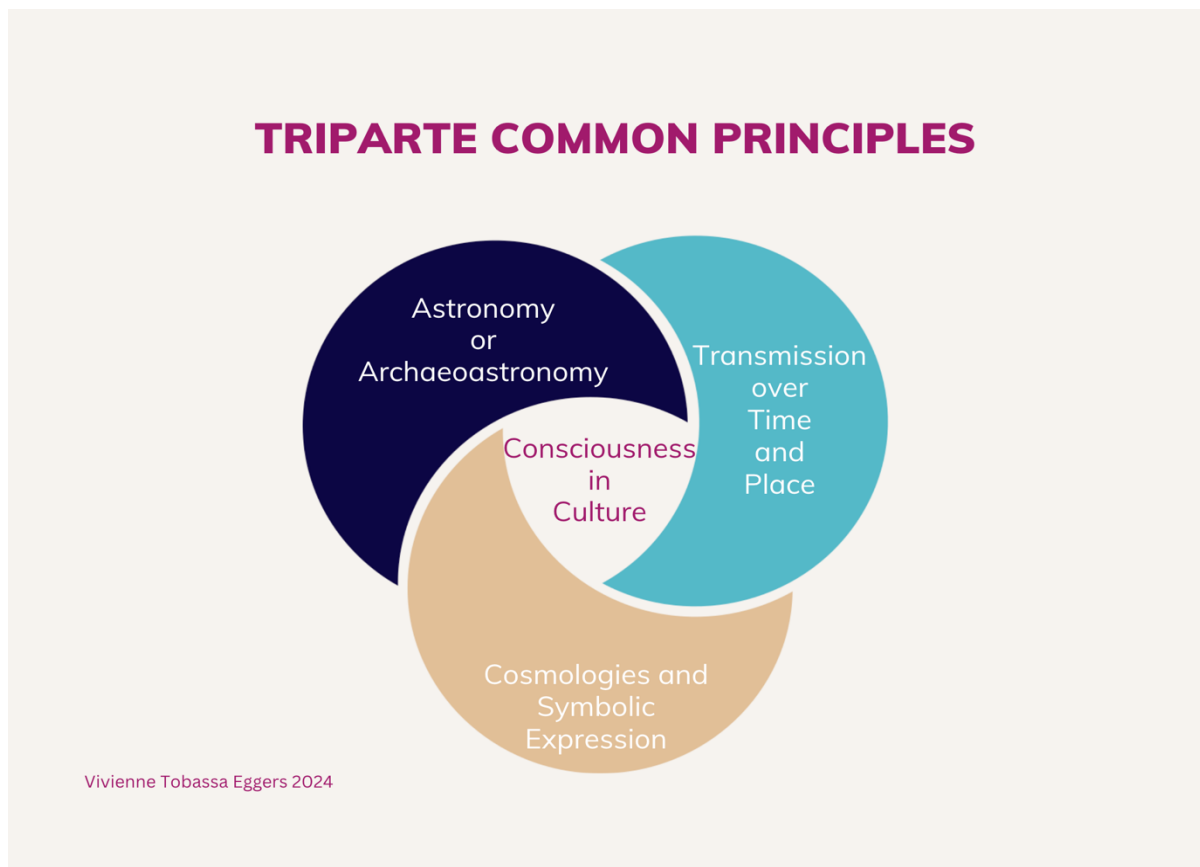


Figure 4: A case study based on three common denominators found in symbolism—representing a way of consciousness.

Data Collection

A longitudinal document analysis of historical and current research texts, theories, and ethnographic observations, serves as the foundation of data collection. I conduct ethnographic observation methods by re-interpreting other anthropologists' ethnographies.

¹¹² Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review*.

I source and select documents from scholarly data repositories, and university libraries, using database searches such as 'Discover, Scopus, and Google Scholar'. I conduct Media searches within university domains and YouTube public broadcasts that carry scholastic, scientific and professional credentials. These check these sources with their publishing institution. I use referencing and data collation technology to cite and tabularise my findings for pattern analysis, editing and reporting summarisation. I analyse and develop flow charts, and graphic images also using Canva software technology. On occasion, I use disability-assisted voice software to dictate notes and research findings.

Data Analysis

The data analysis comprises iterations of the multi-methodological approach with an emphasis on discourse analysis. Figure 2, conceptual design identifies topic-specific analysis processes. Methods include a content analysis of films, documentaries, broadcast lectures, forums, and expert panels. I listen and group content into recurrent themes and categories, to identify critical, topical points.

I synthesise research and perform thematic analysis to identify patterns, compare, and discursively interrogate connections to the topic framework. I analyse explicit and implicit meanings within the literature discussions. This process involves linking and analysis of research problems, mapping, and following leads, and evaluating research findings through investigation, reflection, and deeper analysis. I review and contrast themes, ideas, and theoretical statements.

My content analysis of ethnographies involves examining the ethnographer's observations and the subtle meanings conveyed in participant narratives. I observe and analyse dynamic relationships between spoken, aspect phenomena and texts that 'speak to me' about the experience and qualia of consciousness. I conduct narrative analysis of ethnographies and textual discussions to analyse lived experience—interpreting stories and their meanings connected to my mode of inquiry.

Finally, a summation of the data and analyses consolidates the predominant findings and conclusions. I present the developed hypothesis and future steps of research.

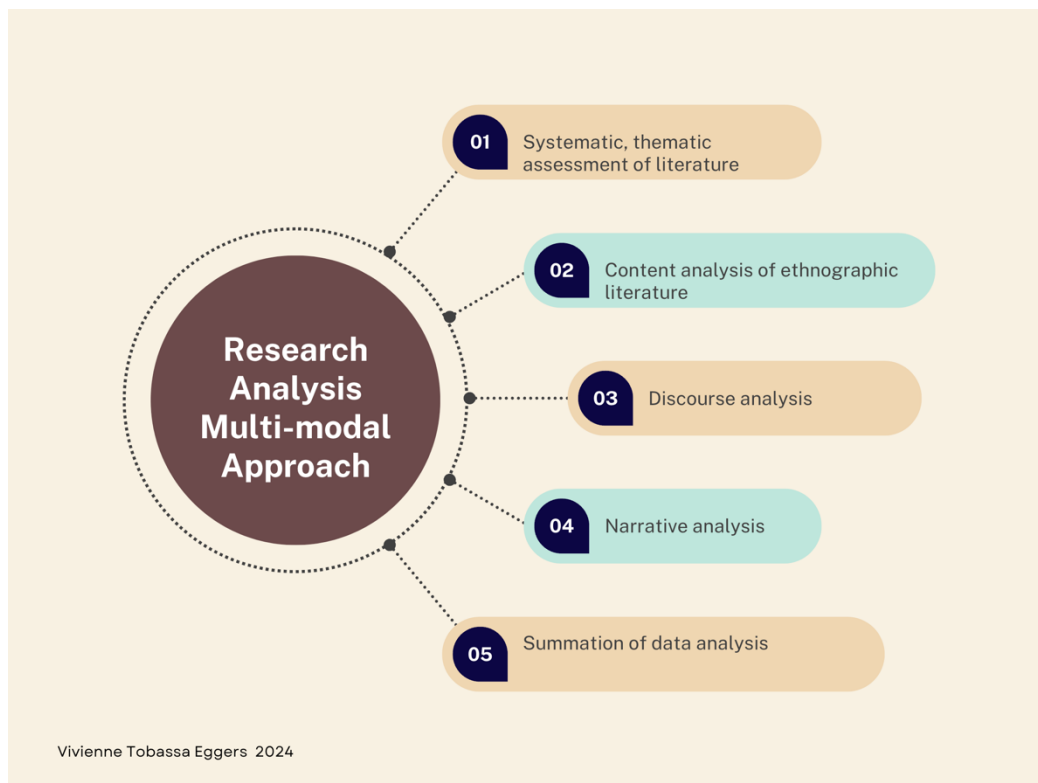


Figure 5: Five iterative approaches to analyse research.

Ethical Considerations

There are no ethnographies, fieldwork, or public or participant interactions in this research stage. The project carries a 'no, or low risk' categorisation in ethical considerations. However, when conducting any culture-oriented research, particularly when engaging with potentially ethnocentric texts, ethical considerations are critical. Respectful engagement with Indigenous issues is recognised as essential. Steps of cultural sensitivity and avoiding cultural appropriation or misrepresentations are further acknowledged.

In my 'personal statement', I provide a detailed account of my background, revealing my reflexive positioning and 'insider-outsider' involvement with Indigenous and traditional Eastern cultures.

Conclusion

In summary, this design and methodology deploys diverse conceptual research strategies. The framework and approach reflect the nature and complexity of the topic itself—as what shapes and scopes the research of consciousness and its anthropological paradigm. As described in the research aims and objectives, the research addresses the lack of contemporary, holistic approaches to studying phenomenological, theoretical, and cultural perspectives connected to consciousness.

My research design has enabled literature and media analysis to fulfil my research aims. These are summarily to comparatively review cultural consciousness, archetypes, and celestial cosmology as symbolic anthropology. I additionally reviewed symbolic transmission from phenomenal, environmental, and cultural perspectives. These may form as alternative ways of knowing and understanding existence. After scoping the broader contexts and anthropological features of consciousness, my next objective is to develop a conceptual framework that gives insight into the transpersonal and cultural domains.

These objectives are confined to the specific framework of methodological design depicted in Figure 6.

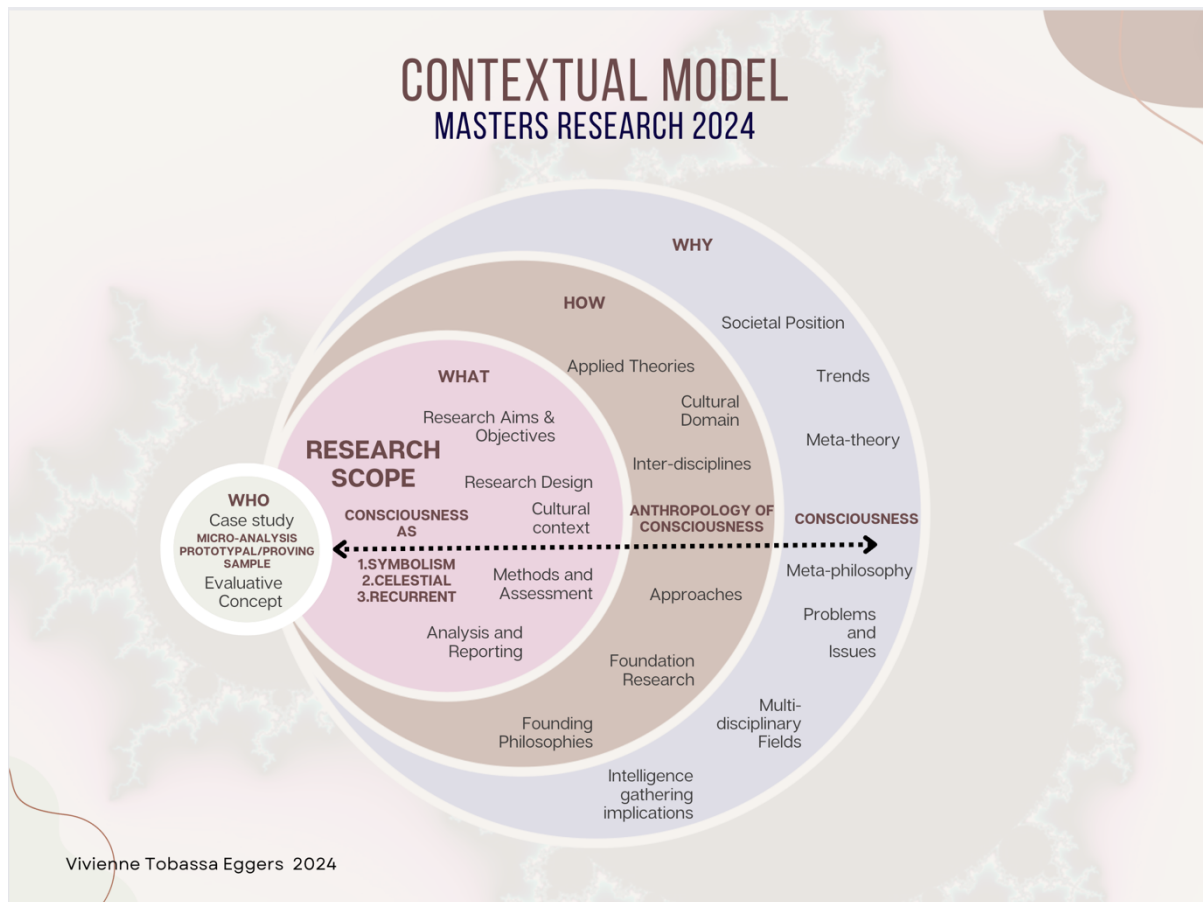


Figure 6: The Contextual model of the research project demonstrates its relational position.

This thesis is scoped and designed as a narrow study that fits within a greater framework of related research. My contextual design facilitates a definitive container that may serve multiple projects, multi-disciplinary studies and examination of networked links and relationships. I conceived the design to accommodate the metatheory of panpsychism. My workings for this model are provided in Appendix 2.¹¹³

My research design is further influenced by the ‘who’—the foundation body of literature review. The existing literature lays out the theoretical models and approaches conducted by other anthropologists and researchers within the field and is relevant to the study. This thesis project of a conceptual model accommodates the established literary discussions within context and perspectives and builds upon the research niche.

Ultimately, I designed this methodology to simplify the ‘how’ of approaching the complexity of a consciousness study and the myriad of cultural facets that may be explored. The adaptability of this approach positions it for a detailed inquiry into personal and social aspects. It may later expand to

¹¹³ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

provide broader anthropological contributions, with minimal restructuring for scaling future research.

In conclusion, Part One of this thesis has focused on introducing the research project, its scope, background, theoretical position, and methodological design. Part Two follows with a comprehensive data analysis and discussion. The thesis concludes with a summary of the findings and the forming hypothesis.

part two

THE ROUND

”

the study discussion

‘Neither this body am I, nor soul, nor these fleeting images passing by,
nor concepts and thoughts, mental images, nor yet sentiments and the psyche's labyrinth.

Who then am I?

A consciousness without origin, Not born in time, nor begotten here below.

I am that which was, is and ever shall be,

A jewel in the crown of the Divine Self,

A star in the firmament of the luminous One.’

—*Rumi*

Document Map – Part Two

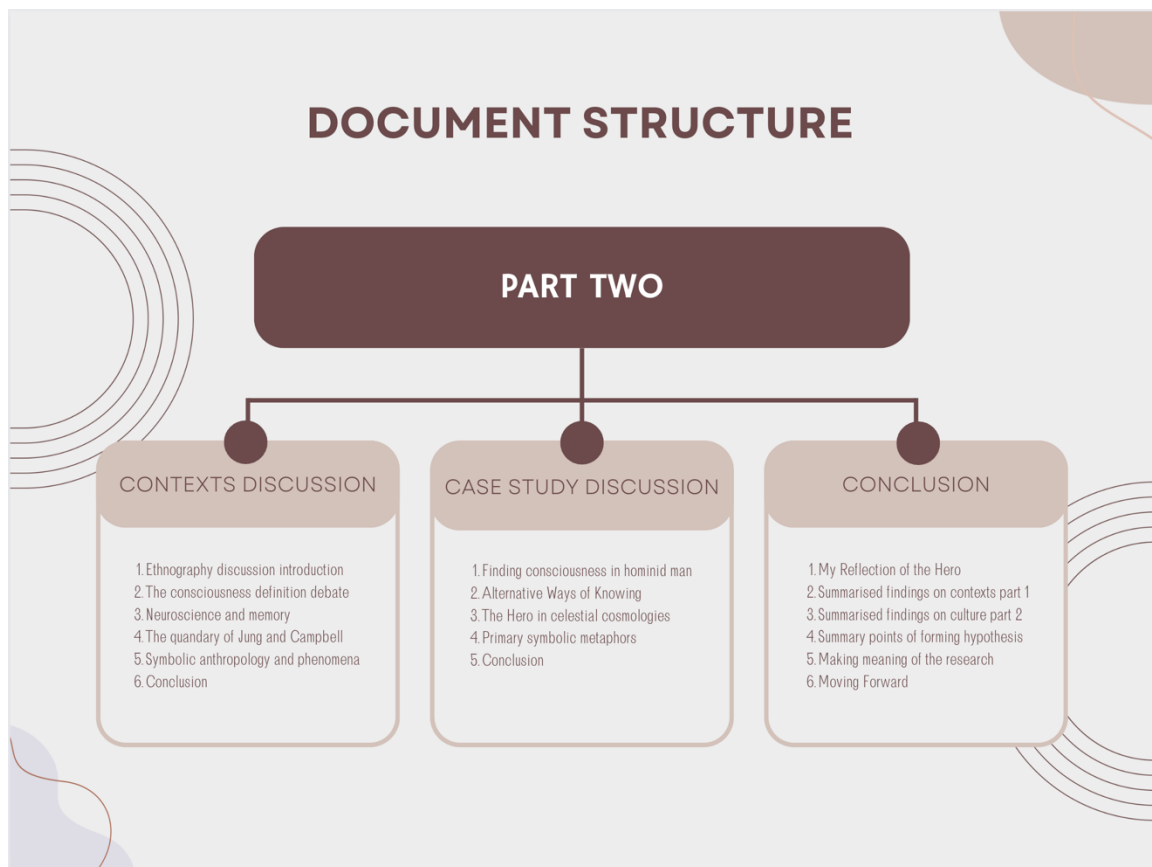


Figure 7: Overview map of thesis document sub-topics, part two.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

About Part Two

The following chapters review findings concerning the current contexts of consciousness studies. I discuss research topic relationships to the multi-disciplinary empirical literature connecting to my assessment.

Chapter Four

SCIENCE CONNECTS CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Ethnography: A Situation Analysis

In this chapter, I interpretively analyse a debate about consciousness. The discussion panel provide a situational assessment of current professional perspectives about the topic and their respective positions as thought leaders in the field. The panel consists of theorists whose work I have analysed in my research. Their topical reflections concerning cultural consciousness are therefore significantly connected to my findings.

Scientific Innovation and the Internal-External Processes Involving Consciousness

My research assessment segues into the scientific research I interrogated. I find linkages with consciousness presenting in the cultural domain. I overview contemporary scientific theories about consciousness to examine their connection and relevance to ongoing multi-disciplinary studies of the anthropology of consciousness. In this research component, I draw deeper insight relating to the initial research questions about the broader issues of cultural consciousness. These form the central question the ethnographic debate addresses, as to whether consciousness is an internally or externally derived process.

Connecting Science to Cultural Consciousness

I initially review prominent consciousness theories to assess the capability of their frameworks to answer the research questions. That is, how well they may address cultural studies within a holistic, multi-disciplinary frame. I subsequently review scientific literature to address my research questions on symbolism—how and why these may arise as local and non-local experiences that are connected to biological function. I want to understand if innovations in scientific knowledge can reveal how it may be physically possible for symbolism to have an alternative consciousness transmission. I connect rigorous neuroscientific findings that overturn traditional beliefs about the mind and the mental domain of consciousness which Jung situated his early psychoanalytic theories of symbolism, archetypes, and the psyche.¹¹⁴

Chapter Five

SYMBOLIC ANTHROPOLOGY AND STAR SONGS

Re-examination of Foundation Theories

I further analyse and contrast a contemporary research position with Jungian¹¹⁵ foundation knowledge on consciousness, its human function, and processes. My extensive research analytical process is identified in the methodology section in Figure 2. I correlate areas of Jung's research that have specific linkages to my research topic. Critically, I find that recent neuroscientific data connects and supports many of his concepts relating to consciousness. However, I want to investigate alternative consciousness transmission more fully. Instead of accepting all of Jung's controversial model of consciousness, I explore the archetypal symbolism in other contexts, central to cultural experience and meaning-making. Connecting his ideas to cultural cosmology, I analyse Joseph Campbell's¹¹⁶ expansion of archetypal motifs. He addresses cosmologies and cross-cultural comparative 'mythology' that applies a consistent 'monomyth'. I re-examine the significance of Campbell's concepts concerning the Great Mother archetype and an original symbolic 'celestial' cosmology.

¹¹⁴ Jung, "The archetypes and the collective unconscious".

¹¹⁵ Jung, "The archetypes and the collective unconscious".

¹¹⁶ Campbell and Moyers, *The power of myth*.

Symbolic Anthropology: Consciousness Perspectives in Culture

I find convergence in my research, by considering how these disparate but connecting concepts of scientific and socio-psychological explanations for functional consciousness might play out in cultural contexts. I undertake a topographical analysis of cultural symbolism—its nature, parts, features and role in universal culture and cultural-specific scenarios. I apply alternative perspectives to examine symbolism as an external phenomenon that propels human meaning-making. I apply the empirical knowledge of Geertz,¹¹⁷ Jackson,¹¹⁸ and Levi-Strauss¹¹⁹ and other scholars. I gain insight into thematic cultural patterns, relationships, behaviours, and belief systems within my framework. I consider and validate symbolism as an alternative cultural language transmission.

Chapter Six

STAR SONGS

Celestial Origins: Consciousness as an Alternative Transmission

I culminate my research findings and discussion with the examination of cultural astronomy contexts of 'star songs'. The term describes astrally derived symbolic narratives or codes that have consistently been exchanged, adopted, and 'transformed' cross-culturally as a universal transmission. I present three cultural symbols as a case example of this deep, arcane phenomenon that has implicitly or explicitly survived throughout history. These symbols demonstrate fundamental codes embedded in the fabric of the cosmos. I deduce that interconnection with phenomena incites the individual and social behaviours of archaic and modern humans. The forces in 'the other' influence humanity to create mechanisms that constitute the high 'value' of the symbolic language for making life meaning and existential explanations. This may be an implicit and explicit process involving unconscious and conscious awareness.

¹¹⁷ Clifford Geertz, "Chapter 1/Thick Description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture," *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, New York, Basic Books (1973).

¹¹⁸ Jackson, "'Myths/Histories/Lives'."

¹¹⁹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The structural study of myth," *The journal of American folklore* 68, no. 270 (1955).

Chapter Seven

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary of Research Findings

In this section, I collate and summarise the critical findings of my research. I categorise the findings aligning with the research method and discussion approaches. I first identify the key findings of consciousness. These are key statements concerning the broader scope of cultural anthropology and its intersections with science as a contextual and topographical analysis. I secondly provide summary statements compiling my findings of analysis into cultural symbolism, archetypal motifs and narratives connecting cultural astronomy and transmission of an alternative consciousness 'language' and meaning-making.

Concluding the Heroine's Journey of Consciousness Questing

From these research discoveries, I consider the implications of finding an external constitutive 'driver' of symbolic archetypal metaphors that present as an 'alternative' language of consciousness. I form a hypothesis for future investigative research that the cosmic forces and celestial aspects may be 'operating' through a celestial 'system' of astronomical precession. This affect appears in a manner akin to the way humans are biologically impacted by circadian rhythms, sunlight, gravity, and lunar cycles.

chapter four

SCIENCE CONNECTS CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Chapter Four

SCIENCE CONNECTS CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS

A discussion of the research synthesis and interpretation

About

In the first section of this chapter, I discuss a situation analysis. I conduct a visual ethnography and survey the current perspectives on consciousness and intersections between science and culture. I consider the physical capabilities and processes of human consciousness as they may apply to the nature of my cultural research. I seek a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of thought, memory, dreaming, and language as they present in bodily function, as they are aspects of consciousness inherently involved in human behaviours and cultural relationships.

I contrast this discussion with a contextual examination of Jung's¹²⁰ and Campbell's¹²¹ concepts in the manner they specifically relate to the research questions. I link the review of scientific views to areas where Jung also intersected with science and empirical research when he conceived his theories on consciousness. I trace the historical threads that Jung and contemporary science lay the foundation of their theoretical frameworks. I find the intersections of this legacy with my research queries. I apply alternative perspectives and correlate these with my core research question of alternative consciousness cultural transmission.

¹²⁰ Jung, "The archetypes and the collective unconscious".

¹²¹ Campbell and Moyers, *The power of myth*.

ETHNOGRAPHY

Does Consciousness Extend Beyond Brains?

In December 2023, the Holberg Prize Debate was streamed live from the University of Aula in Bergen, Norway. The debate chairperson David Malone was introduced by the host convenor, who stated:

"...the debate aims to engage prominent academics, as well as non-academics in public debate on pressing issues of our time, the topic of this year's debate is the scientific and philosophical question of consciousness. What is it? Where is it? Discussions of consciousness go back thousands of years and have acquired new urgency with modern scientific and technological advances. The title of this year's debate is the question 'does consciousness extend beyond brains?'"

—Holberg Prize Debate, 2023¹²²

Malone introduces a panel comprising Anil Seth, Tanya Luhmann and Rupert Sheldrake who participate in the discussion as a 'deep scientific and philosophical mystery of consciousness'. A novel factor to this panel as Malone advises "all are heretics" in their professional field. Despite their respective courage to stand out in front of their peers, the panel appears strategically chosen. Neuroscientist Anil Seth represents the 'hard science' field that pragmatically finds consciousness from and within the brain.¹²³ Seth's supposed heresy is his idea that 'life is a necessary condition for consciousness' and a new controversial theory that humans "project consciousness outside the body in mental hallucinations that create reality". He aptly reminds his associates that 'reductionist' approaches in neuroscience are a necessary act of reducing extraneous factors to focus on what are bodily functional processes. This is a point I relate to in anthropology and the

¹²² Holberg Prize Aula University, "The 2023 Holberg Debate: 'Does Consciousness Extend Beyond Brains?'," (The University Aula in Bergen, Muséplassen 3, 5007 Bergen. Norway.: Livestream on YouTube, 1 February 2024 2023), Academic Expert Debate.

¹²³ Aula University, "The 2023 Holberg Debate: 'Does Consciousness Extend Beyond Brains?'" 9:57

applied philosophical notion of phenomenology. Here the intersection is that ‘bracketing out’ non-fundamental components to uncover the ‘raw essence’ as a phenomenon, is also a form of reducing to the bare bones of the matter.

Positioned in extreme ‘scientific’ opposition to Seth is biological scientist and metaphysical researcher Rupert Sheldrake.¹²⁴ His panpsychism heresy is reported to be his theory of ‘morphic resonance’. This theory asserts that energetic fields external to the body and within bodily function have a role beyond epigenetics in cellular morphing—and affect or are affected by interconnected consciousness. These phenomenological fields exist throughout the universe and shape life. Sheldrake relates to Seth’s idea of ‘controlled hallucination’ by connecting Eastern Indian philosophical thought. He links the idea of the “Maya— as a veil of illusion where humans don’t see exactly what they experience—is somewhat like the idea that people project hallucinations onto their outside world”. He points out they are related to our imaginal thoughts and triggers from survival threats or anticipated from earlier trauma.¹²⁵ But he also states his disagreement with Seth that “it all happens inside the brain”.¹²⁶

Revealing his sympathies for panpsychism, Sheldrake describes the nineteenth-century turn of many scientific disciplines towards believing there are fields outside the body such as gravity, electromagnetic energy, radio waves, and cosmic radiation as well as geological forces. All have an impact on humans and shape the world we exist in. Many of these invisible fields stretch out far beyond the body and do not require a brain to ‘think’ them into existence. Sheldrake maintains that our consciousness is fundamental to these fields. He gives the example that the retina of the eye receives light waves external to the body and processes these phenomena into vision. Sheldrake also describes some of the evidence of psychic sensing, or phenomenological awareness that takes place outside of the body.

One well-documented experiment conducted longitudinally over twenty years in Holland demonstrates that people have an innate sense to ‘feel’ if someone is looking at them from behind. He describes how private detectives are trained to not look directly at a person they follow, for this reason. He connects this ability to survival traits witnessed in animals who sense they are being watched by predators.¹²⁷ Sheldrake provides a case for life and existence “to make more sense, if we are to consider that everything is alive” or has a level of consciousness. This thought is an alternative to proposing the human brain is the only ‘thing’ that is alive and everything else is

¹²⁴ Ibid. 48:55

¹²⁵ Ibid. 49:56

¹²⁶ Ibid. 51:56

¹²⁷ Ibid. 1:02:21

inanimate. He uses this argument to demonstrate why he claims that some scientific thought is indeed ‘unnecessarily reductionist’. Sheldrake upholds that if we take the view that the universe contains life, we have greater prospects of reaching a more unified agreement on consciousness. On the panpsychist view, Sheldrake states “There are levels of consciousness even in atoms and molecules, and not just in atoms, molecules, and animals and plants, but in the sun, in the galaxy, in the galactic system, and maybe the whole cosmos.”¹²⁸

Entering the polarised scientific debate with almost diplomatic mediation is anthropologist and psychologist Tanya Luhrmann.¹²⁹ Luhrmann introduces the concepts of human ‘lived experiences’, and phenomena that are ‘sensed’ as qualities or a ‘knowing’ that constitutes ‘belief it is so’.¹³⁰ She witnesses many people in her extensive studies who have claimed to have rich experiences that cause them to believe in a spiritual reality. She refers to this phenomenology as “feelings of being aware” in consciousness.

Luhrmann reports conflicting relationships observed about the mental and physical, where thoughts may be powerful to individuals, and cross the mind-world boundary as a ‘power’.¹³¹ These give rise to culturally specific ideas that are an “intuitive elaboration that thoughts can leave the mind and act on its own to create a reality”. The more this ‘porous’ state, alike osmosis, between mind and world is accepted, the more likely the person is to believe in a spiritual phenomenon. This person will have a sense of communication, that a ‘God’ or spiritual power has spoken to them, and that they have also received thoughts from the world. That is, not all their thoughts are uniquely private.

Luhrmann’s¹³² alluded heresy is perhaps her historical studies and interests in the supernatural, which she shares with the study of psychosis in various ethnographic contexts. She clarifies the voices her subjects ‘hear’ or communicate with, as spirits or through a ‘higher’ spirit, are typically not the same as the voices that sufferers of psychosis hear.¹³³ This observation leads to the reinforcement that people who ‘sense’ or ‘feel’ supernatural experiences are not necessarily imagining or hallucinating. At the least, the ‘experience’ of an external ‘higher consciousness’ speaking to or through them is *real* in a manner of subjectivity. Luhrmann perceives this process as being “possible to have thoughts that are perceived as not one’s own—an invisible ‘other’”. She also concedes that she cannot rule out the possibility that there may indeed be ‘another’ being ‘out

¹²⁸ Ibid. 1:38:20

¹²⁹ Ibid. 29:32

¹³⁰ Ibid. 29:50

¹³¹ Ibid. 37:49

¹³² Ibid. 29:32

¹³³ Ibid. 44:54

there' of sorts involved. Regardless, she states her work demonstrates someone can have relationships with their thoughts inside their mind *and* experiences beyond the body. Some of these relationships are also social, as with religious groups, experienced as a group form of interconnection.

Neuroscience might argue that the act of perceiving is an internal, neural process but I am aware discursively from Luhrmann's¹³⁴ general tone, body language and speech inflexions, and perhaps even some intuitive consciousness sensory, that she is implicitly stating '*belief* of thoughts being not one's own'. This adjustment for the meaning of 'perception' is an example where the text or language alone would give only a literal sense—interpreted from the social worldview in context—but of an entirely different professional understanding. However, the demarcation is significant because Seth might interpret perception as a functional process of brain mapping and identification. Whereas the term '*belief*' might carry the understanding of an unsubstantiated construct that may be rooted in fantasy rather than rational, scientific thought. However, we may also consider that beliefs may be factual or not, and perceptions may be hallucinated or '*not real*'. To the people who '*experience*' them, they are as real as any other material construct—as neuroscience confirms. Therefore, it is difficult to decide that other people's experiences of phenomenal consciousness are less real, less factual than any other '*explanation*'—a point that Luhrmann articulated well. An emerging thought arises, that for millennia, countless people have felt compelled to believe and share belief in a consciousness that exists in '*the other*'. And this belief is not exclusively rooted in dualism.

I was incited to interpretively analyse this debate—not because of its highlighted '*heretical science*' nature. It was one of the very few publicly broadcast expert debates on consciousness I sourced that considered including the contribution of an anthropological *cultural* perspective. My observation is relevant to the identified literature gap and societal call for more anthropological studies. Significantly, the cultural perspective provided by Luhrmann successfully intersected the points of view positioned by both Seth and Sheldrake. This act enabled a broader, holistic perspective, where both scientists successfully stated their disparate ideas and even found common ground. But Luhrmann retained a stance of neutrality towards both theoretical positions—finding connections in both arguments with objective relationships to the cultural paradigm.

Luhrmann's extensive years of research and ethnographic projects helped me to frame this thesis research proposal with an anthropological lens. My interpretive meaning derived from this debate

¹³⁴ Ibid. 29:32

summarises that consciousness is to humans a *multi-directional communication that is physical, phenomenal, and culturally existent outside the body*. This statement does not deny other facets of consciousness as a ‘phenomenon’ exist. To some extent, these three points were agreed upon by all parties from divergent perspectives that could never completely agree.

For Seth, the only existence is a form of imaginal projection. However, as a visual ethnography, observing this debate serves as a clear reflection of the dynamic interactions that take place between academics and experts in the challenge to find consensual agreement on the definition of consciousness. Were it not for Luhrmann’s intermediary serving discussions in this debate, the two scientific views may never have found commonality—despite Sheldrake’s mature composure and Seth’s conciliatory acknowledgement of factors where both might expand and improve their trajectory.

In summary, the ‘problem’ of consciousness inside or outside the body in this debate appears to be more about compounded worldviews that won’t allow flexible consideration and collaboration of theoretical ideas. Consequently, these more flexible and innovative thought leaders become described as “heretics”. Yet despite comprehensive insights, it was apparent that the contributors were representing a small-scale debate in a much wider multi-disciplinary territory.

CONSCIOUSNESS

The Definition Debate... Is it endless?

I believe that anthropological studies of consciousness will have difficulty finding legitimacy within the multi-disciplinary view—unless at least some consideration is given to the major interdisciplinary theories pursuing the challenge of explanation. It appears that at the root of contention is an acknowledgement that professional ‘belief’ or speculation as to ‘what consciousness is’, approaches the ‘big problem’ with a divisive and subjective understanding of what consciousness *involves*. When the inferences of meaning are greatly divergent, there may never be a consensual explanation. Possibly, the best society may hope for in the coming years are several explanations, relative to the field and approach.

At this emergent stage in contemporary studies, I recognise a limited value in discussing the many theories in detail. However, some examinations were relevant towards scoping the anthropological inquiry. As stated in the introduction, cultural contexts marked the literature gap, but the ongoing development in every other field that studies consciousness ‘touches’ the cultural domain. The one unifying touchpoint I have found is the recognition of ‘phenomena’ within definitions and studies of consciousness.

I conducted a cross-comparative assessment of prominent consciousness theories or fields I identified, as connecting to cultural contexts and anthropology of consciousness.

CONSCIOUSNESS DOMAINS COMPARISON CHART

THEORY/FIELD	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL	ENVIRONMENTAL	UNIVERSAL
NEUROSCIENCE	✓	✓ SOME	ENACTIVE APPROACH	
CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY SYMBOLISM, METAPHYSICS PHENOMENOLOGY (PHIL)	✓	✓	✓	✓
PSYCHOLOGY HIGH ORDER THEORY TRANSPERSONAL/INTEGRAL	✓	✓	✓ SOME	
QUANTUM PHYSICS STRING THEORY QUANTUM FIELD	SUB ATOMIC	✓	✓	✓
ORCH-OR THEORY MATHEMATICS/NEURO/QUANTUM	✓	✓	✓	✓
PREDICTIVE PROCESSING GLOBAL WORK THEORY	✓	✓		
INTEGRATED INFORMATION THEORY MORPHIC RESONANCE FIELD	✓	✓	✓	✓

Figure 8: Consciousness studies domains represented—by personal internal, external cultural and meta-contexts.

I note the findings based on my specific, described lens of inquiry reflected the statements of the SAC identified in the introduction. As the comparison table demonstrates, cultural anthropology studies can establish a presence within and across every field and every or all domains of their research interest. Internal or computationally bound studies such as predictive processing are less concerned with cultural aspects. However, the specification of ‘phenomenology’ in the framework of symbolism and cultural transmission of consciousness finds linkage to these more closed-field studies. This connection may prove beneficial for more ‘porous,’ future activities and

investigations. Further, cognition studies that bear enactive approaches to consciousness may be situated in either neuroscience or anthropology within an environmental framework. Some psychology studies may also extend beyond the local domain with enactive approaches.

I undertook further analysis to assess how my research may interact with other projects via a common clade of 'phenomenology'.

Theory Name	Field/Discipline	Premise Statement	Context	Connection to Phenomenology (in situ Anthropology)
Integrated Information Theory (IIT)	Neuroscience/Philosophy	Consciousness arises from the integration of information in a system.	Universal (applies to any system with integrated information)	IIT considers the first-person perspective of consciousness, aligning with phenomenological inquiry into subjective experience.
Enactive Approach	Cognitive Science/Philosophy	Consciousness emerges through the dynamic interaction between an organism and its environment.	Human organism/ Environmental	The enactive approach emphasises the first-person perspective and embodied experience, aligning with phenomenological investigation.
Quantum Mind Theories	Physics/Philosophy/Neuroscience	Consciousness involves quantum phenomena at the microtubule level in neurons.	Universal	Quantum mind theories have philosophical parallels with phenomenology regarding the nature of subjective experience, although their empirical basis is debated.
Predictive Processing (PP)	Cognitive Science/Neuroscience	Consciousness results from the brain's predictive modeling of sensory input.	Human organism	PP may be linked to phenomenology through consideration of how perception is influenced by prior beliefs and expectations.
Higher-Order Thought (HOT) Theory	Philosophy/Neuroscience	Consciousness depends on higher-order representations of mental states.	Human organism	HOT theory intersects with phenomenology by emphasising the reflective or self-aware nature of consciousness.
Global Workspace Theory (GWT)	Cognitive Science/Neuroscience	Consciousness arises from the global broadcasting of information in the brain.	Human organism	GWT acknowledges the subjective aspect of consciousness, but focuses more on cognitive mechanisms than phenomenological descriptions.

Figure 9: Consciousness theories - touchpoints with phenomenology (in situ cultural anthropology) 2024.

My research synthesis identifies several leading consciousness theories in other fields that link to my thesis research or potential, future projects. As described in the thesis introduction, I found most alignment with theories that encompass panpsychism or broader scope studies of universally derived consciousness. Figure 10 depicts the relationship modelling I conducted to assess panpsychism as the most appropriate theoretical framework to design my research project.

THEORY	RESEARCHER	PREMISE	STRENGTHS	CRITICISMS
Orchestrated Objective Reduction (Orch-OR) Theory	Roger Penrose Stuart Hameroff	Consciousness emerges from quantum computations in microtubules within neurons	Novel integration of quantum physics with neuroscience to explain consciousness. Testable hypotheses.	Question plausibility of maintaining quantum coherence in 'warm and wet' biological environments over relevant timescales. Lack of experimental support.
Global Neuronal Workspace Theory	Bernard Baars	Consciousness results from global neural broadcasting of information in the brain's workspace.	Intuitive and accessible model of consciousness is easier to understand. Successful predictive power, explaining various cognitive phenomena. Grounded in neuroscientific principles with supporting MRI and cognitive science data.	Oversimplification that overlooks complexity of neural processing. Limited predictive power.
Integrated Information Theory (IIT)	Giulio Tononi	Consciousness arises from integrated information within a system, measured by phi (Φ)	Mathematical Rigour that allows for precise quantification and analysis. Testable predictions in different systems regarding level of consciousness. Comprehensive.	Lacking empirical evidence. Poor explanatory power due to arbitrary assignments of parameters. Challenges bridging the explanations of subjective experience and neural processes.
Predictive Processing Theory	Andy Clark, Karl Friston	Brain predicts sensory inputs based on priors and minimizes prediction error	Unifying framework integrating neuroscience, psychology and AI. Broad applicability and computational solutions.	Difficult to falsify empirically. May lead to ambiguous predictions. Provides low detail of neural mechanisms in the theory.
Higher Order Thought Theory	David Rosenthal	Consciousness involves higher-order thoughts about thoughts that represent lower-order mental states. Proposes that consciousness requires awareness of one's mental states	Explanatory power as plausible explanations for various aspects of consciousness including self-awareness and introspection, based on higher order thoughts. Empirical support of theory. Clear conceptual framework.	A 'homunculus problem' as it posits higher order thoughts as necessary for consciousness without fully explaining their nature. Underestimates complexity of higher order cognitive relationships to consciousness. Empirical testing issues.

Figure 11: Summary of major, contemporary consciousness studies.

NEUROSCIENCE AND CULTURE

Cognition, Memory, Dreaming and Language as Consciousness

The studies of neuroscience, cognition, memory, and dreaming are specifically connected to this research of symbolism and phenomenology represented in consciousness. These innovations have supported our understanding of how consciousness functions within human biological systems. In this section, I overview my research from contemporary scientific perspectives. These findings summarise consciousness, primarily as an internal process that relates to cultural perspectives. A more detailed background of my theoretical inquiry is discussed in Appendix 2.¹³⁵

Anil Seth states until recently, the scientific study of consciousness has attracted little interest.¹³⁶ Emergent technologies and better research methods such as MRI, have increased neuroscience studies. Advancing knowledge of neuroplasticity and firing neural networks suggests that alternative consciousness processes are physiologically traceable in humans. Neuroscience confirms the possibility of transmission alternative to the limbic system that Homo sapiens heavily rely on. Science now evidences traits such as neurodiversity in archaic humans.

Neuroscientist Helen Meyberg¹³⁷ states that recent advances in functional topography of the brain overturn early assumptions of a single region or neurotransmitter system being responsible for depression. While primarily a limbic-cortical pathway dysfunction, electrode stimulation shows several patterns that can be mapped, as the brain's processes change. The brain's sensitivity to magnetic fields and the body's responsiveness to this externally driven force are now known as significant to human health and function. The anthropological significance of magnetic fields and cycles is further discussed in the 'Songlines' section and the conclusion chapter.

Meyberg's¹³⁸ recent research connects to the anthropological suggestion that many sensory, thinking, creative and memory processes may find a reflection or relationship in the cultural domain. This link is further validation for conducting cultural anthropology studies of consciousness.

¹³⁵ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

¹³⁶ Anil K Seth, "Consciousness: The last 50 years (and the next)," *Brain and neuroscience advances* 2 (2018).

¹³⁷ Helen S Mayberg et al., "Deep brain stimulation for treatment-resistant depression," *Neuron* 45, no. 5 (2005).

¹³⁸ Mayberg et al., "Deep brain stimulation for treatment-resistant depression."

Memory, Thought and Imagination

Consciousness and its relationship to memory, thought and imagination has been the topic of considerable research and debate in recent years.

Memories and the act of remembering are significant to cultural studies of consciousness and meaning-making. Memories have variant functions and features.¹³⁹ These are shown in Figure 12.

Non-Declarative Memories

Implicit Memories

Type	Definition	Properties/Functions
Procedural Memory	Memory for skills and procedures, often acquired through repetition and practice.	Involves non-conscious recall and automatic execution of learned motor or cognitive tasks.
Priming	Activation of implicit memory by exposure to related stimuli, influencing subsequent behaviour or perception.	Facilitates faster processing and identification of stimuli based on prior exposure or experience.
Classical Conditioning	Associative learning process where an initially neutral stimulus becomes associated with a reflex response.	Enables automatic and involuntary behavioural responses to conditioned stimuli.

Figure 12: Implicit memories are automatic and do not require conscious recall.

Non-declarative or implicit memories are those that are non-conscious and automatic or procedural—such as tying shoelaces or riding a bicycle. These internally bound processes may also connect to the individual's external domain and shared culture as demonstrated in Figure 13.

¹³⁹ Martin A Conway, "Episodic memories," *Neuropsychologia* 47, no. 11 (2009).

Implicit Memories

Cultural Conditioning	Implicit memories formed through exposure to cultural norms, values, and practices, shaping behaviour and perception within a specific cultural context.
Collective Memory	Implicit memories shared among members of a group or community, reflecting historical events, traditions, and narratives that contribute to a collective identity.
Intergenerational Transmission	Implicit memories passed down from one generation to another through storytelling, rituals, and cultural practices, preserving and reinforcing cultural heritage.
Archetypal Memories	Implicit memories associated with universal symbols, motifs, and archetypes present in myths, folklore, and cultural narratives across different societies and time periods.
Language Acquisition	Implicit memories involved in learning and acquiring language, including grammar rules, vocabulary, and linguistic conventions embedded within a cultural context.
Social Conditioning	Implicit memories formed through social interactions, peer influences, and societal expectations, shaping individuals' behaviours, beliefs, and attitudes within their cultural milieu.
Embodied Knowledge	Implicit memories stored in the body through sensory experiences, physical practices, and kinesthetics learning within cultural contexts, influencing motor skills, gestures, and bodily expressions.
Muscle Memory	Implicit memories associated with repetitive physical activities and skills learned through practice, such as playing musical instruments, martial arts, or traditional crafts, reflecting cultural expertise and craftsmanship.

Figure 13: *Implicit memories relating to consciousness in culture—Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, 2024.*

Explicit Memories

Declarative or explicit memories are considered supportive of working memories and are derived from conscious recall. The prefrontal structures of the brain foster declarative memory and support working memory. This is the short-term storage of information—before acting on it or integrating it with other memories. These features are often associated with decision-making, learning processes and comprehension.

Explicit Memories

Type	Definition	Properties/Functions
Semantic Memory	Memory for specific events or episodes from one's personal life, including contextual details and emotional content.	Involves conscious recall of past experiences, allowing individuals to retrieve specific events from their history.
Episodic Memory	Memory for specific events or episodes from one's personal life, including contextual details and emotional content.	Involves conscious recall of past experiences, allowing individuals to retrieve specific events from their personal history.
Autobiographical Memory	Memory system containing personal information and experiences, including both episodic and semantic components.	Encompasses conscious recall of personal facts, events, and experiences, contributing to one's sense of identity.
Spatial Memory	Memory for spatial relationships and navigation, including knowledge of one's surroundings and environment.	Stores information about spatial layouts and navigation routes. Used for orientation and navigation. Involves mental mapping of physical spaces.

Figure 14: *Explicit memories involve conscious recall.*

Autobiographical memories involve the temporal recall of events as they interact with the 'self'. Alea and Wang¹⁴⁰ describe that early research upheld Indigenous and cultural contexts of being ecologically embedded in the 'real world'—which needs adaptive consideration as people go about their daily life. Remembering personal history in certain ways may serve them in the present and the future. However, more recent research recognises personal bias in making such claims and moves further to understand the life contexts that functionally embed cultural usage of memory.

The way that explicit and autobiographical memories may express consciousness in cultural contexts is identified in Figure 15.

¹⁴⁰ Nicole Alea and Qi Wang, "Going global: The functions of autobiographical memory in cultural context," *Memory* 23, no. 1 (2015).

Explicit Memories

Historical Knowledge	Explicit memories related to information, events, and historical narratives passed down through formal education, oral traditions, and written records, shaping individuals' understanding of their cultural heritage and collective past.
Cultural Rituals and Traditions	Explicit memories associated with ceremonial practices, rites of passage, and cultural customs observed within specific communities, reinforcing cultural identity and social cohesion.
Religious Scriptures and Texts	Explicit memories derived from religious teachings, sacred texts, and spiritual doctrines that guide beliefs, rituals, and ethical principles within religious communities, influencing worldview and moral values.
Educational Learning	Explicit memories acquired through formal education, classroom instruction, and academic study, encompassing knowledge of various subjects, disciplines, and cultural perspectives transmitted through educational institutions.
Artifacts and Cultural Artifacts	Explicit memories embodied in tangible objects, artifacts, artworks, and cultural relics that serve as material evidence of cultural practices, historical events, and artistic expressions within different societies.
Cultural Narratives and Mythologies	Explicit memories conveyed through storytelling, legends, myths, and folklore, portraying cultural symbols, heroes, and moral lessons that reflect collective beliefs, values, and societal norms.
Linguistic Expressions and Vernacular	Explicit memories encoded in language, dialects, idioms, and linguistic expressions specific to a particular culture or community, shaping communication, identity, and cultural belonging.
Personal Memoirs and Family Histories	Explicit memories preserved in personal narratives, autobiographies, and family histories recounting individual experiences, life stories, and ancestral legacies within familial and communal contexts.

Figure 15: *Explicit memories relating to consciousness in culture* —Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, 2024.

Episodic memories are significant to consciousness, as they are experienced when accessed and recollected. The reason is they are attached to emotions and closely associated with trauma. These memories are more likely to be involved in passing down ancestral knowledge and cultural resilience.

Episodic memories and autobiographical memories were recently linked with internal processes of dreaming. The dreamer will reconstruct a collection of memories into creative narratives in a process that is proposed to be problem-solving, decision-making, trauma-resolving or rehearsing 'future living' scenarios and actions for adaptive survival.¹⁴¹ The reservoir of symbolism mapped through the process of dreaming, may have little or no relevance to lived experience, but in some

¹⁴¹ Ken A Paller, Jessica D Creery, and Eitan Schechtman, "Memory and sleep: how sleep cognition can change the waking mind for the better," *Annual review of psychology* 72 (2021).

way has been associated with by the dreamer as a way of making personal sense, or connecting emotions that may have disparate meanings.¹⁴²

Aspect	Definition	Properties/Functions
Dream Symbolism	Symbols or representations in dreams that reflect personal experiences, emotions, or subconscious processes.	Serve as a means of processing and integrating memories, emotions, and psychological states; provide insights into unconscious desires, fears, or unresolved issues.
Dream Narratives	Storylines or sequences of events experienced in dreams, often incorporating elements from autobiographical or episodic memories.	Serve as a mechanism for consolidating and recontextualising memories; may facilitate emotional processing, problem-solving, or creative exploration.
Emotional Processing	The mental psychological activity involved in experiencing and managing emotions within the context of dreaming.	Facilitates the resolution of emotional conflicts, trauma, or stressors; allows for the expression and exploration of complex feelings and experiences.
Memory Consolidation	The process by which memories are stabilised, strengthened, and integrated into existing cognitive frameworks, often occurring during sleep.	Enhances the retention and organisation of new information acquired during waking hours; contributes to the formation of long-term memories and the refinement of existing knowledge structures.
Problem-Solving	The cognitive process of finding solutions to challenges, puzzles, or dilemmas encountered within the context of dream scenarios.	Enables the exploration of alternative perspectives, strategies, or outcomes' fosters creativity, innovation and adaptive responses to real-life problems or decision-making dilemmas.
Future Scenario	Imagined or anticipated events, situations, or outcomes depicted in dreams that may reflect aspirations, fears, or concerns about the future.	Provides opportunities for mental rehearsal, preparation, or exploration of potential courses of action. Fosters goal setting, planning, and anticipation of future challenges or opportunities.
Cultural Relevance	The influence of cultural beliefs, values, symbols, or narratives on the content and interpretation of dreams.	Shapes the thematic content and symbolism of dreams based on cultural norms, traditions, rituals, or collective experiences. Influences and reinforces the meaning and significance attributed to dream experiences.

Figure 16: *The use of memories and their function in relationship to dreaming—Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, 2024.*

¹⁴² Iain Edgar, *A guide to imagework: Imagination-based research methods* (Routledge, 2004).

Alea and Wang’s findings reveal a wide array of usages for memory, of which they find cross-cultural consistency of predominating functions. These are identified in Figure 17.

Cultural Function	Description
Identity Formation	Memory serves as a repository of personal experiences, narratives, and cultural heritage, shaping individuals' sense of self and belonging within their communities.
Teaching/Informing	Memory facilitates the transmission of knowledge, traditions, and customs across generations, enabling the preservation and dissemination of cultural practices and values.
Intimacy	Autobiographical and episodic memories deepen emotional bonds and foster intimacy by enabling individuals to share personal stories, experiences, and reflections with others.
Communications	Memory aids in effective communication by providing a shared framework of reference, vocabulary, and storytelling conventions, enhancing mutual understanding and social cohesion.
Problem-Solving	Memory allows individuals to draw upon past experiences and lessons learned to navigate challenges, make decisions, and devise strategies for addressing complex issues within their communities.
Death Preparation	Memory assists in the commemoration of the deceased and the rituals surrounding death, providing solace, closure, and a means of honouring the departed within cultural and religious contexts.
Other Working Memory Tasks	Memory supports various cognitive tasks requiring conscious recall, such as planning, organisation, and multitasking, contributing to individuals' adaptive functioning and everyday problem-solving abilities.

Figure 17: Cultural function of memory—Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, 2024.

Significant to my research findings, the predominant usage for memory in cultural contexts is found to be relationships.¹⁴³ Autobiographical memories play an important role, and episodic memories build empathy and social relating with linkage to phenomenal lived experiences.

Figure 18 identifies the primary cultural functions of memories within the context of relationships.

¹⁴³ Alea and Wang, "Going global: The functions of autobiographical memory in cultural context."

Function	Contexts
Identity Formation	Relationships contribute to shaping individual identities within cultural groups by providing shared experiences and interpersonal connections.
Intimacy	Relationships foster emotional bonds and intimacy, strengthening social connections and promoting a sense of belonging within cultural communities.
Communications	Relationships facilitate effective communication by providing shared references and understanding, enhancing mutual understanding and social cohesion.
Problem-Solving	Shared memories and collective experiences enable collaborative problem-solving within relationships, promoting mutual support and cooperation.
Death Preparation	Relationships provide comfort and support during times of loss and grief, with cultural rituals surrounding death serving to maintain connections and honour the departed.
Other Working Memory Tasks	Relationships influence various cognitive tasks involved in maintaining social connections, such as remembering commitments, recalling past interactions, and understanding social dynamics.

Figure 18: Functions of cultural memory in contexts of relationships—Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, 2024.

The summarised findings of Alea and Wang¹⁴⁴ and Pallea et al.¹⁴⁵ reinforce my synthesis and analysis of scientific texts comparatively with anthropological literature and ethnographies across cultures. These latter texts were considered against Lynne Kelley’s recent findings and supposition that memory is the primary purpose for sacred sites, the use of mnemonic devices and ritual acts such as songlines.¹⁴⁶

Kelly¹⁴⁷ based her premise heavily on her extensive review of neuroscience’s understanding of conscious recall and personal survival purposes. When considered in the cultural context, the embodiment of consciousness and collective lived experiences of cultures demonstrates a focus towards ritualised behaviours. However, I find the predominating reason for ritual and customary behaviours is to make *connections*. Individuals and groups make relationships between ‘self’ and ‘the other’ in variant phenomenal formats using implicit and explicit memory in binary function. That is, physical, social, environmental and spiritual forces and their aspects. I identify this as a

¹⁴⁴ Alea and Wang, "Going global: The functions of autobiographical memory in cultural context."

¹⁴⁵ Paller, Creery, and Schechtman, "Memory and sleep: how sleep cognition can change the waking mind for the better."

¹⁴⁶ See songlines discussion Chapter 5 and Appendix 2.

¹⁴⁷ Kelly, *Knowledge and power in prehistoric societies: Orality, memory, and the transmission of culture*.

critical factor to base future studies on cultural consciousness. Our mutual desire to connect with external factors goes beyond conscious recollection as a process for survival. I will discuss this aspect in the 'alternative ways of knowing' section.

Figure 19, depicts aspects of relationships, functions and memories involved as a secondary and often implicit process of connecting.

Aspect	Explicit/Implicit	Definition	Properties/Functions
Relationship Dynamics	Explicit (Autobiographical) Implicit beliefs, unspoken, non-formalised interactions.	Patterns of interaction, communication, and emotional exchange between individuals within social or familial relationships.	Shape interpersonal connections, intimacy levels, and relational satisfaction; influence social roles, expectations, and conflict resolution strategies.
Social Bonds	Explicit (Episodic) and Implicit, unconscious association. Implicit bias.	Emotional connections, attachments, or affiliations formed between individuals through shared experiences, memories, or mutual support.	Provide emotional support, security, and belongingness; foster trust, loyalty, and cooperation; contribute to the formation of social networks and community ties.
Emotional Attachment	Implicit (Unconscious Procedural) Explicit episodic and autobiographic memories that reinforce association.	Strong feelings of affection, care, or commitment towards another person, typically developed over time through shared experiences and mutual understanding.	Promote emotional intimacy, empathy, and reciprocity; contribute to psychological well-being, resilience, and coping with stress or adversity.
Intimacy	Implicit (Priming) Explicit episodic and autobiographical memories that maintain warmth and closeness.	The emotional closeness, vulnerability, and mutual understanding shared between individuals in close or romantic relationships.	Enhance communication, trust, and empathy; foster physical and emotional intimacy, sexual fulfilment, and the development of a secure attachment bond.
Conflict Resolution	Implicit (Classical Conditioning) Explicit (Episodic) memories involved in conscious adoption of resolution strategies.	The process of addressing disagreements, tensions, or misunderstandings within relationships through negotiation, compromise, or problem-solving.	Promote understanding, compromise, and reconciliation; facilitate the resolution of disputes, power struggles, or interpersonal challenges; strengthen relational resilience and cohesion.
Interpersonal Trust	Explicit (Episodic and Semantic) Implicit bias and unconscious association.	The belief, confidence, or reliance on another person's integrity, reliability, and goodwill in social or relational contexts.	Foster feelings of security, predictability, and vulnerability; enable effective collaboration, cooperation, and mutual support; underpin the development and maintenance of healthy relationships.
Cultural Norms	Explicit (Episodic and Semantic) Implicit beliefs and unconscious association	Shared beliefs, values, or norms within a cultural group that shape expectations, behaviours, and attitudes towards relationships and social interactions.	Influence social roles, gender dynamics, and communication styles; define acceptable boundaries, expressions of affection, and relationship milestones; provide a framework for navigating interpersonal dynamics and conflicts.

Figure 19: Relationships function and memory use in culture—Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, 2024.

Interactions of Expanded Contexts of Language

There are two major concepts connecting internal mind-body processes, thought and imagination with linguistics and the language mechanism that dominates our understanding of human spoken, written, and graphic communication. Linguist Noam Chomsky¹⁴⁸ proposes that a very simple genetic restructuring of the brain may have led to the richness and complexity of the human capacity to produce thoughts—and people's ability to share thoughts with others.

Some researchers alternatively propose that language has arisen as a secondary mechanism to thought as a tool of communication, negotiation, and relationships. Fedorenko et al.¹⁴⁹ submit that language is not primarily a tool of thought and that the intrinsic structure of neural nets does not favour computational qualities. Experiments carried out on people with certain types of brain damage and impaired language capacity show many who can perform other complex thinking tasks—such as playing chess or puzzle games.¹⁵⁰

Fedorenko states her observations from linguistic analysis reflect an entire history of social negotiations about what we need from language as a tool of communication.¹⁵¹ The structures of language require thinking of its use for relationships between 'speakers and listeners'. As a tool of communication, spoken and written language may accompany other mechanisms, such as hand and facial gestures, eye contact, and sound, volume, and tone inflexions. Significant to my research of symbolism transmission in culture, these observations support the potential of alternative consciousness systems involved in relationships, knowledge transmission and communications for cultural resilience.¹⁵²

Linguist Daniel Dor describes language as a 'social communication technology' that has been collectively invented to express the power of imagination and thought in a peripheral sense.¹⁵³ It is a tool that allows humans to communicate their emotive senses and expressions. To 'feel' a memory or connection activates long-term memory clusters of experiences. According to the language, the imagination then rearranges and recreates from these experiences the event in their

¹⁴⁸ Noam Chomsky, "7. the logical basis of linguistic theory," in *Eight decades of general linguistics* (Brill, 2013).

¹⁴⁹ Chengxu Zhuang, Evelina Fedorenko, and Jacob Andreas, "Visual Grounding Helps Learn Word Meanings in Low-Data Regimes," *arXiv preprint arXiv:2310.13257* (2023).

¹⁵⁰ Evelina Fedorenko, "The role of domain-general cognitive control in language comprehension," *Hypothesis and Theory, Frontiers in Psychology* 5 (2014-April-28 2014), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00335>, <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00335>.

¹⁵¹ Fedorenko, "domain-general cognitive control in language."

¹⁵² See also 'alternative states in ritual' and Appendix 2—Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, 2024

¹⁵³ Daniel Dor, "Language as a communication technology: a proposal for a new general linguistic theory" (<http://people.socsci.tau.ac.il>, 2011).

mind. The events may take place in the past as a form of memory recall association, or anticipation of a future event based on the information provided by past experiences that might contribute to how the event is imagined to be. In this process, language is the fundamental process of sharing and creating a 'collective consciousness'.

Socially constructed thinking is contributed to by shared language and cultural expression. It may represent an entire collective of imaginative symbols—such as drama, dance, song, and other performative enactments. These social structures are held together because the shared symbolism serves a group purpose and takes on a shape larger than the individual identity. Primarily the language forms connections for relationships and negotiating within the group worldview. Dor argues that contemporary studies of humans reveal a deeper link between the systems that support social perception, cognition, and language, compared to the systems that support abstract complex reasoning and language.¹⁵⁴ The internal and external processes are distinct and there is a strong possibility in evolution that broader regions of the brain are attuned to social stimuli because humans are a social species who need relationships.

Rather than evidence of genetic mutation, Dor states that around two million years ago in Homo Erectus or Homo Habilis, archaeological evidence shows that human communities broke a barrier of private experience and moved into a mode of collective experiencing. They used memetic tools for communication that included hand gestures. They later broke the barrier of 'experiencing' and went beyond that practice into 'collective imagination'. This practice proved useful for community languages and individuals to co-evolve with each other. During this process, individual brains came to be selected for socio-linguistic advantage. Dor describes 'language-ready brains' that don't require a set of formal rules or grammar to be carried in gene transmission. This non-local, socially constructed 'collective' of symbolism may be shared in more traditional psychology and socio-cultural approaches to understanding mental constructs of symbolism, archetypes, and their transmission frame of collective consciousness or unconscious.

¹⁵⁴ Daniel Dor, "From experience to imagination: Language and its evolution as a social communication technology," *Journal of Neurolinguistics* 43 (2017).

JUNG AND CAMPBELL

Theoretical Quandary

In this section, I discuss the interconnection between Jung's transpersonal theories and cultural expression. I compare Jung's theories and other scholars with links to cultural phenomena. My query deepens perspectives on how symbolism arises as a cultural experience. I review the historical lineage of philosophical thought and sciences that influenced Jung's¹⁵⁵ works and the consciousness model he developed. I reveal his thought progression to connect any alternative conceptual links from my research.

Archetypes and Symbolic Systems

Jung's theories of archetypes represent universal symbols that constitute individual and shared realities.¹⁵⁶ These transcend the internal personal experience as a transpersonal interaction with 'the other'. Symbols manifest in societies as cultural artefacts. Jung proposes they are accessed from a collective source of thoughts, memories, and archetypal experiences, which he calls the "collective unconscious." People develop narratives, cultural customs, rituals, and expressions, as explanations for social beliefs, life, and existence.

Social meaning-making is a core societal function that establishes and maintains cultural worldviews. Human behaviours centre on customary expression involving archetypal symbols, applied with local significance. Language, norms, and values shape the way people perceive reality as their place within the world. These codes affect human relationships and their navigation through life. Cultural customs and ritualistic practices serve to connect with spiritual and ancestral lineages. They reinforce values, habits and idealised behaviours instilled within the group. They offer interpretive mechanisms to associate with the symbolism embedded in the collective unconscious. The premised ideal purpose is human resilience.

¹⁵⁵ Jung, "The archetypes and the collective unconscious".

¹⁵⁶ Carl Gustav Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. , Bollingen Series XX, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968).

Jung proposed the collective unconscious rises from deep within the psyche as a mental framework. It comprises a non-quantifiable knowledge repository containing dormant, archaic forms of human existence, and the functional residue of our animal forbears. It holds the source of all myths and legends, which are formed as cultural narratives. These 'stories' are expressions of deeper codes in the psyche that connect with internal processes such as thoughts, memories, and dreams. Archetypal patterns of behaviour are triggered in response to internal and environmental forces and events. Jung saw the collective unconscious as universally accessible.

The metaphysical nature of some of Jung's connecting ideas fuels scientific rejection. However, recent scientific knowledge may help us to interpret some of his views with a deeper perspective. For example, he observed that some people who are psychically gifted and have creative genius—that is, use alternative states of consciousness—more easily access the power of the collective unconscious to achieve exemplary results. Science continues to reject psychic phenomena as pseudoscience. However, if we consider traditional tribal practices, people have often performed the tribal role of shaman, ritual facilitator or spiritual mediator between the collective unconscious, the dimensions, and phenomenal realms. Their role intersects human awareness and belief in existence beyond the mundane world. Advances in studies of neurodiversity help us to understand that certain individuals present with unusual sensory capabilities. Traditional societies have honoured those demonstrating exceptional abilities to mediate with their ancestor and spiritual realms.

While his student, Jung drew on Sigmund Freud's idea of the 'unconscious mind' or psyche—a part of the mind that contains all the thoughts, memories, and impulses we are unaware of. Jung used his interests in mythology and religion to expand upon Freud's analysis of patients' dreams. He observed that many myths and legends have similarities across cultures, despite being uniquely generated. He upheld that the collective unconscious contains the source of forces that set the soul in motion and is then regulated by the archetypes. In contrast, he described 'consciousness' as an 'ephemeral phenomenon'. Its primary purpose is to transiently locate and orient a person and their life function in a state of equilibrium.

Jung perceived the collective unconscious stores the total experience of humanity that is reflected in our consciousness. The term 'collective consciousness' popularly describes shared unconscious symbolism that has transcended the psyche into shared conscious awareness. This concept is linked to the Buddhist spiritual philosophies that Jung also studied. Emile Durkheim observes that collective consciousness arises when individual minds come together to share their meaning-

making, experiences, and beliefs as a group or global-scale knowledge.¹⁵⁷ Notably, Jung believed the collective unconscious to be like the Sanskrit concept of *Akasa* or Akashic records. This is a non-material record of all events residing from creation and moments of existence.

Jung's theoretical frameworks have profoundly influenced contemporary thought. However, he receives criticism.¹⁵⁸ Despite significant records of pragmatic client testing, a prevailing materialist view proposes that much of his work is speculative and non-empirically based. The main reason given is that his experimental work cannot be re-tested under today's rigorous scientific standards. Further criticism describes his research into metaphysics, the psychic realms and collective consciousness as "sheer mysticism". Critics claim these concepts to be non-physical, non-testable and therefore unsubstantiated. However, many multi-disciplinary researchers are informed by his theories. His iconic contribution following Sigmund Freud, is to establish analytical psychology as a valid field.

Collective Conscious and Unconscious

The research I examined connecting Jung's theories reveals an alternative insight into the collective consciousness and unconscious. The collective pool of archetypal symbolism may not be the amorphous, non-physical 'reservoir' that Jung¹⁵⁹ describes as "psychically derived and a set of mentally shaped symbolism". Jung's ideas of the collective unconscious being an 'immaterial' or 'mental' field follows from Plato's idea of forms to Voltaire's "*Elements of the Philosophy of Newton*"¹⁶⁰—a work co-authored with Emilie du Chatelet about Newton's metaphysics.

In forming a panpsychism hypothesis of fundamental, universal interconnection, I alternatively find this invisible source, *is* physical and from a cosmic celestial source. The nature of its operations is constitutive messages. But these are not literally translated and definitively perceived. Human interactions on a sub-atomic, biological, and cultural scale, construe the phenomenal forces and associate the symbols with archetypal metaphors. Further research discussions will expand insights into this concept.

My locus connects panpsychist thought, cultural phenomena and scientific ideas of consciousness with existential theories such as quantum physics. Jung also connected to the astronomical,

¹⁵⁷ Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim on morality and society* (University of Chicago Press, 1973).

¹⁵⁸ Drake, "Jung and his critics."

¹⁵⁹ Jung, C, *The Archetypes, and the Collective Unconscious*, 2014

¹⁶⁰ Daniel M Albert, "Notes on Voltaire's 'The elements of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy'," *Documenta ophthalmologica* 94, no. 1-2 (1997).

mathematical and metaphysics ideas of an external, collective 'other' made from elemental, but non-materialised forms. However, he held to the mental concepts of the psyche and a driving emotional unconscious. His thoughts reflect his metaphysical studies of Buddhist, Christian and Eastern philosophies regarding the soul and supernatural. Although he explored and corresponded with contemporary scientists, including Albert Einstein, Jung never proposed that the 'collective unconscious' was a 'physical place' or materialised in this world outside the mental plane. From his interactions with Pauli, I surmise he may have done so if he had lived a few decades after his death. In his period, science was newly discovering quantum physics ideas of a subatomic unified field of consciousness.

Synchronicity and the Realm of Physics

While studying the phenomena of 'synchronicity' Jung met and collaborated with quantum physicist Wolfgang Pauli.¹⁶¹ Pauli's major contribution was to theories of quantum physics and quantum mechanics. In 1925 he was awarded a Nobel Prize for the Pauli exclusion principle, which finds that in an atom, no two electrons can occupy the same quantum state. Through Pauli, Jung explored quantum theories and mapped concepts to his evolving psychological framework of consciousness—particularly his near-death experience after suffering a heart attack.¹⁶²

"I had reached the outermost limit, and do not know whether I was in a dream or an ecstasy. At any rate, extremely strange things began to happen to me. It seemed to me that I was high up in space. Far below I saw the globe of the Earth, bathed in a gloriously blue light."

— Jung, ed. 1989

Timothy Desmond states that in this cited excerpt of his autobiography, Jung described travelling to the edge of the event horizon. This concept likens quantum space-time travel to the edge of a black hole.¹⁶³ Desmond's multi-disciplinary background supported his finding parallels and intersections between Jung and physicist Leonard Susskind's quantum holographic string theories

¹⁶¹ Marialuisa Donati, "Beyond synchronicity: the worldview of Carl Gustav Jung and Wolfgang Pauli," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 49, no. 5 (2004).

¹⁶² Carl G Jung, *Memories, dreams, reflections*, vol. 268 (Vintage, 1989).

¹⁶³ Timothy Desmond, "Psyche= Singularity: A Comparison of Carl Jung's Transpersonal Psychology and Leonard Susskind's" (California Institute of Integral Studies San Francisco, CA, 2014).

and gravitational field 'Black Holes'.¹⁶⁴ Desmond finds significant influences between Pauli's and Jung's thinking. Their reflections extended beyond physics and psychology, intersecting the early philosophy of Nature. They examined the ontological, archetypal character of synchronistic phenomena. Pauli's interest in the philosophical connections to the unconscious grew. Many of the symbolic aspects in their discussions about synchronicity challenge contemporary scientific views. However, they reveal interesting insights about archetypal symbolism embedded in universal structures of consciousness.

Synchronicity is described as the "personally meaningful coincidence with no direct cause—or an acausal connection."¹⁶⁵ Jung wrote, "Synchronicity means the simultaneous occurrence of a psychic state with one or more external events, which appear as meaningful parallels to the momentary subjective state."¹⁶⁶ In other words, synchronicities happen when external phenomena seem to link with our inner thoughts. For this reason, many people take the universal 'signs' as messages from other realms.

To many, synchronicities are a fundamental aspect of human nature and the human search to make meaning in life. Social worldviews contribute to the increased tendency to identify synchronistic events. During her ethnographic field research on witches practising in the United Kingdom, Tanya Luhrmann coined the term "interpretive drift".¹⁶⁷ As people immerse themselves in the symbolic language of witchcraft, they begin interpreting phenomena through the lens of symbolic meanings. Within a coven or practitioner community, people witness more synchronistic experiences, as mechanisms for perceiving reality change.

Pareidolia, Perceptions and Caves

As Jung described in his "*Red Book*,"¹⁶⁸ not all synchronistic events are intentionally looked for. Klaus Conrad coined the term 'apophenia' as the "unmotivated seeing of connections or finding patterns in randomness."¹⁶⁹ Klaus saw this 'pattern detection' as cognition and an important part of brain functioning, of which pareidolia is also a substrate. Pareidolia is the recognition of faces,

¹⁶⁴ Timothy Desmond, *Psyche= singularity: A comparison of Carl Jung's transpersonal psychology and Leonard Susskind's holographic string theory* (California Institute of Integral Studies, 2014). 3.

¹⁶⁵ Carl Gustav Jung and Wolfgang Pauli, *The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche: The Work of Carl Jung and Wolfgang Pauli* (Taylor & Francis, 2022).

¹⁶⁶ Jung, *Collected Works of CG Jung, Volume 8: The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*. 441.

¹⁶⁷ Tanya M Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the witch's craft: Ritual magic in contemporary England* (Harvard University Press, 1991).

¹⁶⁸ Carl G Jung, *The red book: A reader's edition* (WW Norton & Company, 2012).

¹⁶⁹ Donna L Roberts and NY Canandaigua, "Apophenia: The Human Tendency to Find Patterns in Randomness," *Psych Stuff* (Jan 10 2024).

humans, animals, and other symbols within the natural environment. These include the shape of rocks, shadows, features, and iconography perceived in caves, cliff faces, clouds, and geological formations. Pareidolia is evidenced as a consciousness mechanism for symbolic communication in early humans.

Jung and Pauli connected Plato's ancient Greek philosophical knowledge. Born around 428 BCE, he made an enduring and valued contribution to Western civilisation, and towards founding contemporary sciences.¹⁷⁰ Plato influenced Christianity while forming. Surviving theological architecture reflects his authority. Plato's "*The Republic*" shaped the early establishment of democratic order. Ideas in this work significantly influenced Jung's theories. Plato publicised four major thought systems "metaphysics, the theory of forms, the theory of the soul, and the allegory of the cave".

Plato's allegory of the cave had a significant influence on Jung's conceptual development of a collective unconscious. His ideas of metaphorical narrative expand on Plato's theory of reality, the soul and consciousness.¹⁷¹ The account describes people fettered in chains inside a dark cave, watching shadows cast by puppeteers on the wall behind a fire. The people have never been outside the cave and view the shadows as 'real'. Plato describes them as representing "ordinary people who don't know the essence of reality". One day a person breaks free and sees that the shadows are cast from the flames. Plato states this act represents the "absorption of knowledge" from encountering the material world. The person exits the cave and is blinded by the sunlight. This symbolises the true nature of reality being revealed to the prisoner. The prisoner descends back into the cave and shares his discovery with the others, who don't believe him. This rejection represents the narrow-minded behaviours of society towards a philosopher of knowledge. In Plato's account, there is an alternative reality beyond the sensory world. The entire allegory is a metaphor for a person's quest for enlightened knowledge and the challenges they must face. Jung considered this metaphorical narrative in defining his archetype of the 'self' and the human inner and outer quest for self-discovery and individuation.¹⁷² Joseph Campbell later extrapolated these concepts further when he proposed the monomyth of the Hero's Journey.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ John H Hallowell, "Plato and his Critics," *The Journal of Politics* 27, no. 2 (1965).

¹⁷¹ HG Plato, *The collected dialogues of Plato* (Princeton University Press, 1962).

¹⁷² Carl Gustav Jung, *Dream symbols of the individuation process: notes of CG Jung's seminars on Wolfgang Pauli's dreams*, vol. 15 (Princeton University Press, 2019).

¹⁷³ Carl Gustav Jung, Joseph Campbell, and Richard Francis Carrington Hull, *The portable jung* (Penguin Books New York, 1971).

The Universe of Forms

My research finds additional connections between Plato's ideas with Jung and Pauli. Plato intensively explores ideas of reality linking metaphysics.¹⁷⁴ His theory of forms claims the underlying fabric of the physical world as our reality is made up of unchanging, ideal forms or ideas. Plato saw the perceived material world as only a reflection or immaterial and flawed copy of the perfect, ideal forms. Jung took this idea to establish a 'collective unconscious' containing archetypes and symbols. Plato's ideas of platonic forms have also presented a significant influence on modern science and physics.¹⁷⁵ However, Plato also drew his ideas from another great philosopher—Pythagoras, who was one of the earliest known Western philosophers to address consciousness from a spiritual context.

It is with the ancient Greek mathematician and astronomer Pythagoras that my research makes many intersections of synchronicity in the study of consciousness. Pythagoras lived in Samos, Iona around 570 BCE.¹⁷⁶ Like Plato, he was born of the elites and had access to education. He studied mathematics, geometry, astronomy, and cosmology from influencers Thales and Anaximander. Pythagoras later travelled to study more advanced concepts in Egypt. Here, he learned the 'theorem of Pythagoras' and other mathematical, music and astronomical concepts. The outbreak of war and the decline of the Egyptian dynastic period resulted in his capture and imprisonment in Babylon. There, he may have encountered Babylonian encodings of the astronomical and mathematical symbolism, inscribed over one thousand years earlier.¹⁷⁷ Some years later he was freed and returned to Samos but found a new era of war and rampage. He fled to Croton in Italy and founded the Pythagorean Mystery School. This learning 'community' was based on Pythagoras' mix of Orphic religious beliefs and his learning in the East.

The music, mathematics, and geometry that Pythagoras founded in Western traditions have had far-reaching effects on our contemporary civilisation. In astronomy, Pythagoras also founded the Western heliocentric knowledge that the Earth orbits the sun.

Pythagoras' teachings conveyed five thematic ideas.¹⁷⁸ These were first, that at its deepest level, reality is non-material and mathematical. Second, he believed that philosophy could be used for

¹⁷⁴ Plato, *The collected dialogues of Plato*.

¹⁷⁵ Desmond, *Psyche= singularity: A comparison of Carl Jung's transpersonal psychology and Leonard Susskind's holographic string theory*. 66-73

¹⁷⁶ Christoph Riedweg, *Pythagoras: His life, teaching, and influence* (Cornell University Press, 2008).

¹⁷⁷ Bruce Ratner, "Pythagoras: Everyone knows his famous theorem, but not who discovered it 1000 years before him," *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing* 17 (2009).

¹⁷⁸ Carl Huffman, "Pythagoras," (2005).

spiritual purification and third, that the soul can rise into union with the 'divine'. His fourth key idea, influenced by Orphism, proposed that certain symbols are charged with a mystical significance. His final idea upholding elitism, was that all male and female 'brothers' in his school should observe strict loyalty and secrecy.

Pythagoras' influence on Plato's development of the theory of forms is evident. Possibly it is for this reason that carved stone versions of the platonic solids dating five thousand to one hundred years before Plato's birth have been found in Neolithic archaeological sites in Scotland, Ireland, and England.¹⁷⁹ Their discovery at least points to a more ancient lineage of Plato's knowledge. Perhaps Plato received more acclaim as the founder of modern sciences because he left records as his detailed writing. We rely on other writers of the era to inform our knowledge of Pythagoras.

Mathematics and Space-Time

Pythagoras' cosmological ideas of a mentally or spiritually derived non-material universal essence are also not uniquely original. However, they mark a progression from an Eastern transmission of cosmology into an articulated formation of Western 'knowledge foundation' and eventually the sciences. This fact is evident from the now-known Eastern mystic schools such as that of Indian Sri Baudhayana who taught the geometric theorem six hundred years before Pythagoras was born.¹⁸⁰ The Indian version is based on far earlier doctrines and knowledge passed down to construct sacred temples. The transmission of early Vedic Astrology and its intersection between later Hindu and Buddhist philosophies becomes evident.

Further insights draw parallels between Pythagorean notions of a world comprising a fundamental essence of immaterial forms and the contemporary laureate and mathematician Roger Penrose. His collaboration with neuroscientist and physicist Stewart Hameroff led to 'Orch-OR' quantum theories. These may also meet the often described 'scaling problem'—of finding a bridging mechanism between sub-atomic worlds and the macrocosm of the universe.

Penrose has also independently expressed his theory that the fundamental quantum fabric of existence is mental and made up of numerical forms—or at least the "universe communicates in numbers."¹⁸¹ This idea and his proposition of a cyclic cosmology for existence are controversial

¹⁷⁹ Andrew Meirion Jones, "An archaeology of affect: art, ontology and the carved stone balls of Neolithic Britain," *Journal of archaeological method and theory* 27, no. 3 (2020).

¹⁸⁰ Prem Kumar Singh, "A Note on Basic Proof of Some Famous Mathematical Theorem and Its Illustration," *Journal of Neutrosophic and Fuzzy Systems* 3, no. 1 (2022).

¹⁸¹ Roger Penrose, *The Road to Reality: A Complete Guide to the Laws of the Universe* (Vintage, 2007).

among peers. However, Penrose is also accredited for many breakthroughs, including the reinvention of Einstein's theory to show dying stars could create black holes. Ignoring the proposed geometrical structure of space-time, in 1965 Penrose 'proved' the existence of black holes by focusing on the topology of space.¹⁸² His approach gave rise to the concept of the black hole's infinitely dense centre, which is now called 'singularity'. Matter collapsing into this field is drawn from the same event horizon of Jung's near-death experience analogy. Black holes are also a recurring theme that metaphorically maps to the example of cosmology discussed in my case study section.

At the edge of this horizon, the pattern of space and time reverses and the only way matter can 'escape' the negative gravitational field is to travel faster than the speed of light—a feat unknown in our current established physical reality. If a person were to be the matter travelling to the black hole, their mass would be surrounded by a funnel and mirrored inverted funnel or toroidal photon 'light cone'. This toroidal shape depicts visibility approaching the future and a rear-view vision of the past the person was travelling away from. At the event horizon, the person's motion would appear to slow down and freeze before collapsing into the black hole. When reaching its edge, there would be no remaining light cone of the approaching future and only the rear view of past events. Jung likened this concept to his 'soul' travelling to the edge of the universe where he also received a 'personal viewing' of his life events—a commonly reported phenomenon in near-death experiences. From this event, Jung proposed the archetype of the self and individuation as the process of 'falling within' oneself to be the primary archetype—and possibly the reason for earlier, geocentric depictions of an Earth-centred universe.

In isolation, Penrose and Hameroff's theories depart from direct linkages with cultural consciousness beyond the parallels to classical thought systems upholding a fundamental fabric of universal existence. But Pythagoras and Plato were not only responsible for influencing the establishment of science and physics. The Orphic religion that Pythagoras grew out of was significant in his formation of the mystery school, the practice of sacred geometry, symbolism, and harmonic scales in music. It was also the vehicle for ancient rites of passage under the Goddess Demeter and her daughter Persephone. Some scholars believe these rites may have been conjunct or a precursor to the Eleusinian mysteries that Plato writes about.¹⁸³ These mystical rituals meet with symbolic cultural consciousness, Jung's Great Mother archetype of the Goddess and Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey. They also form a convergent point for our awareness of ancient sacred

¹⁸² Roger Penrose, "Space-time and Cosmology," *Tanner Lectures on Human Values* 17 (1996).

¹⁸³ Robert Parker, "Early orphism," in *The Greek World*, ed. Anton Powell (Routledge, 2002).

rituals involving alternative states of consciousness for transcending knowledge and power as the Sacred.

Shortly before he died in 1987, Joseph Campbell made some comments about “the birth of mathematical mythologies” during a film interview.¹⁸⁴ He stated that the priest cast of ancient Sumer in 4500 BCE invented their writing and used it for recording gifts to the temples and recording their observations of the heavens. Reports stated that the planets “moved at a mathematically determinable rate through the fixed constellations, and here we begin to get mathematical mythologies where certain numbers become very important... and then a total transformation of mythology takes place.”

In his discussion, Campbell is referring to the establishment of early city-states and civilisations where ‘cosmic order’ appears to take over and becomes a blueprint of high-culture mythologies. He also refers to the spread of these mythologies throughout the ordinary people who were previously close to Nature. They focus on ‘exceptional objects’ such as trees, rocks, bodies of water, and other environmental phenomena.

Campbell’s observations are significant as they synonymously link the establishment of rulership, ‘power centres’ and ‘cosmological knowledge’ or metaphysical consciousness as the power source of the elite holders. Our Western-centric science established from classical Greek history, is a narrowed view transferred by mystical orders throughout the ensuing ages. Even the ‘scientific revolution’ from around 1500 to 1700 was restricted to studies of the cosmos and newly developed technologies. These allowed the use of scientific instruments like the telescope and barometer to test, measure, and review their findings with innovative quantitative methods.

When Descartes introduced his doctrine of ‘reductionism’ in 1637¹⁸⁵ his principles were founded on the same ‘mathematical’ understanding of cosmic order that Campbell describes. His idea applied the contemporary technology language of his peers when he stated that “the universe is made like a machine, its pieces like clockwork mechanisms, and that the machine could be understood by taking its pieces apart, studying them and then putting them back together to see the larger picture.” His thinking held weight for a new scientific era evolving in disparate fields. All require detailed examination and factual proof.

¹⁸⁴ Joseph Campbell, "The Birth of Mathematical Mythologies," interview by Bill Moyers, 1987, <https://youtu.be/FnPix6cunzo?si=mj1UwlyJh48aPfr4>.

¹⁸⁵ René Descartes, *A Discourse on the Method* (OUP Oxford, 2006).

In the six-thousand-year epoch that appears to have spawned from Sumer, metaphysics, spirituality, cosmology, and science remained entwined in societies that continued to be overseen by a priestly high order. Arising out of the Roman civilisation, the knowledge was passed within Christianity and other patriarchal religions. Christianity provided the early institutions that eventually became modern science. Until the late nineteenth century when Charles Darwin and other scientists marked a break away from religious allegiance.¹⁸⁶ Science then grew with the 'new order' of power elites. Slowly other non-empirical knowledge schools lost their position of authority in the eyes of rulership or governance.¹⁸⁷

Conclusion

In my introduction, I noted that the major problem claimed by societal thought leaders is that no agreed definition of consciousness has been reached. I then identified an additional call to contribute to the field of anthropology with a focus on cultural consciousness. During research synthesis, a greater pattern and insights emerged surrounding the 'hard problem' described by David Chalmers.¹⁸⁸

The deeper issue of finding common ground to conduct collaborative studies on consciousness appears to be socio-political rather than purely divergent thought systems. The necessity for compartmentalisation, the rise of competition and the devaluing of traditional and empirical knowledge derived from non-testable sources pose the problem. Over time, a legacy understanding of consciousness carried by those who formerly held positions of knowledge authority has diminished. It seems even 'valid' scientific and non-scientific studies are pushed aside, marked as fringe, and their knowledge bearers described as pseudoscientists or 'heretics'. If we are to find collaborative approaches to understanding consciousness, we need to follow Descartes' method of 'putting things back together to see the larger picture'. We might perceive *all culture as an expression of the experience* of consciousness. Its location is certainly in the non-local domain of 'the other', regardless of its debated source as an internal or universal cosmic existence.

¹⁸⁶ Melissa Suran, "The separation of church and science: Science and religion offer different worldviews, but are they opposite or complementary?," *EMBO reports* 11, no. 8 (2010).

¹⁸⁷ John A Schuster, "The scientific revolution," in *Companion to the history of modern science* (Routledge, 2006).

¹⁸⁸ Chalmers, "The puzzle of conscious experience."

My research finds anthropology suitable to expand understanding of consciousness. I remain unclear why anthropologists have not been asked to play a greater role in the current Renaissance quest for insights. A reason may be the rise of multicultural mythical narratives in pop culture. These play down the socially perceived merit of anthropological insight into multi-disciplinary studies. Many disciplines now adopt the ethnographic practices specialised in anthropology. But often without the traditions of relational studies, ethics, and objective view that the trained anthropologist requires. At least to position themselves reflexively to the subject of their work.¹⁸⁹ Self-examination is a necessity of a profession that focuses on human experience and reviews its future. The discipline of anthropological science continues with a conscious effort to deepen our understanding of the human condition, and consciousness is central to this focus.

As my discussions address the anthropological relevance of cultural consciousness studies, I naturally observe its existence as a 'local', 'non-local' or 'interlocal' phenomenon. I reflect on my findings to confirm cultures express themselves in 'the other'—including an environmental and cosmic context. My observance reinforces that consciousness is universally perceived as 'knowledge and awareness' as an individual 'power'. However, knowledge is not mutually exclusive to individuals. It arises in people and cultures as a social language of forms or symbolism.

The shared dimensional experiences can be examined as mutual consciousness by understanding how individuals within a culture develop frameworks of meaning. These are influenced by the shared archetypes, myths, and other cultural constructs that form a symbolic flow of existence, experiences, and our perceptions of reality. However, these symbols are highly represented in cultural contexts and practices outside the 'norm' of scientific experiments.

Alternative states of consciousness as 'neuroplasticity' in healing and reframing our mindsets have been highly esteemed throughout history. This qualitative aspect does not reduce the value, or the existence of culturally found consciousness. The challenges arise for science to find ways to understand phenomena that are predominantly excluded from mainstream studies. Therefore, I reflect that empirical, anthropological ethnographies and research are ideal for greater cultural understanding.

My review of Jung's theories reveals an arcane history and wisdom that finds common ground with the same sciences that Albert Einstein and Roger Penrose built upon. The difference appears to be

¹⁸⁹ Karen Sykes, "My aim is true: Postnostalgic reflections on the future of anthropological science," (2003).

that Jung's approaches and subject matter involved metaphysical and spiritual concepts that later became discredited as science competitively denied its spiritual and religious 'power' predecessor. Ultimately, regardless of the lens and the scientific or non-scientific path we take, we are describing our experiences, meanings of existence and explanations of reality through culturally rich, and diverse languages and perceptions. At the heart of our communications is a common source of symbols. Consistently, our cultural expression and knowledge explanations are linked as Campbell described "to the cosmic order".¹⁹⁰

I next discuss this language of symbols brought by metaphors, narratives, and human expression in ritual and ritualised behaviours.

¹⁹⁰ Campbell, interview.

chapter five

SYMBOLIC ANTHROPOLOGY AND STAR SONGS

Chapter Five

SYMBOLIC ANTHROPOLOGY

Culture as Symbolism

Symbols are a ‘teleological way’ of experiencing the world phenomenologically. They involve the explanation of phenomena in the purposes they serve and affect—rather than the cause by which they arise in the material world.¹⁹¹ However, as a ‘language of consciousness’, their source, production, and process are inherently linked to human function. Connecting desires ‘to know’ an intellectual concept of ‘being’ an identity, in the world—of life and its referential existence. The enmeshment leads to a complex network of concepts and inter-relationships. These appear to be multi-dimensional. They mirror-scale in binary alternatives, depending on perspectives and our many facets of inquiry. For example, a symbol or symbol set may appear in our mental vision—our mind’s eye as we walk through the landscape. In a form of synchronicity, we may then see the symbol ‘represented’ in our environment. It may appear as the same iconography of our visualisation, or it may appear as pareidolia, a ‘thing’ that we have previously associated with the symbol’s meaning—unique to our person, or a culturally constructed meaning, or both. The symbol and our interpretation may involve any of our senses. We may smell and associate a memory, a story, or a song.

The language of symbols may primarily exist to support human function—as neuroscience and biological science attest.¹⁹² Human biological function inherently communicates to affect our dreaming. It incites our imaginations, and it seems even thought processes—giving rise to automatic or conscious bodily responses. Neuroscience has likened this bodily symbolic messaging to the tiniest observable scale—such as Stuart Hameroff’s ORCH-Orr theory of microtubules.¹⁹³ However, the symbols involved in our internal physiology are primarily and unconsciously linked. They connect to the cellular networks of our function, hormones, and neural

¹⁹¹ Gabriele De Anna, "Teleology and theology. On the specificity of teleological explanations," *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 10, no. 3 (2018).

¹⁹² Seth and Bayne, "Theories of consciousness."

¹⁹³ Roger Penrose and Stuart Hameroff, "Consciousness in the universe: Neuroscience, quantum space-time geometry and Orch OR theory," *Journal of Cosmology* 14 (2011).

‘signalling’ more than the rich qualia of symbols interacting directly with our imaginations, perceptions, and experiences in the world.

My research finds a thematic Great Mother archetypal relationship with ‘the other’ in cultures. I specifically include the realms of ‘Spirit’ that teleologically speaks to and is spoken to by cultures relating to its power forces. This is the realm of divine deities, Nature’s spirits, the ancestors, animals, spirit opposers, and spirit helpers that guide humans through their life Hero’s Journey. The speaking tongue is metaphorical, a fundamental code of symbolism. As a language of consciousness, it communicates within and across cultures, throughout time and place. Symbolic systems and social constructions are influenced by the environment, adaptive behaviours, social norms, and shared narratives.¹⁹⁴ I observe that consciousness is a human connection that is transformed within cultural meaning-making.¹⁹⁵

Symbolism is a Communication

Possibly the most universally shared symbolic language of consciousness is that of mythology. Often described as a fantasy or an imaginative ‘make-believe’ tale, myth carries far more potent properties.

Joseph Campbell’s scholarly legacy is cross-cultural mythology. In Campbell’s definition, a myth is most clearly a “dreamlike symbol that evokes and directs psychological energy.”¹⁹⁶ The story or narrative motif is part of a greater fabric of myths that consolidate. They form a cultural mythology expressing a culture’s attitude towards life, death, and universal existence. Here, the myth may be taken literally but most often has metaphorical meanings embedded within its expression. Myths carry and raise our consciousness with shared experiences about encounters with the human psyche and symbolic struggles through life and the afterlife. Campbell says, “Myths are public dreams” and “Dreams are private myths. Myths are vehicles of communication between the conscious and the unconscious, just as dreams are.”

¹⁹⁴ Jackson, *How Lifeworlds Work: Emotionality, Sociality, and the Ambiguity of Being*.

¹⁹⁵ James J Fox, "The transformation of progenitor lines of origin: patterns of precedence in eastern Indonesia," in *Origins, Ancestry and Alliance : Explorations in Austronesian Ethnography* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2006).

¹⁹⁶ Campbell and Moyers, *The power of myth*. 1991

Campbell states a 'properly operating mythology' has four important functions. The first is that it awakens a sense of wonder, gratitude and even rapture concerning the mystery of a person's existence and the universe. Secondly, it provides a rational, comprehensible image of the world that shows where that person belongs. The third function supports social order through initiations, rites and other rituals that shape the young and reinforce the community. The fourth and most important function is to guide a person on a clear path through psychological crises and traumatic events. This life path begins with childhood and ends with death and in many cases prepares individuals and those left behind for after death.

Jung's Dreaming Hero

Campbell's interest in Indian cosmology and Sanskrit language was fuelled by works of Indologist Heinrich Zimmer who was a close friend of Carl Jung. Jung's work on archetypes gained through examination of the *"Tibetan Book of the Dead"*¹⁹⁷ and dreaming inspired Campbell's studies on the symbolism of comparative mythology. He collaborated and eventually met with Jung. The relationship fostered many deeper and enduring insights into the 'mysteries of the collective consciousness'. Jung significantly influenced Campbell's well-known work *"The Hero with a Thousand Faces"*¹⁹⁸ where he explains the monomyth as the "Hero's (or Heroine's) journey."¹⁹⁹

Campbell's idea of the universal monomyth links to Jung's archetype of the 'self'—described as an inward journey or physical, mental, and emotional quest to gain a new state of 'being' in the world. It represents a personal acquisition of knowledge, realisations, and sometimes status or wealth—marking a cyclic process of individual change and common trials and traumas a person encounters. The Hero as the archetype of the self, embarks into the 'underworld' representing the psyche or collective unconscious. The Hero encounters the Goddess or Mother and often includes a helper. They undergo a series of challenges culminating with the 'death of the psyche' or a symbolic slaying of consciousness by an opposer. The 'old self dies' and a 'new self' is born or reborn—transcending further challenges to reposition themselves in the 'place' of their former status. They have embodied transforming qualities and are in a new state.

Campbell's hypothesis claims archetypal symbolism represented in the 'collective unconscious' is woven into mythology narratives that embed this monomyth theme across cultures, religions,

¹⁹⁷ Graham Coleman and Thupten Jinpa, *The Tibetan book of the dead: First complete translation* (Penguin UK, 2008).

¹⁹⁸ Campbell, *The hero with a thousand faces*.

¹⁹⁹ See also Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review*.

cosmologies, and even human behaviours. Critical features remain similar even though the stories may vary cross-culturally. Comparing mythology to Jung’s knowledge of dreaming, Campbell proposes this symbolism is from an internal source, accessed and shared as lived experiences.



Figure 20: Adapted diagram of the Hero’s Journey process in position on the astronomical precession cycle of the sun and moon and constellations marked by annual equinoxes and solstices—Vivienne Tobassa Eggers 2024.

Despite recognising its importance as a universal concept to bring ‘cosmic order’ in human affairs, Campbell never directly linked the monomyth to the cosmos as the source. Instead, he followed Jung’s supposition of a mental field of archetypal forms that cultures sometimes projected onto the heavens in many of their cosmologies, religious rites, and expression of ‘star myths’. However, he asserted the ‘Heavenly Mother’ is the earliest archetypal symbol of creation.²⁰⁰ In episode 5 of their documentary series, Bill Moyers summarises Campbell’s position.

²⁰⁰ Joseph Campbell, "Love and the Goddess," interview by Bill D Moyers, *Moyers*, no. 5, 1988, https://youtu.be/v_2DhV4BdOo?si=vl-qCFrrRNdTNE7u.

"...so long ago, the feminine figure of the goddess ruled mythology as the equal of the male. The Greeks even gave her top billing... Joseph Campbell liked that story and told it to me when we were talking one day about how patriarchal authority finally drove the goddess from the pantheon of imagination. Somehow the old guys figured that if they wanted to control the world, they had to change the metaphors and the goddess had to go. She remained the symbol of fertility crucial to humanity's survival but no equal—except rarely in the exercise of power. The repercussions have played out down the centuries and are still with us."

—Bill Moyers (Ep 5 25:54)

During the interview, Campbell claimed that religious images are metaphorical symbols—whereas, in ancient systems of religion, the Great Mother archetype has been the key creation deity. Campbell believed her dominant mythic survival related to her being synonymous with Nature, water, agriculture, and fertility, and hence a divine female creator. Campbell refers to ancient world myths and specifically to the Egyptian Nut as the sky goddess who creates the world and gives birth daily to the sun. In one version, at night she carries him as the moon through the underworld in her cow/buffalo horns. She is the progenitor of life and represents the cosmic order of the celestial waters. Campbell states, "She is time and space and the mystery beyond her is pairs of opposites, so it isn't male, and it isn't female...but everything is within her so that the gods are her children. Everything you can think of, and everything you can see, is the production of the goddess."²⁰¹ Campbell interprets the mythic symbolism of Nut in her earliest form (also associated with Nu, Neith, and Hathor) before she became the consort of Geb as a lesser deity in the patriarchy. Earth god Geb held Nut in her Milky Way arch as two supporting pillars formed by his upstretched arms.²⁰²

The Mystery is Binary

The 'mystery' Campbell refers to of 'pairs of opposites' is a thematic pattern found commonly in myths that Claude Levi-Strauss²⁰³ observed. He traced the pattern back to early Greek myths, to discover 'binary oppositions, or binary pairs.' He found the heart of the myths contained

²⁰¹ Ibid, Ep 5 (31:31)

²⁰² Appendix 1 Research Literature Review—Vivienne Eggers

²⁰³ De Ruijter, "Levi-Strauss and symbolic anthropology."

conflicting themes or polarising ideas and ideologies that are opposing—such as ‘good and bad’, ‘light and dark’, or ‘order and chaos’. Levi-Strauss found these ‘conflicts’ exist universally in myth inherent in their structure.

The binary pair alternatively contains similar elements, which gives rise to an opportunity for exchange in a relationship. In his definition of ‘kinship’ systems, a woman may be given away by one tribe or family to become a wife in exchange for another ‘material culture’²⁰⁴ of value. Binary pairs in the contexts of myths denote a symbolic exchange of similar elements to bring order and meaning-making to the myth. For example, Ra as the sun flies across the sky until Nut swallows him and he enters the underworld. In some versions, he is then depicted by the moon. Ra retains his symbolic meaning, but his iconic representation has been exchanged.

Levi-Strauss²⁰⁵ major contention is that all myths contain binary oppositions that bring tension and invoke the hero or protagonist to seek some form of resolution to restore equilibrium. Moreover, he uses this idea to submit that the purpose of myth construction is to resolve conflicting ideas. The myth narrators may have no conscious awareness of the deeper symbolic meaning that is playing out in the unconscious. The early cosmological story told of Nut demonstrates many binary oppositions woven into its passage—such as ‘overworld’ and ‘underworld’, ‘masculinity and femininity’, and ‘life and death’.

In answer to the pattern of structural ‘sameness’ or similarities of thematic elements of myths across cultures, Levi-Strauss proposes that myths are a language of their unique taxonomy. It differs from spoken and written or shared linguistics. He states, “All myths have *langue* and *parole*”—with both the ahistorical synchronic structure that has “reversible time”. The specific details are diachronic but “non-reversible time” within the structure.²⁰⁶ He means that *parole* as an event within the myth can only exist in linear, unidirectional, and forward time. *Langue* as the structure itself, may exist in the past, present and future. A myth is ahistorically specific to the time it is set within, but its meaning is relevant at any time. Therefore “as history, myth is *parole*; as timeless, it is *langue*.”²⁰⁷

Despite their divergent approaches, both Levi-Strauss and Campbell share some similarities in identifying common thematic elements that play out in what seems ‘universal’ occurrences across cultures, time, and place. But where Campbell found resonance with Jung’s internal psychological process of individuation and self-realisation, Levi-Strauss was more concerned about cultural-level

²⁰⁴ Bloch, *How we think they think: Anthropological approaches to cognition, memory, and literacy*.

²⁰⁵ Lévi-Strauss, "The structural study of myth."

²⁰⁶ Lévi-Strauss, "The structural study of myth."

²⁰⁷ Lévi-Strauss, "The structural study of myth."

operations of the myth structures, rather than their content.²⁰⁸ Both Levi-Strauss and Jung held that the main function of myth is meaning-making and exemplify how its function operates within the unconscious as a form of crisis or tension resolution. However, Levi-Strauss did not support Jung's internalisation of metaphysics and traditional religious beliefs as projections of the psyche. He maintained that "as a structure, myth is discovered and not invented by the mythologist."

*"With respect to the tellers of myth, I do not believe that they necessarily understand the nature of myth. It is doubtful, to say the least...whether the natives of central Brazil over and above the fact that they are fascinated by mythological stories have any understanding of the systems of interrelations to which we reduce them. I therefore claim to show not how men think in myths but how myths operate in men's minds without their being aware of the fact."*²⁰⁹

—Levi-Strauss *"Mythical Thought and Social Life"* 1984

My research finds significance in that Campbell²¹⁰ refers to Nut as a goddess creation mythology. To the neolithic predynastic hunter-gatherer tribes who worshipped her twelve thousand to twenty-six thousand years ago, in Nabta Playa, the 'Cave of Beasts' and the 'Cave of Swimmers' she was the 'Heavenly Mother' of a primordial creation cosmology.²¹¹ To the dynastic Egyptians, she became central to their cosmogeny as a matriarchal religion of the *"Celestial Waters of Life"*.

The later story of Nut and Geb is a clear example of the patriarchal demotion and eventual destructive removal of the goddess as the divine creator of the cosmos and the bringing of order out of chaos. Here the 'language of consciousness' in social structures changes, while the collective symbolism remains unchanged, but exchanged or 'buried' within realms of imaginal mystery that are accessed via the subconscious. Although the initially described demotion of the goddess seems widespread if not universal, there remained many tribes and societies who maintained their reverence of her at least as an equal. In the warring patriarchal empires, the choices of worship were more often made for the captured slaves and invaded territories with autocratic enforcement.

²⁰⁸ Vernon W. Gras, "Myth and the Reconciliation of Opposites: Jung and Lévi-Strauss," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 42, no. 3 (1981), <https://doi.org/10.2307/2709188>, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/stable/2709188>.

²⁰⁹ Levi-Strauss, "Mythical Thought and Social Life," interview by Charles and Martha Hitchcock Lectures, Video, 1984, https://youtu.be/97cOCrYc7zk?si=-a4NdX-1RX-BxA_d.

²¹⁰ Campbell, interview.

²¹¹ Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review*.

For other societies, the decision appears to have transitioned with the trail of migrating cultures and lifestyles as described in Appendix 1.²¹²

Campbell's discussion of this specific symbolic motif of the goddess and her fate provides a further synchronous intersection to my research thesis. It provides a segue to the discussion of cultural astronomy in Appendix 2²¹³ and its constitutive transmission discussed in the next chapter.

However, there are further correlations and significant linkages that require synthesis before making the transition.

Spirit Animals

Firstly, Campbell's description of the goddess cosmology is an early, archaeological record of symbolism transmitted as social meaning-making and explanations of existence. In episode 3 "*The First Storytellers*"²¹⁴ Moyers interviews Campbell about the origins of symbolism and offers a description of consciousness.

Campbell describes how in primeval times animals were often the envoys and teachers to guide humans in the world.²¹⁵ They represent caretakers of Nature and the mysteries to which humans found themselves integrally connected as part of their existence. Campbell identifies myth that relates directly to ritual and tribal ceremonies. In this case, he says the divine imagery is in 'anthropomorphic form' and the message of 'going into the cave' during rites is a relationship of life events to the eternal powers that experience a transformation of consciousness—as is felt when in the womb. The cave is the inner world of the psyche and where life springs forth when emerging out of the darkness. These are ancient monomyth symbols of death and rebirth where the animal spirit joins the man on their journey as the helper or mentor-guide. Invariably the tribe has become inextricably linked with this animal in place and time as an embodied experience of living within the Great Mother cosmos. The animal and often rocks, trees, bodies of water and other material symbols are features of the person and society; daily living that may often serve the people with some sort of sacrifice—such as the provision of food, shelter, and sustenance.

In early belief systems where humans know themselves as integrally a part of Earth and the universal existence, the spirit of the beneficiary animal or other animist element remains in a

²¹² Ibid. See Barta.

²¹³ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

²¹⁴ Joseph Campbell, "The first storytellers," interview by Bill D Moyers, (*No Title*), 1988. Ep 3 (36:11)

²¹⁵ Campbell, interview. Ep 3 (36:11)

supernatural relationship with the person and the tribe, just as the ancestors do when they die. Here, the myth and ritual become valuable to support the ongoing relationship with those in the spirit dimensions—often with the facilitation by someone who can mediate the relationship—such as the shaman, priestess, or healer. In this regard, the animals and other ‘material culture’ symbols hold a high-value place to the tribes who see them as willing benefactors—who give their lives to sustain human existence as a service of honour. Animal totems therefore became associated with and even worshipped by many hunter-gatherer tribes.

Alternative States and Ritual

As Van Gennep²¹⁶ and Turner²¹⁷ explain, the ensuing process of liminal trance in rites of passage aids individuals in embodying and reinforcing their relationships with the spirit dimensions. In the physical place of ritual setting, material culture symbols are often utilised to invoke and engage with ‘the other’ as an unseen spiritual or metaphysical phenomenon. The ritual becomes a tool of communication with universal forces. It embodies a ‘power’ of consciousness that is often ‘unknowable’ in normal daily living. Or at least available only when the participant has crossed a threshold of awareness to realise alternative states and transcendent consciousness.

Within the ritual space, the cultural expression of mythological or metaphorical symbolic narratives includes performance, dance, music, storytelling, chants, and art. People may utilise symbols to support the ritual process of grounding the immaterial into the material world as meaning-making. The facilitator and participants may bring to the ritual space, material cultural symbols that mark and connect physical manifestations of the supernatural phenomenon. These include wands, staffs, masks, and—as Kelly²¹⁸ describes—mnemonic devices that aid the participants in recalling historic oral legacies—associating shared autobiographical memories.

I find resonance in this ritual discussion with both Levi-Strauss and Jung on the operation of social behaviours. These serve as ways to resolve conflicts and make meaning of relationships within external parameters. Campbell²¹⁹ adopts the Jungian frame of internalised symbolism projected onto an external environment from the collective unconscious. He upholds rituals are an

²¹⁶ Van Gennep, *The rites of passage*.

²¹⁷ Victor Turner, Roger Abrahams, and Alfred Harris, *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure* (Routledge, 2017).

²¹⁸ Kelly, *Knowledge and power in prehistoric societies: Orality, memory, and the transmission of culture*.

²¹⁹ Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers, *The power of myth* (Anchor, 2011).

expression of a culturally shared mythology. Levi-Strauss alternatively poses that myth and ritual are two different coded “mechanisms that express a semantic message.”²²⁰

Social Power Fields

Both points of view appear valid depending on the application of these ideas. In the temporal transmission of language are found both internalised processes and the expressing, making, shaping, and reinforcing of language within socio-cultural contexts. Many behaviours represented in cultural expression demonstrate these traits—as Pierre Bourdieu’s²²¹ ‘Social Field Theory’ attests.

Field Theory examines ‘social fields’, and how individuals construct, interact, and are affected by them.²²² Fields are environments where tension and conflict need to be resolved between individuals and groups. The field is often competitive and is always where the individual must position themselves to receive judgement, criticism, acceptance, and status from the social groups they join. According to Bourdieu, individuals take a form of social capital and habitus into the field. Habitus is formed through the accumulated experience of individuals in different fields that bring perceived value to the group. Capital may be economic, social, and cultural. It aids people in determining their positions and status in the field’s social structure. To individuals, social capital and habitus are how they attain ‘belonging’ to the group and achieve personal recognition in ‘the other.’

Bourdieu’s Field theory adequately encapsulates the field where the tribal ritual and the mythological expression take place. The structural elements of meaning-making are the doxa or rules of the field that unite individuals into group participation. Both rituals and performances are enacted by participants who organise themselves and their roles through collective agreements that recognise individual habitus and capital—such as a facilitating shaman or myth narrator. Inside the field is certain tension and conflict to resolve through negotiation, contest, and interaction. It is assumed that the group holds ‘symbolic power’ however it is recognised. By participating in the group, the power will be transferred to the individual, who in mythological representation is the individual ‘Hero’ or ‘Heroine’.

²²⁰ Levi-Strauss, interview. (6:17)

²²¹

²²² Pierre Bourdieu, “Structures, habitus, power: Basis for a theory of symbolic power,” *Culture/power/history: A reader in contemporary social theory* 155 (1994).

Relationships are the Impetus

The motivation and purpose of the ritual or the myth expression is to *enable relationships* that ultimately serve the group and aid the individual transcendence of consciousness to new states of being. They may often serve to connect with ancestors or guardian animal totems and spirits. These rituals occur in association with the shared group consciousness or in explanations of meaning as status quo.

Within this framework of the field are demonstrated both structural elements and the facilitation of mythological content, such as the 'Hero's Journey' that forms an existential blueprint.²²³ The individual who joins the field is experiencing a unique internalised process that interacts with the psyche. The perceptions and personal meaning will be uniquely filtered by individual beliefs of reality—as neuroscientist Anil Seth²²⁴ describes. However, the individual will leave those internal beliefs behind or have them challenged when they enter the field. In the field, they will participate and behave in ways that may have no personal meaning or connection—as they are driven by their desire for liminal communitas, vanquishing their fears or overcoming an ordeal.²²⁵ In this manner 'the other', the external field has an identity, nature and consciousness that is separate from the individual's, until they find resolution in some form of merging and emergence in a new state.

This process, the forces, and aspects of power that the individual experiences have all been invoked from non-local sources—relegating a separate but entangled reality that recruits or engages the individual. It seems implausible that consciousness is purely an internally derived process that is projected from the individual. Levi-Strauss²²⁶ describes those of the group participating in the ritual and mythological, cosmological, or supernatural expression are engaging, receiving, and even mediating with the phenomenological 'other'. This event happens without the requirement for a conscious intellectual connection to their behaviours.

²²³ Olivia Efthimiou and Zeno E Franco, "Heroic intelligence: The hero's journey as an evolutionary and existential blueprint," *Journal of Genius and Eminence* 2, no. 2 (2017).

²²⁴ Seth and Bayne, "Theories of consciousness."

²²⁵ Turner, *The forest of symbols: Aspects of Ndembu ritual*, 101.

²²⁶ Levi-Strauss, interview.

Conclusion

This research reveals the study of symbolism is a multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary topic to which a vast number of researchers have contributed valuable insights throughout the ages. My discussion has involved pinpointing specific components of symbols, their nature, structures and function or operations within the context of my thesis questions on consciousness. I have primarily correlated to Jung and Campbell's influential insights. Within this framework, it feels remiss to not juxtapose the ground-breaking anthropological work of structuralist Levi-Strauss in the contexts of cross-cultural symbols, 'mytheme' narratives, or mythology, rituals, and sense-making practices of the many tribes he studied. Levi-Strauss brought semiology to the field of anthropology. He changed a predominant study of behavioural traits, to a study of signs, and symbolic systems of messages that reflect human mental processes and behaviours.²²⁷

Levi-Strauss²²⁸ states he developed his structural methodologies because he wanted to take a more scientific, empirical approach. This is an area where he also criticised Jung for claiming religions and metaphysical beliefs are internalised projections from the psyche. He gives additional criticism of Jung for reallocating mythology within a new source in Nature. Jung's idea was that in the individuating process, the ego becomes the 'opposer' to Nature and the unconscious. God therefore becomes a psychic projection, archetypally embodying itself repeatedly throughout history.

Although he also believed that myths have psychic energy that operates within the psyche, Levi-Strauss countered Jung's claims as being subjective without supporting empirical evidence from cross-cultural belief systems. Regardless, he also shared Jung's belief in returning to the cultural influence of Nature as a governing or guiding force. However, as a construction in socio-cultural worldviews and behaviours. Despite their differing perceptions, Jung and Levi-Strauss shared many common findings and beliefs. For example, Jung's concepts of archetypes also operate in binary opposition, and often in conflict—life/death, light/dark, and male/female. Overall, both made the function of myth natural to an internal reconciliation of the unconscious and in some form to establish individual balance within the external environment and life. Favouring Jung's philosophical approaches, Campbell found resonance. As a literary scholar of comparative mythology and religion, he established the theory that all mythic narratives are monomyths—or variations of a single great story.

²²⁷ Gras, "Myth and the Reconciliation of Opposites: Jung and Lévi-Strauss." 476-480

²²⁸ Lévi-Strauss, "The structural study of myth."

Campbell's observation that a common pattern thematically links the narrative elements of most cross-culturally found myths, irrespective of creation time and origin, leads to the transition of this discussion. Figure 20, illustrated earlier in this section, provides a conceptual diagram of Campbell's monomyth elements—with one significant variation. I have intentionally shown the cycle of the Hero or Heroine's Journey placed on the 'astral wheel' of precession, solstices, and equinoxes. The concept reflects my finding of a cosmic correlation to Platonic forms or Jung's 'collective unconscious'. I have evidenced the panpsychism potential of a fundamental, universal existential essence operating from the subatomic quantum level into the astronomical and cosmic scale.

Jung,²²⁹ Campbell, and it seems other scholars do not explicitly make the same conscious connection I do between a cosmic synthesis of the Hero's Journey and the archetype of the collective unconscious having a cosmic source. However, Campbell does refer to the returning Hero who has realised his conquest as the 'cosmic dancer':²³⁰

"Freedom to pass back and forth across the world division, from the perspective of the apparitions of time to that of the causal deep and back—not contaminating the principles of the one with those of the other, yet permitting the mind to know the one by virtue of the other is the talent of the master. The Cosmic Dancer, declares Nietzsche, does not rest heavily in a single spot, but gaily, lightly, turns and leaps from one position to another."

—Joseph Campbell citing Nietzsche's "The Hero with a Thousand Faces"

Significant research links archetype and the Hero's Journey to astrology. However, as a study of the *internal, personal process mapped onto the heavens* as the subjective projection of the psyche.²³¹ I acknowledge that most early religions and cosmologies are centred in the cosmos, including astrology which was an early religion in origin.²³² I examine elements of ancient astrology as early

²²⁹ Liz Greene, *The Astrological World of Jung's' Liber Novus': Daimons, Gods, and the Planetary Journey* (Routledge, 2018).

²³⁰ Campbell, *The hero with a thousand faces*.

²³¹ Nicholas Campion, *Astrology and Cosmology in the World's Religions* (New York University Press, 2012).

²³² Nicholas Campion and Dorian Gieseler Greenbaum, *Astrology in Time and Place: Cross-Cultural Questions in the History of Astrology* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016).

‘cultural astronomy’ in Appendix 2.²³³ Contemporary Western astrology is now a vast and complex topic involving human personality profiling that has significantly diverged from its astronomical roots. It therefore falls outside the bounds of my current research as do the specific studies of other individual religions. However, I note significant connections.

The critical point of finding an external consciousness driver and its astral relationships is discussed in the next section. I do not source all ancient cosmologies as inextricably embedded in the cosmos. However, I note they are influenced, received, and mediated through celestially bound forces and affects.

Misconceptions About Early Intelligence

I observed a prevalent assumption in the analysis of cosmic symbolism and mythology. That is primitive societies lacked intelligence and conscious understanding, projecting symbolic language onto their landscape as a fantasy product of their inner imaginative psyche. This assumption,²³⁴ often treated as a given truth, is criticised by scholars like Levi-Strauss who challenge Jung's work. The gap highlights a significant omission by contemporary science in considering the 'outside in' forces of consciousness. Despite scientific advancements revealing the intelligence of early humans, the prevailing societal worldview tends to overlook their conscious awareness—attributes demonstrated through intricate cultural explanations and mechanisms for balancing life amidst environmental and social changes.

My observation agrees with recent years of literature research. Conscious intelligence is evidenced when connecting symbolism, myth, ritual, and cosmologies to early astronomical representations or cultural relationships with celestial spheres. However, contemporary perspectives have shifted from early views to a focus on scientific legitimacy, denying the presence of phenomenological forces or energies once considered supernatural. This shift aligns with Levi-Strauss and Jung's observations that humans have distanced themselves from Nature, becoming mechanistic controllers of a material world rather than integral parts of a holistic existence.²³⁵

Many who study cultures, including Jung and Campbell²³⁶ have openly discussed how societies have ‘mapped their mythology onto the astral heavens’. Institutions devoted to studies of the

²³³ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

²³⁴ Brian Greene, "Brave New Prehistoric World," in *Big Ideas Series*, ed. World Science Festival (John Templeton Foundation, 2023). https://youtu.be/51y5mt7F_N4?si=NRHqjk_aVJL_XgzV.

²³⁵ Gras, "Myth and the Reconciliation of Opposites: Jung and Lévi-Strauss."

²³⁶ Joseph Campbell, *Pathways to bliss: Mythology and personal transformation*, vol. 16 (New World Library, 2004).

ancient world substantiate that “records of ritual practice and architectural topography provide evidence of a reflection or embodiment of the cosmos.”²³⁷ But other studies follow from the early assumptions that historically, people held little conscious awareness and even lacked the intelligence to grasp concepts that contemporary science, physics, and technology provide to reframe the paradigm.²³⁸ Under re-examination, early understanding of ancient and philosophical terms is now revealed to be ‘inherited’ rather than ‘invented’ by the classical founders of Western knowledge. Discoveries about our ancient past are frequently updated and give a clearer understanding of the capabilities and consciousness of our arcane ancestors.²³⁹

Fast forward to the post-Roman patriarchal Western knowledge schools and the interpretation of considered ‘savage’ people’s culture and intelligence. Fledgling theories of psychology attempt a scientific legitimacy with the interpretive application of Platonic conceptual explanations. These are found in cultures thousands of years earlier before the timekeeping authenticity of written language records. These early findings were unexplainable within the context of ‘primitive’ societies and therefore designated by many scholars as coincidences or errors.

The point emphasised by Campbell²⁴⁰ exacerbates the issue—that a ‘Heavenly Mother’ or goddess, perhaps representing Nature was at the heart of many belief systems in pre-patriarchal societies. As Moyers said, “She had to go”, and consequently her legacy was destroyed, adopted, or subverted into an acceptable male-power orientation.

Exciting innovations arose from these conquest periods of discord, unfortunately, shaped by the androcentric platform of mixed falsehoods and knowledge ‘truths.’ This is the legacy that Jung and others inherited. It influenced their worldview when they interpreted ancient Greek and Roman philosophy. The prevalent worldview in literature continued informing and contrasting archaeological and historical records of cultures through a projected and systemically reinforced societal worldview of male power hierarchies.

²³⁷ Deena Ragavan, *Heaven on earth: Temples, ritual, and cosmic symbolism in the Ancient world* (Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago Chicago IL, 2013).

²³⁸ Sue Taylor Parker and Michael L McKinney, *Origins of intelligence: The evolution of cognitive development in monkeys, apes, and humans* (Johns Hopkins University Press+ ORM, 2012).

²³⁹ Agustin Fuentes et al., "Burials and engravings in a small-brained hominin, Homo naledi, from the late Pleistocene: contexts and evolutionary implications," *bioRxiv* (2023).

²⁴⁰ Campbell, interview.

The Question of External Consciousness

From Jung's²⁴¹ foundation, a generic perspective is that the archetypal self goes within, on their individuation quest and after trials, arrives at their destination—achieving transformation through the events and experiences they encounter. This journey forms the thematic narrative of the dream or myth. The myth becomes a social construct as individual meaning-making applies group values to the story. Evidence is apparent to support this transpersonal process of human growth and awareness. There appears less empirical backing to the assumption that human supernatural relationships in 'the other' via ritual, myth and other symbolic expression are only imaginal and personal mental projections. Evidence suggests a 'binary opposite' of 'outside-in' is at least co-existent with an 'inside-out' phenomenal driver. However, this observation leaves science with a conundrum and additional challenges to find ways to explain rather than ignore the potential of metaphysical consciousness or describe it as a 'fading image of God projected on a screen of the mind.' However, this finding gives conclusive support to the thesis research problem. Identifying if consciousness is an externally derived force, that should be considered through the specialised socio-cultural expertise of anthropology. The answer, simply, is 'yes'.

Research Outcome

Research findings led me to also consider common patterns, themes and elements in the structure and content of symbolic language expressing consciousness. Moreover, to consider cultural contexts and settings the symbolism is conveyed. From their comparative cultural studies, Campbell,²⁴² Levi-Strauss, and Jung's²⁴³ observations confirm a primary purpose of relationships and meaning-making is involved in symbolic culture—regardless of an individual's conscious awareness or intellectualisation of the function. Clifford Geertz²⁴⁴ might also agree with this interpretation with his described 'textual piles of meaning'. These are findings made with direct ethnographic observation and interaction with specific cultures—minimising subjectivity at least from the researcher.

²⁴¹ Jung, *The archetypes and the collective unconscious*.

²⁴² Campbell and Moyers, *The power of myth*.

²⁴³ Gras, "Myth and the Reconciliation of Opposites: Jung and Lévi-Strauss."

²⁴⁴ Geertz, "Chapter 1/Thick Description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture."

Thematic Analysis

Several other thematic observations seem apparent in reviewing the research literature. Firstly, the identified impetus of symbolic culture for relationships is not only interpersonal. More apparent is the intent to secure and reinforce relationships with the supernatural, the spirit dimension and ancestors who are no longer living, as Jackson so clearly demonstrates in ethnography.²⁴⁵ To achieve this aim, shamanic and spiritual mediation is deployed—often through achieving alternative states of consciousness or ways of ‘knowing’. My research agrees that the preoccupation with an extended sense or experience of ‘being’ and of ‘communicating’ beyond the mundane world of ‘living’, reflects a predominating human relationship with the heavens. With ancestors and with ‘unseen’ forces connecting cosmologies, myths, and other cultural artefacts.

A Hero Within and Without

Secondly, the Heroine or Hero’s Journey²⁴⁶ reflects an internal, archetypal narrative of intention, conflict, relationships, and conquest leading to personal transformation. However, it also marks the individual’s actions, behaviours, and interactions at least metaphorically in the external world, where environmental and social constructs of power are encountered, contested, and negotiated. These patterns and events occur throughout a lifetime in the diverse social fields of human experience. But they are also experienced metaphorically and embodied when individuals engage in ritual and cultural symbolic expression. In many cases, the individual invokes a metaphysical connection and supernatural energy. Representation of symbolic power may ultimately be the desire to embody, transform, and transcend states of consciousness to achieve union with the cosmic essence and receive universal power from which life is born and the deceased spirits depart.

²⁴⁵ Jackson, “Myths/Histories/Lives”.

²⁴⁶ Joseph Campbell, “The hero with a thousand faces (Vol. 17),” *New World Library* (2008).

Gateway of Spirit

To most early cultures, the source and place of human origin and departure are central to the heavens and astral realms that receive our nightly gaze. Joseph Campbell²⁴⁷ cites Dakota leader Black Elk in this context:

“...a key statement to the understanding of myth and symbols, he says ‘I [Black Elk] saw myself on the central mountain of the world. The highest place, and I had a vision because I was seeing in a sacred manner of the world and the sacred central mountain was Harney Peak in South Dakota... but the central mountain is everywhere.’ That is a real mythological realisation of why it distinguishes between the local cult image and its connotation at the centre of the world that is the hub of the universe, the axis mundi. The central point pole star around which all revolves... where stillness and movement are together. Movement is time. Stillness is eternity realising the relationship of the temporal moment, but forever is the sense of life realising your life is, a moment of eternity. And the experience of the eternal aspect of what you’re doing—the temporal experience is the mythological experience. So, this is where [Black Elk] was saying there is a shining point where all lines intersect... and each of us is a manifestation of that mystery.”

—Joseph Campbell citing Black Elk “The Power of Myth” ep 3, (53:06)

In the next chapter, I discuss in more detail the relationship and significance of consciousness embodied from cosmic sources as symbolic culture transmission. To support this discussion, I refer to Appendix 2²⁴⁸ discussion overview of cultural astronomy and archetypal symbolism case study.

²⁴⁷ Campbell and Moyers, *The power of myth*.

²⁴⁸ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

chapter six

SYMBOLIC STAR SONGS IN CULTURE

Chapter Six

STAR SONGS

Consciousness as the source of 'the other' in ancient culture transmission

About

In this section, I discuss the implications of my research findings and hypothetical proposal of an explicit 'outside in' reciprocal driver for consciousness. I attest that the earliest cultures looked to the heavens, phenomena, and astral movements as integral to their survival and meaning-making of creation and existence.

I find that instead of purely projecting imaginal internal worlds, the cultural practices of people throughout history demonstrate an external 'power' in consciousness is attained and valued possibly universally by humans. This power is realised through symbolic communication. Transmission requires complex rituals and mechanisms specifically designed to invoke forms of *mediation* with the 'heavenly realms.' The heavens give critical value to human existence and vice versa. They represent in various forms, the place of pre-birth origin and ancestor abode after departing from mortal life. Here, the spirit transitions as invisible to other realms or becomes the essence of stars and astral bodies shining in the cosmos.

In this discussion, I refer to Appendix 2²⁴⁹ for an overview of cultural astronomy.²⁵⁰ I introduce the primary concepts that form the 'round' or astral scape of "*The Celestial Waters of Life*" cosmology. It directly relates to Campbell's discussions of the Egyptian Nut as the primordial progenitor deity. This ancient astronomical framework also provides an astral representation of the Hero's Journey,

²⁴⁹ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

²⁵⁰ Giulio Magli, *Archaeoastronomy: introduction to the science of stars and stones* (Springer Nature, 2020).

depicted in Figure 20. The appendix discussion contextualises the framework connecting with my discussion.

In the section *Sky Lore and Other Ways of Knowing* I trace early recorded forms of Great Mother archetypal symbolism. I discuss how these are embedded in the 'stars and stones'²⁵¹ cosmologies, ritual scape, and cross-cultural beliefs from prehistory. I explore the potential transmission of the alternative celestial symbolic language from archaic humans and traditional cultures. A comprehensive research project and literature review relating to this study of transmission is referred to in Appendix 1.²⁵²

In the section *Songlines and Dreaming* I present a case scenario demonstrating an alternative consciousness system that survives in Indigenous Australia. This demonstrates a living example of 'how' the alternative language of celestial symbolism may have been embodied and related to since archaic humans. Customary succession²⁵³ of culture and cosmologies has survived in many Indigenous Australian tribes for tens of thousands of years with little change.

In the section *The Waters of Life* I discuss symbolism directly linking to The Great Mother archetype and relating to possibly the earliest written recorded astral cosmogeny "*Celestial Waters of Life*".²⁵⁴ I refer to a comprehensive discussion of symbolic metaphors and archetypal motifs in Appendix 2.²⁵⁵ To examine the aspects of transmission, I include visible roots, similarities, and linkages to far older cosmologies and cultural systems sharing inherent beliefs. I refer to the literature research in Appendix 1.

Sky Lore and Other Ways of Knowing

Cultural Astronomy²⁵⁶ has an ancient ancestry, that includes traces of astral symbolism found in hominin societies. In the evolving study of early humans, manuports, cave and rock art and artefact engravings have been linked with celestial phenomena.²⁵⁷ Currently, the scarcity of

²⁵¹ Giulio Magli, *Mysteries and discoveries of archaeoastronomy: from Giza to Easter Island* (Springer Science & Business Media, 2009).

²⁵² Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review*.

²⁵³ Lidia Xynas, "Succession and Indigenous Australians: Addressing Indigenous customary law notions of 'property' and 'kinship' in a succession law context," *Australian Property Law Journal* 19, no. 2 (2011).

²⁵⁴ David Klotz, "A New Edition of the 'Book of Nut'," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 68, no. 5-6 (2011).

²⁵⁵ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

²⁵⁶ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

²⁵⁷ Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review*.

archaeological records and a lack of definitive cultural knowledge reveal significant speculations. But tangible links have also been discovered as scientists begin understanding the intelligence, capabilities, mobility, and global migrations of early hominins.

Recent research exploring the cultural links of hominin art proposes that the originators in the ancestral lineage are *Homo Erectus* or *Homo Habilis*. This would have occurred when they broke intellectual constraints into 'collective imagination'.²⁵⁸ Dan Everett describes a cultural capability, from artefacts and cave or rock inscriptions found in African and Southeast Asian regions. These indicate early intelligence and an alternative or more sensory consciousness held by our earliest ancestors.²⁵⁹ The manuport 'Venus of Bereket' approximately 250,000 BCE was partially constructed by *Homo Erectus* and even painted with red ochre. The cross-hatching style of engraving found on stones and Javanese shells dating 500,000 BCE has a similarity to some engraved Indigenous Australian artefacts. These may have also been crafted or culminated out of a Denisovan population concentrated in the prehistoric Sundaland region of which the archipelagos of Indonesia and Micronesia remain.

Current ideas about Denisovans remain speculative with only a tiny sample of fossil records and cultural artefacts.²⁶⁰ From these, we are aware that sophisticated jewellery was crafted, and needles were used to sew hides or textiles—possibly even make clothing. Cultural evidence from our more recent Neanderthal ancestors is more apparent.

When considering alternative consciousness and expression in our hominin ancestors, researchers of neurodiversity have found these admixing traits in the DNA of Neanderthals.²⁶¹ Cultural astronomer and naturalist Bernie Taylor revisited El. Castillo caves in northern Spain and recorded Pareidolia imagery. The art is proposed to have been made by modern humans at the time of Neanderthal occupation dated 40,000 BP. Taylor's interpretations of the symbolic art depict a 'Hero's Journey' and lunar timekeeping that is central to the Great Mother archetype and the astral precession round of solstices and equinoxes.²⁶²

The Southeast Asian discoveries that reveal Denisovan inhabitation are of specific significance to this study. Another early 'cradle of civilisation' arises, based in the Indonesian, Micronesian,

²⁵⁸ Dor, "From experience to imagination: Language and its evolution as a social communication technology."

²⁵⁹ Daniel Everett, *How language began: The story of humanity's greatest invention* (Profile Books, 2017).

²⁶⁰ Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review*.

²⁶¹ Gerit Pfuhl and Leif Ekblad, "Neurodiversity traits linked to Neanderthal admixture," (2018).

²⁶² Bernie Taylor, *Before Orion: Finding the Face of the Hero* (USA: Acquila Media Group, 2017). <https://www.beforeorion.com>.

Melanesian and regions that remain of Sundaland.²⁶³ Around 13,000-7,000 BCE, large areas of this sub-continent were submerged by melting ice sheets and sea level rise of approximately 120 metres.²⁶⁴ The lower sea level around 25,000 BP meant that travel between the closer Pacific Islands, Australia, and New Zealand via the Kermadec-Tonga arc would have involved crossing smaller seas between a more visible chain of islands. These are anomalies in our current charting of oceanic territories. It may account for recent similarities in findings between Indonesian, Melanesian, Indigenous Australian and South American DNA, cultural symbolism, and cosmologies.²⁶⁵

Recent scientific research has confirmed that hominins had seafaring capability and were likely to have crossed into and out of Sundaland into Sahul—now known as Australia. Archaeological findings remain controversial due to analysis of an early date. Fire-blackened shells were left by humans who lived around 125,000 BP.²⁶⁶ Local Gunditjmarra man John Clarke responded by saying: “There’s an unwritten knowing within ourselves that we don’t need to discuss how long we’ve been here—we know we’ve been here forever.”²⁶⁷ Without Homo Erectus or Denisovan fossil remains yet found in Australia, researchers may at best attribute the 3-5% of Denisovan DNA admixing found in Indigenous Australians and Melanesians to interaction on Sundaland, rather than Sahul or Australia. In the surviving cultural artefacts of the Sundaland region, we find the oldest links to the astral goddess precession symbols that have since travelled with the early migrating Homo sapiens. This observation leads to the consideration that archaic hominins may have had astronomical and timekeeping consciousness. They may have been responsible for passing on or sharing transcendent knowledge with modern human arrivals.

Homo Erectus’ arrived in the South Asian region around two million years BP. Official Australian migration dates are progressively receding to at least 65,000 BP. Modern humans had ample time for interaction and intermarriage with the hominins. However, cultural evidence supports the earlier hominin migration to Australia hypothesis. Some Australian tribes have cultural cosmologies and report encounters with the ‘old people’ in Australia, who became their ancestors.

²⁶³ Chris Clarkson et al., "Human occupation of northern Australia by 65,000 years ago," *Nature* 547, no. 7663 (2017).

²⁶⁴ Laurent Husson et al., "Evidence of Sundaland’s subsidence requires revisiting its biogeography," *Journal of Biogeography* 47, no. 4 (2020).

²⁶⁵ Patrick D Nunn and Nicholas J Reid, "Aboriginal memories of inundation of the Australian coast dating from more than 7000 years ago," *Australian geographer* 47, no. 1 (2016).

²⁶⁶ Jim M Bowler et al., "The Moyjil site, south-west Victoria, Australia: fire and environment in a 120,000-year coastal midden—nature or people?," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria* 130, no. 2 (2019).

²⁶⁷ Sian Johnson, "Ancient Aboriginal site Moyjil could rewrite the global story of human migration," *ABC News* (Online) 2020, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-09-05/moyjil-coastal-site-at-warrnambool-of-global-indigenous-heritage/12629934?utm_campaign=abc_news_web&utm_content=link&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_source=abc_news_web.

These ‘dreaming characters’ are mostly assumed by scientists to be imaginary myths. Regardless of scientific subjective interpretation, the early ancestral inhabitants were reported through customary inherited narratives, to have passed on vital skills and knowledge. One theme involves how to make fire. This memory may be particularly recollected because of its association with the first people in the dreaming, when the current tribes came in contact. This time in the North seems to coincide with the subsidence of Sundaland and the ice melt. Indigenous writer Janet Mathews quotes one such ethnographic record written by explorer David Lindsay in 1887.²⁶⁸

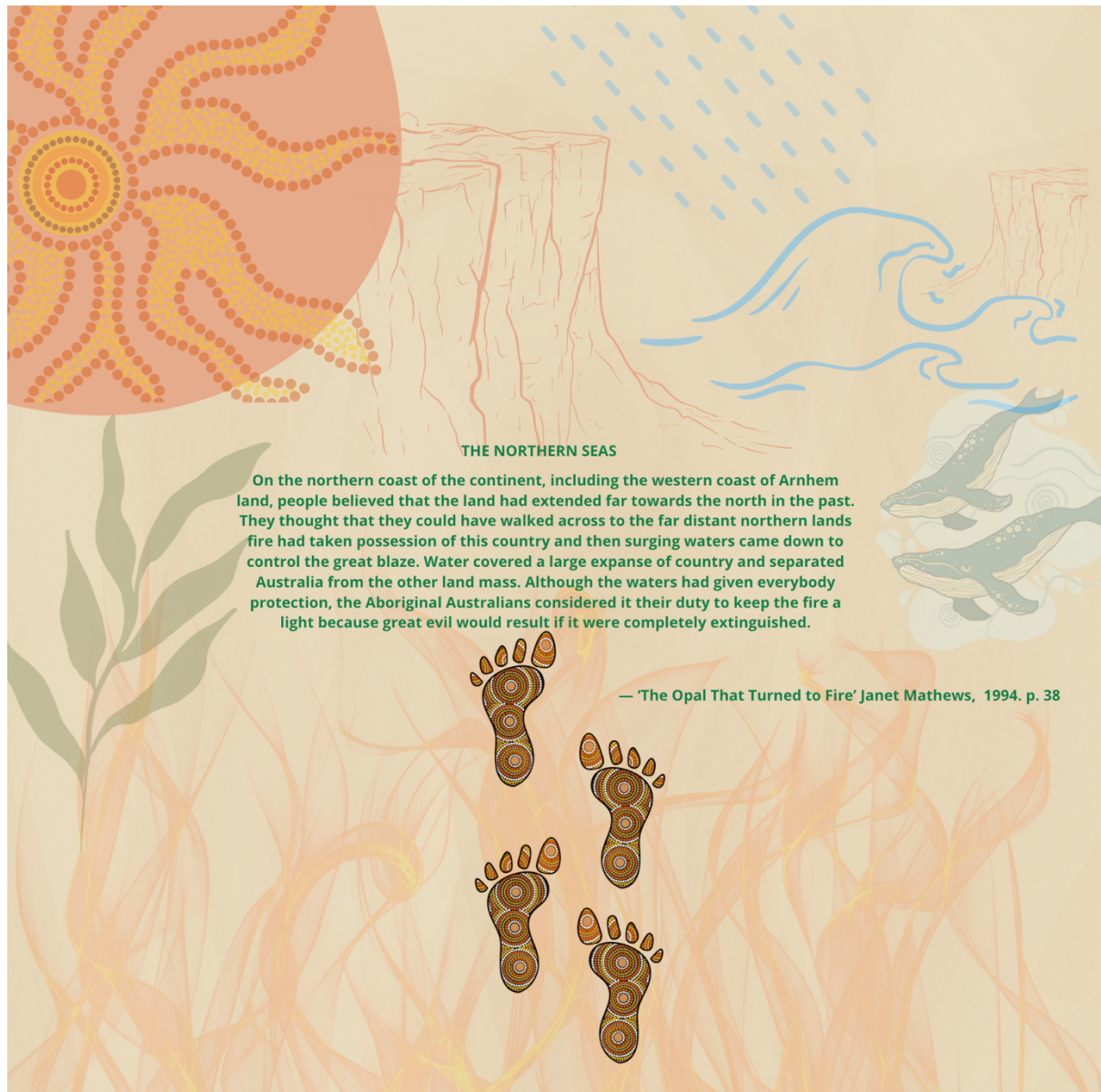


Figure 21: Quotation of Australian explorer David Lindsay 1887.

²⁶⁸ Janet Mathews and Isobel White, *The Opal That Turned to Fire and Other Stories from the Wangkumara*, ed. Isobel White (Magabala, 1994).

Everett advises the first evidence of Homo Erectus sea travel is to Indonesian Flores Island—then a trip of approximately thirty-nine kilometres across significantly treacherous seas.²⁶⁹ Archaeologists have re-enacted this event and decided that these were not accidental voyages, the result of tsunamis or ‘drifting’ as other theories have proposed. Notably, seafaring Homo Erectus is also evidenced to have founded colonies on the islands of Socotra and Crete before Homo sapiens’ habitation. Colonies are not evidence of single migrations, and these early navigators may have also relied on the stars, weather, and other phenomena to travel.

Rock art drawings in the Southeast Asian region of Maros caves have been carbon-dated to 40,000 BP.²⁷⁰ They depict boat travel in this period. Also found in the regional cave art of Sulawesi are the oldest graphic depictions of a warty pig—linking to contemporary cultural practices by the Dayak people who also look to the astral precession round. Located in this area, they continue to connect with the Sky Lore pig hunt ‘Spring Trap’ season which is locally associated with the appearance of the constellation Orion.²⁷¹

The early known New Zealand inhabitants leave remnants of this Sky Lore symbolism in their place names in Whakatu, Nelson region. ‘Waka Puaka’ refers to the underworld boat appearance of the Orion constellation Rigel that marks ‘puaka’ or pig hunt season. Later migrating Maori tribes from various parts of Polynesia also brought the Matariki version, referring to Rigel with ‘puanga’ or ‘poaka’²⁷²—which also carries the meaning of ‘pig’ for many. When the pig appears in the heavens, the new year or Springtime will follow, and the hunter signified by Orion will set his traps. It is now known that travelling ancestors of the Maori brought pigs on their voyages, along with Indonesian rats, and pigeons. The pigs did not survive for long, and possibly the connection to this ancient sky lore faded, the symbolic language reappropriated in dialects to mean ‘kai’ or food ‘abundance’. Later colonial visitors reintroduced pigs.

Indigenous researchers in recent years have revealed the early Polynesians were master navigators, who used cultural astronomy techniques extensively.²⁷³ Notably, another version of the Nut cosmogony depicts her as a pig who cyclically births and eats her piglets—as giving birth and devouring the stars in the heavens in a perpetual cycle of abundance.²⁷⁴ With many Maori tracing

²⁶⁹ Daniel Everett, *How language began: The story of humanity’s greatest invention*.

²⁷⁰ Adam Brumm et al., "Oldest cave art found in Sulawesi," *Science Advances* 7, no. 3 (2021).

²⁷¹ Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review*.

²⁷² Jim Williams, "Puaka and Matariki: The Māori New Year," *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* (2013).

²⁷³ Allan Gillingham, "Pigs and the Pork Early Farming and Feral Breeds," (online: NZ Government Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand, 20 March 2024 2008). <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/pigs-and-the-pork-industry/page-1>.

²⁷⁴ Richard H Wilkinson, *The complete gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt* (UK: Thames and Hudson, 2003). pp 60-61

ancestral ties to ancient Egypt, there is likely a similar link to the annual appearance of Rigel with the constellation of Orion. When the Milky Way annually aligns with Orion on Earth's horizon, the great rift or river²⁷⁵ opens for the transitional crossing of the dead—alluded to in the Kuranko death rites by Jackson.²⁷⁶

Early cosmology of the Tiwi and Torres Strait Islands refers to the later flood period of their dreaming approximately 9,650 BP.²⁷⁷ The 'Palaneri' dreaming phase corresponded to the ancient submergence of Sundaland and parts of Sahul that linked the islands in this region—specifically the formation of the main Tiwi Islands. A narrative about an old blind woman 'Mudungkala' describes how she rose from the Earth in the Southeast and dragged her three infants across the land while travelling north. Freshwater bubbled up in the trails she left behind, creating the tides and the sea straits that separate the islands from mainland Australia. She covered the bare islands with vegetation and animals to feed her children and then vanished, without a trace.

When examining the cosmologies of Indigenous traditions, we benefit from casting aside the ethnocentric belief that they are 'mythology' defined as creative, imaginary fantasies, or 'not real'. Engaging alternative consciousness perspectives enables the interpretation of symbolism communicated in a metaphorical language.²⁷⁸ We may find that profound meanings are conveyed through simple abstract concepts. The central source of wisdom was readily available for archaic humans to access by associating astral patterns, material culture, kinship, and ancestor relations to the anthropomorphised narratives of cultural expression. This process seems for the most part intentional—if only to the wisdom of the shaman or mediator that facilitates this process. The rituals themselves, the art, storytelling, and other cultural practices are shared with deeper meanings not always consciously interpreted by those who receive and pass them on in the chain of transmission.

A reason for this conscious loss of arcane meaning may be that the narratives become disconnected from the direct source—the mutual relationship with 'the other' that speaks. Likened to the game of 'Chinese Whispers', the symbolism is exchanged in reciprocity when intellectually processed in the

²⁷⁵ Bawaka Country, Ritjilili Ganambarr, and Merkiyawuy Ganambarr-Stubbs, "Celestial Relations with and as Milŋiyawuy, the Milky Way, the River of Stars," in *The Routledge Handbook of Social Studies of Outer Space* (Routledge, 2023).

²⁷⁶ Jackson, *How Lifeworlds Work: Emotionality, Sociality, and the Ambiguity of Being*. pp 16-37

²⁷⁷ Louis A Allen, "Traditional-From the Ancestral Times: How Children Come-the Mundungkala Myth," *Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal* 3, no. 3 (1979).

²⁷⁸ Robyn Heckenberg, "Bunya pine, Goanna and star clusters: using metaphor to frame indigenous ways of doing," in *Creativities in Arts Education, Research and Practice* (Brill, 2018).

neuro nets Seth²⁷⁹ describes. Careful to retain the sacred value of the power relationship, cultures reinforce the mythic meaning they have transformed in the migration towards their ownership.

Value is a culturally specific feature. The diversity of social constructions will vary depending on social hierarchies, gender perceptions, kinship, and other factors.²⁸⁰ However, the idiom may pervasively refer to the earlier or original archetypal metaphor, depending on localised value perceptions. For example, among East Timorese Mambi, cult relations are associated with a 'tree of life'. Father and mother 'water buffalo' steady the tree and support the tree as a rock, described as "sisters since the base of Heaven and brothers since the rim of the Earth." The culturally embedded motif of the archetypal celestial Axis Mundi and Tree of Life and the goddess's bovine horned lunar chalice have been exchanged in meaning-making to preserve progenitor lines.²⁸¹

This case example shows how with reciprocity the transmission of symbolism has exchanged aspects. However, the idiom retains some original value inferring the power instilled by the phenomenal forces, that gave rise to the source metaphors and existential explanation. I will next examine an example of how that arcane power is embodied by humanity.

Songlines and Dreaming

Inside the integral dreaming consciousness of Indigenous Australians, the variant tribal creation cosmologies are made. Dreaming is a dimension beyond the constraints of time and space but is never separate and therefore forms the location and source of all things existing. Reality is conceptually manifested on a perpetual basis through symbolic association. Relationships with 'the other' are brought forth into a present life cognisance with intentional intersections. The interactions are not necessary to intellectualise, but essential to become lived experience in some phenomenological way and sensory embodiment.²⁸²

The ritualistic passage of 'songlines' is an example of alternative consciousness. Engaging with the external yet intrinsically internalised messages of cosmic forces, Indigenous Australians describe a songline, song spiral, or 'dreaming track'. Songlines symbolise a 'way' across the land and sky,

²⁷⁹ Seth and Bayne, "Theories of consciousness."

²⁸⁰ Fox, "The transformation of progenitor lines of origin: patterns of precedence in eastern Indonesia." pp 114

²⁸¹ Ibid

²⁸² Lynne Hume, "On the unsafe side of the white divide: New perspectives on the dreaming of Australian Aborigines," *Anthropology of Consciousness* 10, no. 1 (1999).

creating life and connecting the person to their life, their country and their integral meaning-making of cosmologies and ancestral spirit.²⁸³

Controversially, some non-Indigenous researchers interpret songlines to be like a GPS that a person travels, remembers, and locates resources significant to their personal and tribal survival.²⁸⁴ While the dreaming and star maps of songlines provide navigational tracks, they are more connected to a person's sense of being and their integral relationships with 'the other' experienced as sacredness, environment, and events.²⁸⁵ This external being is an internally felt universe that is connected through sensory and symbolic narrative expression—often in rhythm, song, and walking or art and physical expression. The individual receives a spiritual 'call' that incites them to journey songlines. Dreaming tracks may therefore be a spontaneous action, or may coincide with astral portents, seasons, weather, or important tribal and personal customary obligations. Journeying songlines often involves interacting with ancestors, kin relations, the environment, and phenomena for which the person has been attributed 'custodianship'.²⁸⁶

Lynne Kelly discusses mnemonic devices may also be carried by the person walking songline or dreaming ways.²⁸⁷ However, when intrinsically entangled within the songline cosmos, intellectual, autobiographical memories are not necessarily the driving impetus. I find synergy with the symbolic culture described by Bloch,²⁸⁸ that the artefacts, notches, grooves, and unique features of the Tjuringa device serve to reconnect and reinforce the person's relationship with the sacred creator spirit of the songline.

This practice is somewhat like the successive fingering of individual rosary or prayer beads while singing mantras or reciting prayers. The 'remembered' and repeated narratives invoke the Sacred with perceived value for its power and meaning. The animist power of intention and relationship connection to the Sacred is 'signified' at every point. There are semblances of liminal phases and trance that are invoked during this process.²⁸⁹

²⁸³ Bawaka Country et al., "Songspirals bring country into existence: Singing more-than-human and relational creativity," *Qualitative inquiry* 28, no. 5 (2022).

²⁸⁴ Glenn Morrison, "Walking, frontier and nation: re/tracing the songlines in Central Australian literature," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 40, no. 1 (2019).

²⁸⁵ Mike Smith, "The metaphysics of Songlines," *Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters* (2017).

²⁸⁶ Amanda Kearney, "Intimacy and distance: Indigenous relationships to country in northern Australia," *Ethnos* 83, no. 1 (2018).

²⁸⁷ Kelly and Gojak, "The Memory Code: The traditional Aboriginal memory technique that unlocks the secrets of Stonehenge, Easter Island and ancient monuments the world over - A Review."

²⁸⁸ Bloch, *How we think they think: Anthropological approaches to cognition, memory, and literacy*.

²⁸⁹ Turner, Abrahams, and Harris, *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure*.

The physical expression, internal connection to a material culture artefact, mnemonic device or environmental symbol culminates in a personal state of *communitas* and oneness with all that exists and the creator's essence. Synchronised into one human point across space, place, and timeless dimensions, all 'things' are brought into the 'now'.²⁹⁰

Indigenous Australians have preserved their deep, timeless traditions of song and dreaming tracks. Other cultures worldwide practise 'songline' like pilgrimages of spiritual connection and meaning. These are engaged with varying degrees of liminality and connection, for many reasons. All seek a relationship with 'the other' in some form. We may essentially liken songline rituals to experiencing a sacred 'Hero's Journey' that is deeply liminal, symbolic, and creative in its nature as an alternative state of consciousness. The communication and relationship are responsive to the phenomenal forces and aspects of the divine within the cosmic whole.

²⁹⁰ Country et al., "Songspirals bring country into existence: Singing more-than-human and relational creativity."

THE WATERS OF LIFE

About

In this section, I discuss symbolism embedded in the cosmos as the source of consciousness. I review the celestial archetypal metaphor as an alternative consciousness language. I consider the nature of external forces, fields, or energies as phenomenological influences on human meaning-making and cultural expression. I connect 'The Waters of Life' and cultural variants of this ancient cosmology with primordial symbolism. In the literature review project of Appendix 1,²⁹¹ I have traced cultural signifiers of the Great Mother archetype and Sacred Feminine symbolism into the earliest records of hominin and homo sapien history. In Appendix 2,²⁹² I provide a comprehensive discussion.

Context of the Case Study

This case study examines an example of co-existing 'internal and external' consciousness. It has survived cross-cultural transmission throughout history. I demonstrate that succession conveys the utmost, inherent value to humans. I examine its symbolic communication in an alternative consciousness transfer. I discuss three primary symbols found in cosmology that have persisted throughout cultures and universally. I thread the earlier research discussions on the arcane goddess metaphor, symbolism, and examples of cultural transmission of an ideogram.

In responding to Levi-Strauss's described alternative 'symbolic language', the applied motif of the Hero's journey gives an example of *communication* with 'the other'. Individual and cultural customary behaviours connect, mediate, and embody the phenomena in physical experiences. These are reflected in internal processes and social behaviours.

Appendix 2²⁹³ identifies and discusses the case study in more detail, with examples of alternative consciousness interpretations of the archetypal creation goddess narrative, notably Bernie Taylor's neurodiversity-based analysis. It traces the goddess's journey through archaeological and research

²⁹¹ Eggers, *Appendix 1: Great Mother Star Cosmology Origins and Transmission Research Literature Review*.

²⁹² Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

²⁹³ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

literature, synthesising valuable insights into the formation and transmission of cosmological symbolism.

External Consciousness Communication

In Appendix 2,²⁹⁴ I have discussed concepts of linguistic anthropology, applying new and alternative perspectives to examine traditional literature and ethnographies.²⁹⁵ The purpose is to review the mechanisms available to study alternative consciousness and communication of symbolism.²⁹⁶ An alternative language transmission is highlighted in the often subjective and subconscious nature found in ethnographic records of Indigenous diffusion. Ancient tribal systems often carry progenitor and origin lines through a reinforcement and transformation process across time and place.

These approaches are significant to my study because they demonstrate how and why the original celestial symbolism of archaic humans may have survived in customary succession. We gain insight into disparate meanings and contexts revealed under comparative cross-cultural examination. If the predominant mechanism for transfer examined in linguistics is explicit, but the meaning conveyed is often implicit, the cognitive analysis of written scripts may not reveal the ideogram, or a deeper, consistent code embedded in the symbols.

Further, the use of metaphor, idiom and figurative language observed in Indigenous lineages is associated with the prevalence of subliminal and subconscious transfer.²⁹⁷ These observed behaviours and practices do not typically align with a driving internal process and socially shared projection of reality. They instead determine an 'external' symbolic communication that 'speaks to' individuals and groups in a manner that is internally processed, constituted and reinforced in social structures. This is more than a subtle deviation from the neuroscientific position.²⁹⁸

With the significant neuroscientific awareness of internal body-mind-brain processes, the logical deduction is that there is a *reciprocal relationship* between internal and external human processes involved in the 'role' of consciousness. From this observed 'external phenomenal driver',

²⁹⁴ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

²⁹⁵ Walter J Ong, "Literacy and orality in our times," *Profession* (1979). 1

²⁹⁶ Stuart Hall, *Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*. London/New York, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (UK: Routledge, 1996). 157-158

²⁹⁷ Fox, "The transformation of progenitor lines of origin: patterns of precedence in eastern Indonesia." pp 114

²⁹⁸ Seth and Bayne, "Theories of consciousness."

metaphorical transfer uses idioms and figurative language. It conveys the deeper cultural meaning buried within the layers of socially constructed symbolic narratives. Ethnographies reveal that symbolism often survives temporal transmission by being exchanged in inter-relationships and transformed in local-specific contexts during migration. This act conveys the high level of worth associated with the original symbols, even when their aspects and signifiers are transformed.

I observe a recurrent primacy of value placed on the symbolism within the mechanisms of external symbolic transfer, in the subconscious and conscious awareness. The finding leads me to examine concepts of 'the other' as a phenomenon, or even Plato's²⁹⁹ mystical forms. This force may be 'spiritual' in essence, or it may be a fundamental field as described in physics. The identification of the external phenomena may be both spiritual and physics, depending on the belief systems and other associations to the symbolism.

The case study of symbolism and its applied linguistic anthropology leads to the forming hypothesis. The 'external source' of the symbolism equates to Jung's concept of the 'collective consciousness' but without a home in an unknown mental field. It reflects Penrose's³⁰⁰ fields of mathematical tiles and the various theories of quantum physics that find sub-atomic superstrings and unified fields of existence.

My research is outside a supernatural or metaphysical inquiry. I therefore do not find a central deity involved or representing that source, other than one is 'signified' in the primordial archetype of the heavenly Great Mother.³⁰¹ I note that throughout history humanity has an overwhelming propensity to 'believe' in a divine source that is fundamental to the phenomenal or spiritual realm of 'the other'.³⁰²

The ethnographic observance of the use of idioms and botanic metaphors raises the possibility of a linguistic system alternative, beyond the anthropomorphism of celestial objects. That is a system embedded in orality with material cultural artefacts that carry the perceived, yet arcane 'value' of the symbolism and transform its representation in acts of meaning-making. In this case, the primordial creation symbol is repeatedly exchanged and transformed as 'the Sacred'.

²⁹⁹ Plato, *The collected dialogues of Plato*.

³⁰⁰ Penrose and Hameroff, "Consciousness in the universe: Neuroscience, quantum space-time geometry and Orch OR theory."

³⁰¹ Jung, *The archetypes and the collective unconscious*.

³⁰² Tanya M Luhmann, *How God becomes real: Kindling the presence of invisible others* (Princeton University Press, 2020).

The next sections summarise the symbolic discussion that is explored in Appendix 2.³⁰³

³⁰³ Eggers, *Appendix 2: Star Songs, Symbolism and Thesis Addendum Materials*

Symbolic Case Example One

Water: The Round as the Vessel and Birthing Mother-Creator

Water symbolises the cosmic force and creator. Various symbolic motifs throughout history represent this power in the archetype of the Great Mother as the primordial goddess.



Historic perceptions give reverence to water as the birthing womb of creation. Ancient rock engravings at New Grange researched by Martin Brennan,³⁰⁴ provide examples of water symbols found in Indigenous cultures. Archaeological findings, such as those by Marija Gimbutas,³⁰⁵ consistently link water symbols with Mother Goddess fertility across cultures. Philosophers like Mircea Eliade³⁰⁶ highlight water as spiritually being the holiest, representing the merging of the Sacred and the profane.

Figure 22: An illustration of many symbols associated with water as a source of primordial creation.

Metaphor and Meaning

Scientific discoveries reinforce ancient beliefs. Findings confirm water as a primary universal substance.³⁰⁷ Birthing stars produce water through hydrogen fusion at their core. Recent astronomy research finds water circling black holes.³⁰⁸ The symbolic motif of rings depicts water

³⁰⁴ Martin Brennan, "The stars and the stones: ancient art and astronomy in Ireland," *The stars and the stones: ancient art and astronomy in Ireland*. M. Brennan. Thames & Hudson (1983).

³⁰⁵ Gimbutas, *The language of the Goddess: [unearthing the hidden symbols of Western civilization]*.

³⁰⁶ Eliade, *The sacred and the profane: The nature of religion*, 81.

³⁰⁷ Rudolf Podgornik, "Water and life: The unique properties of H₂O: Ruth M. Lynden-bell, Simon Conway Morris, John D. Barrow, John L. Finney and Charles Harper (eds). CRC press; 2010," (Springer, 2011).

³⁰⁸ Podgornik, "Water and life: The unique properties of H₂O: Ruth M. Lynden-bell, Simon Conway Morris, John D. Barrow, John L. Finney and Charles Harper (eds). CRC press; 2010."

honouring as the existential source.³⁰⁹ Similarly, cosmologists have recently discovered water is a primary constituent in the universe's formation.³¹⁰

Juxtaposing scientific discovery poses questions if and how archaic humans were aware of this physics cosmology. This research proposes that with alternative consciousness they may have been, resulting in the observable history of archaic astronomy. Connecting with the primordial ancient star songs of the Great Mother, they responded in metaphorical expressions of existence. They made daily life engaging with the powers of Nature and forces she brought as the progenitor goddess turning the astral water wheel of the heavens.

In the past, Science has asked how and why humans suffer certain types of depression. They discovered significant impacts of 'invisible' cosmic forces on human function, sleep, and Seasonal Affective Disorder.³¹¹ We are reminded that the term 'lunatic' stems from the Roman 'disease of the moon'. The affliction arises from observations the moon affects mental behaviour disturbances.³¹² In many Indigenous societies, the mutual coincidence of feminine menstruation continues to be shared and ritualised.³¹³

The coinciding ideogram of water and cosmology is applied in tribal menstruation belief systems. Anthropologist Chris Knight proposes that many Australian Indigenous cultures believe the snake symbolises synchronous menstruation and cyclic time as a "master metaphor of power". He claims this power was manifested physically through the synchronisation of menstruation.³¹⁴

The worldview of archaic humans was observably rooted in a deep connection to the Sacred. Diverse modern perceptions remain. Early cultural worldviews perceived integral belonging to the celestial waters. The heavenly Great Mother birthed the Sun. In the process of migration, exchange and transformation, 'he' replaced her as the primary deity representing energy and power to preserve social constructs and progenitor lines. Likewise, the goddess gave birth to the moon in the metaphorical concepts of binary opposites, polarised in the magnetic fields of celestial waters. To Eliade,³¹⁵ this action comprised the forming of the 'profane' from the divine Sacred. In the

³⁰⁹ "Astronomers Find Largest, Most Distant Reservoir of Water," Jet Propulsion Laboratory, NASA, 2011, <https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/astronomers-find-largest-most-distant-reservoir-of-water>.

³¹⁰ J Smidt, "The first water in the universe" (paper presented at the SC 18. supercomputing. org, 2018).

³¹¹ Thomas A Wehr et al., "A circadian signal of change of season in patients with seasonal affective disorder," *Archives of general psychiatry* 58, no. 12 (2001).

³¹² Daniel Francis, "The Development of the Lunatic Asylum in the Maritime Provinces.," *Acadiensis* 6, no. 2, <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/Acadiensis/article/view/11437>.

³¹³ Rebecca Orleane, *The return of the feminine: Honoring the cycles of nature* (AuthorHouse, 2010).

³¹⁴ Frederick Lamp, "Heavenly bodies: Menses, moon, and rituals of license among the Temne of Sierra Leone," *Blood Magic: The Anthropology of Menstruation* 92 (1988). pp 185

³¹⁵ Mircea Eliade, *The myth of the eternal return: Cosmos and history*, vol. 122 (Princeton university press, 2021).

primordial centre, Earth formed in the goddess's web of creation, as the yolk inside the cosmic egg wrapped by the heavenly spiralling serpent. This symbolism is conveyed in Orphism mysteries.

Veronica Strang describes the representation of water in cultures as threaded in concurrent dialectical streams.³¹⁶ One level denotes the “biological, sensory and affective universal meanings of water” as an individual contribution to a culture. Concepts of water management, custodianship and control in social power constructs overlay this personal attribution. But the inherent ideogram of human value placed on water’s sacred utility is the metaphor of “social being”. This deeper meaning centres on individual and shared perceptions that water is the connecting substance of vitality, abundance and all life.

Perceptions of water as the Sacred conceive metaphorical imagery and existential consciousness that is temporally and diversely shared in humanity. Cosmic interactions emphasise worldviews honouring an interconnected life and existence. This relationship comprises consciousness as a phenomenon presenting in cultures and individuals both explicitly and implicitly.³¹⁷

³¹⁶ Veronica Strang, *The meaning of water* (Routledge, 2020).

³¹⁷ Nathaniel Altman, *Sacred water: the spiritual source of life* (Paulist Press, 2002).

Symbolic Case Example Two

The Line, Cross, Flame, Light and Radiant Energy

In Egyptian cosmogonies, the symbolism surrounding the sun, light, and radiant energy exchanges and transforms in societies that honour the visible power of its influences upon this arid region.



Initially, the goddess Nut is depicted as the ultimate creator, giving birth to the sun god Ra.³¹⁸ However, patriarchal influences later relegate Nut to a subordinate role as Ra's daughter, reflecting a shift towards male-dominated narratives. Despite these changes, the archetype of the sun as the "son of the Goddess" persists across cultures, symbolising the masculine aspect of radiant energy born from the primordial feminine.

Figure 23: An illustration of various symbols associated with the sun or divine radiant energy.

Metaphorical Transmission

Throughout history, cultures have universally paid homage to the sun. The symbolic metaphors are diverse.³¹⁹ Early New Zealand researcher Elsdon Best describes Maori and Polynesian cultures, associating the sun with the god Tane, who embodies qualities of light and creation. However, Sir James Frazer noted the complexity of symbolic meanings, finding discrepancies when interpreting cross-cultural sun worship. Despite cultural variations, the sun's symbolism remains universal, with common descriptors of warmth, and growth central to an ideogram of divine power and vitality.

³¹⁸ Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the cosmos: The ancient Egyptian experience of the sacred* (Inner Traditions/Bear & Co, 1996). pp 1-61

³¹⁹ James George Frazer, *The Worship of Nature: The worship of the earth, the sky, and the sun*, vol. 1, Gifford Lectures, (Macmillan, 1926). C XII.

Sun symbolism's theological representation includes Christianity. The sun positioned at the centre or 'mid-heaven' of precession solstice and equinoxes is symbolically represented as the cross. This association underscores the enduring but deeper meaning of primordial symbolism carried in religious and spiritual contexts.

Enduring symbols of the sun demonstrate the deeper layer of meaning surrounding cosmic forces and divine energies as the central motif in spiritual and religious discourse.³²⁰ The sun maintains persistent physical effects of radiant energy upon human survival. Its regular appearance on the dawn horizon and setting in the West mark the cycles of human daily productivity, as a growing concern with the formation of societies reliant on agriculture production. The popularity of sun worship dominated the cosmogonies of patriarchies. The more subtle association of the primordial heavens to the goddess subsumes her into the ethers. She becomes defined as 'an unseen force, the holy spirit, mysteries, or the primordial cosmic ocean'. However, the clues remain visible in the Great Mother archetype as a celestial, creation metaphor for the astronomical framework. In this regard, the sun becomes the 'Hero' or 'son' of the unseen goddess with the zodiacal crown of stars or Ouroboros that Nut represents as the Milky Way.

In Mesoamerican Aztec worship the Teotihuacan creation of their fifth sun involved a humble deity named Nanahuatzin and an extravagant deity Tecuciztecatl. He was at first afraid to sacrifice himself into the 'teotexcalli' fire and Nanahuatzin was called and sacrificed himself without fear. The Hero was resurrected as Tonatiuh, the fiery sun god who rises in the East. Tecuciztecatl was embarrassed and finally sacrificed himself as well. Another deity threw a rabbit into his face and darkened his shine. He became the moon—the Aztecs considered to be a replica of the sun. The Aztecs' belief in binary opposing pairs of deities was apparent. Cihuacoatl was the 'woman serpent or feminine twin' of the great ruler deity—akin to the early Egyptian cosmogonies. The feminine celestial waters metaphors are also represented in her form.³²¹

Gender in cultural myth is a matter of perspectives in the context of social values and hierarchies.³²² The sun and radiance as a dynamic force have alternative gender associations, but the symbolic idiom of power remains consistent in its transfer.

Outside the cosmologies of Indigenous societies, patriarchal emasculation of the Sacred Feminine narrative peaked during the Inquisition period. Over three thousand years of demonising and

³²⁰ S Acharya, *Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha, and Christ Unveiled* (Adventures Unlimited Press, 2004).

³²¹ Erika Buenaflor, *Sacred Energies of the Sun and Moon: Shamanic Rites of Curanderismo* (Simon and Schuster, 2020). pp 14-16

³²² Fox, "The transformation of progenitor lines of origin: patterns of precedence in eastern Indonesia."

outlawed suppression have resulted in the societal removal of the goddess as the phenomenal 'power' source of creation.³²³

However, her powerful astral framework depicting existence remains in scientific correlation with astrophysics. Her crown of stars and wheel of cosmic cycles endure and are recorded in cultural astronomies. Only the explanations have been exchanged and adapted to new language forms. Where god survives in theology, the goddess remains in myths, fantasy culture, and Indigenous and traditional cultural systems—also described by society as mythology.

³²³ Christina Crawford, *Daughters of the Inquisition: Medieval Madness: Origins and Aftermath* (Open Road Media, 2017).

Symbolic Case Example Three

The Triangle, Mountain, the Tree as Axis-Mundi

The Axis Mundi and equating symbols represent the central connection of the heavens, the Earth and humanity.



People individually and culturally connect to hierophanies, where they experience a supernatural potency of the Sacred made profane. These sacred spaces facilitate profound communication with the divine power of the spiritual 'other'.³²⁴ The Axis Mundi symbolism conveys varied iconic depictions. A central mountain or tree, serves as the Earth's core, mirroring the goddess's astral cosmogony mapped onto the terrestrial plane. The goddess birthed the profane as the astral heavens, the profane on Earth materialises through Man's geocentric intersection.

Figure 24: An illustration of many symbols associated with the Axis Mundi, Tree, Mount, Staff, Triangle or Pyramid.

Metaphorical Significance

The world axis symbolism holds deeper origin meanings. For example, in Indonesian cosmology, the central mountain is associated with the goddess Dewi Danu, who gives birth to life on Earth. She is the materialised progenitor deity of the celestial crown of Roro.³²⁵ In the Agama Hindu merged version of Tri Hita Karana, her sacred volcano is Mount Mahameru, which has been

³²⁴ J Donald Hughes and Jim Swan, "How much of the earth is sacred space?," *Environmental Review* 10, no. 4 (1986).

³²⁵ Anita Syafitri Arif, "Mount Batur Calderas as a Sacred Landscape in Bali" (paper presented at the 5th ACLA: Symposium on Sacred Sites, Cultural Landscape & Harmonizing the World of Asia, 2016).

displaced by Bathara Pasupati to make a palace (the crater) for the goddess. This is a further example of an ideogram in transmission. The exchange and transformation of an arcane cosmology demonstrate social values that incite the culture to retain earlier meaning along with idiomatic symbolism.

In another example of the same symbolic transmission, Hawaiian mythology features the volcano goddess Pele, as a primordial Axis Mundi symbol connecting creation and fire.³²⁶ The ancient symbolic metaphors reflect current scientific knowledge of Earth's formation. This observation suggests an alternative consciousness at play. Early humans were relating their awareness of volcanic activity's involvement in the emergence of life.

Symbolic representations of the intersection between the sacred and the profane include sacred symbols such as trees and staffs or wands. The latter is common in early European metaphors. They continue in global use today as material cultural artefacts denoting mediation and 'speaking' within ceremonies. Determined by the personal geographical position, the Axis Mundi serves as a crucial reference point for celestial observations, guiding the movement of the sun and moon across the sky.³²⁷ Modern research, such as astrophysicist Duane Hamacher's³²⁸ studies on Aboriginal cultures, reveals advanced astronomical knowledge encoded in Indigenous cosmologies. These findings highlight the profound understanding of the cosmos held by early societies and their ability to convey complex metaphysical concepts through symbolic narratives.

As an atmospheric phenomenon, the Axis Mundi symbolises humanity's deep-rooted connection to the sacred cosmic essence that infuses existence.³²⁹ It is invoked for spiritual practices and rituals, uniting participants with the divine forces of 'the other'. It represents the toroidal centre of the world, where man connects the profane to the Sacred. In this act, he *is* the Axis Mundi—forming the geographic referential point to intersect his personal 'being', the material world environment and Nature's forces and aspects with the astral fields of 'other' as the Sacred.

The act of 'drawing down' the sacred power to embody and manifest, is demonstrated in Indigenous Australian practices.³³⁰ Singing and walking the songlines and dreaming tracks is a phenomenal experience of being integrally within existence. Therefore, the statement: "All life is

³²⁶ H Arlo Nimmo, *Pele, Volcano Goddess of Hawai'i: A History* (McFarland, 2011).

³²⁷ Marinus Anthony van der Sluijs, *The world axis as an atmospheric phenomenon* (All-Round Publications, 2007).

³²⁸ Duane Willis Hamacher, *On the astronomical knowledge and traditions of Aboriginal Australians*, Australian Indigenous Astronomy, (AU: Macquarie University, 2012).

³²⁹ arinus Anthony van der Sluijs, *The world axis as an atmospheric phenomenon* (All-Round Publications, 2007).

³³⁰ Hume, "On the unsafe side of the white divide: New perspectives on the dreaming of Australian Aborigines."

sacred, inside the Dreaming”—an analogy I make to the goddess’s astral mesmerising cyclic framework, and subliminal hypnotic relationship with humans.

Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has discussed three examples of archaic symbolism that ‘speaks to’ humanity. The symbolic communication is a primal motif of The Great Mother archetype as a phenomenal force, and two of her aspects are born out of this fundamental source. This absolute is referred to as ‘Ain Soph Aur’,³³¹ an unseparated consciousness that is ‘black water’ of limitless, boundless space—the Zazen concept of emptiness, or ‘nothingness’. It causes *spirit and matter to be*.³³²

This black ocean of liquid light is likened to the scientific discovery of ‘dark matter’ and black holes. It invisibly permeates all things and the spaces where matter comprises the universe.³³³ In this context, the Kabbalah aligns with Plato’s concept of forms, reflecting a classical societal perception of a non-gendered essence. Early ancestors may have perceived the primordial essence (Nammu) as gendered by her innate power of procreation. The absolute is the source metaphor for Jung’s Great Mother archetype.³³⁴ From this essence, the Goddess arises out of herself as ‘form’ from ‘no form’ and then gives birth again of form in binary relationships. The astral deities are birthed in her oceanic womb—her aspects as planets, stars and heavenly bodies who perform her operations of cosmic order. Birthing again into the profane, her dreaming brings life to the grounded observer who synchronises existence into the Earthly plane of the firmament. The goddess spirit, the forces, and aspects of the heavens in a cosmic process speak life: action, movement, and death in an eternal cycle.

This framework of ‘outside in’ human consciousness, energetically ‘sings’ in symbolic vibrations. Humanity invokes, embodies, and mediates her forces as complex language systems and alternative consciousness. This celestial communication carries primacy of value in the ideogram of the origin symbol. Exchange and local transformation shape the foundation of meaning-making for rituals, customs, and relationships with the Sacred.

³³¹ Monica Danci, "Archetypes and the Spheres of the Tree of Life," *Scientific Journal of Humanistic Studies* 3, no. 5 (2011).

³³² Toshihiko Izutsu, *Toward a philosophy of Zen Buddhism* (Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy Tehran, 1977).

³³³ Podgornik, "Water and life: The unique properties of H₂O: Ruth M. Lynden-bell, Simon Conway Morris, John D. Barrow, John L. Finney and Charles Harper (eds). CRC press; 2010."

³³⁴ Jung, *The archetypes and the collective unconscious*.

This reflective observation subverts a literal, scientific logogram of the ‘meaning’ of existential consciousness. It acknowledges a historical scholarly belief that universal worship and cosmologies stem from one common source. My research finds the earliest links with the great celestial waters cosmogony of Nammu or Nu. Charles Dupuis commented on this matter.³³⁵

“Men of all countries, since the highest antiquity, have had no other gods, but those of Nature, in other words, the world and its most active and most luminous parts. Heaven, Earth, the Sun and the Moon, the Planets, the fixed Stars, the Elements and in general all, which bear a character of cause and perpetuity in Nature. To portray and to praise in songs the world and its operations, was in olden times the same as portraying and glorifying the Deity.”

—Charles Francois Dupuis, The Origin of All Religious Worship

³³⁵ Charles François Dupuis, *The origin of all religious worship* (Lulu. com, 2016).

chapter seven

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Chapter Seven

CONCLUSION

My Heroine's Journey

In my celestial Great Mother archetypal Heroine's journey of questing consciousness, I have travailed the Sacred—her source, nature, and transmission as an alternative symbolic language embedded in cultures. I have embraced conflicts and engaged in the challenges of being in the profane as the Axis Mundi of my life on Earth. I perceive this toil to be my songline and dreaming track call—destined within the Great Mother's astral round encircling the cosmic waters of life and giving cyclic order. As the cosmic Hero, I have triumphed and now wear her astral crown of stars in my new state of awareness and equilibrium. This work has sealed my resolve that in the Sacred we find the primary wellspring and flow of all consciousness. Materialising into the profane through humanity, the stars sing an eternal song and the goddess's astral spinning wheel weaves a hypnotic web spell on those interacting with Nature and making productive social clades within Earth's biosphere.

I have addressed many concepts as cross-sectional parts of a whole systems approach to gain insight and appraisal with a holistic perspective. Having woven many threads in an intricate tapestry, I now review and summarise the critical points that arose in my research, from which I made further discussion in this thesis. I have categorised these key findings into two parts—presented in tabular form as follows.

Contextual Issues of Consciousness

The first table summarises the conclusions I have made concerning contextual issues on the anthropology of consciousness and the 'hard problem' in public debate.

The Problem of Consciousness and Related Studies

Findings on Consciousness and Related Studies
Due to bias of invested interests, there is a lack of consensual agreement in defining consciousness.
Currently there is a major gap in cultural studies focusing on consciousness due to reductionist approaches.
Contemporary studies on consciousness prioritise human intelligence and biological function, driven by technology innovation.
Theoretical frameworks such as Quantum physics and IIT face challenges in connecting to human experience.
Overlooking empirical, qualitative cultural research leads to premature discrediting of value perspectives in understanding consciousness.
Consciousness is found in external and internal processes in humans and humanity.
Culture plays a pivotal role in shaping how consciousness is perceived and experienced.

Figure 25: Problem and contexts of consciousness and its study.

Topography of Consciousness in Culture

Critical Features and Issues Found During Research Synthesis

The second table describes the key thematic findings of my research. These highlighted points were identified and discussed in detail throughout this thesis.

Findings of Consciousness Studies - Critical Features and Issues

Consciousness is a culturally oriented construct of meaning-making. It is shaped by cultural beliefs, practices, and societal norms, influencing its interpretation.

Consciousness is experienced as phenomenal forces and aspects that interact with sensory and intuitive processes from symbolic interactions. Human experience involves perceiving phenomena beyond tangible reality, interacting with sensory and intuitive processes.

Consciousness is perceived by cultures as transcendent realisation and union with forces from 'the other'. Cultural perspectives often regard consciousness as union with forces beyond the ordinary realm.

Consciousness has been perceived as sacred throughout history, linked to spiritual essence. Across cultures, consciousness often embodies spiritual significance and divine presence.

Consciousness, expressed through archetypal metaphor, drives humanity's conscious and unconscious mechanisms. Archetypal motifs serve as symbolic languages through which consciousness influences human thoughts and behaviours.

Consciousness connects the Sacred with the profane or material world through 'Nature' and humanity. The dichotomy of sacredness, the profane and the sublime is bridged by consciousness, with Nature serving as the intermediary.

Consciousness, expressed through archetypal metaphor, drives humanity's conscious and unconscious mechanisms. Archetypal motifs serve as symbolic languages through which consciousness influences human thoughts and behaviours.

The Hero's Journey archetype is a universal celestial motif depicting unconscious actions in dealing with living through conflicts and intentional quests for self-awareness and enlightenment. It symbolises the human experience and is representational of all life actions for individuals.

Human experience of consciousness involves invoking, receiving, and responding to a universal symbolic language transmission that may be connected through alternative ways of knowing and states of 'being'. It transcends conventional understanding, potentially linked to alternative modes of cognition and existential states.

Figure 26: Key findings in thesis research results.

Culminating Research Conceptualisation

Hypothetical Concept Proposal

In summary, my research has progressed my insights and thinking on this topic, leading to the formation of a hypothetical concept for further research. Figure 27, lists the critical points of this hypothesis.

Findings That Contribute to Forming Hypothesis

The physical, astronomical representation of the celestial cosmogeny (the framework of precession, solstice, equinox, and planetary cyclic movements) is the source of consciousness. The celestial movements are posited as the origin of consciousness, influencing human cognition and perception, to drive and shape life and our human existence.

Celestial phenomena, and fields such as gravity and energy fluctuations, influence the human unconscious mind akin to the effects of circadian rhythms and other cosmic forces interact with biological processes.

The movement of planets, stars, and astral bodies within the celestial waters precession cycle and framework create the geometric patterns and sacred geometry that permeates 'the other' as forms. These forms materialise as the space-time and electromagnetic field is shaped through cosmic movements, cycles, and order from subatomic to universal scales within the astral framework.

Humans have responded to the 'subliminal' or deep archetypal messaging by sharing a rich symbolic language that maps to referential experiences in 'the other' as environment, people, and sensory responses to 'living'. The language assembled and shared reflects experiences and interactions with the environment, other beings, and the essence of experiencing existence.

Cosmic influences shape human experience and consciousness on a fundamental level, transcending individual awareness. The pervasive influence of cosmic patterning suggests a universal connection to consciousness, regardless of conscious awareness.

The interplay between cosmic forces and human consciousness suggests a reciprocal relationship that scales—where human actions (such as carbon emissions, and environmental impacts) may influence cosmic phenomena and vice versa. Certain cultural worldviews and sub-cultures (such as shamans and traditional metaphysical practitioners) hold belief that humans may directly interact with cosmic phenomena to impact change (including weather, and animal interactions). These often-ritualised processes may involve alternative states of consciousness.

Figure 27: Hypothetical submissions formed out of thesis research—Vivienne Tobassa Eggers, 2024.

Meaning Making

In the history of Western literature, cultural cosmologies and myths have been defined as mostly fictional accounts of traditional beliefs and religious ideas. Even the word 'myth' is commonly described as 'fantasy' or 'superstitious, false belief'. In conducting this research, I have become convinced that this sentiment is not purely racist ethnocentrism against tribal societies. I now believe that in the race for intellectual sophistication, status and comfort, modern humanity has inadvertently disconnected themselves from their relationship of 'being' at one with Nature and the Sacred.

As cultural ethnographers, Levi-Strauss and Jung observed, this is a loss of 'meaning', rather than severing belief. My study has observed that meaning-making comes through relationships with 'the other'. These are the primary cosmic forces that speak to us through a metaphorical communication with alternative consciousness. I surmise that the rich tapestry of culture expressed by our ancient ancestors originally held a literal conscious connection. As Indigenous Australians continue to move and sing the threads of existence into the present, other migrating societies have exchanged and transformed the same symbolic idioms to suit their local contexts.

It seems technology and materialist science have supported us in building complex civilisations and progressing intellectual comprehension. However, we may have also *lost consciousness* through sensory disuse or misuse. We witness traumas and historic events that propelled societies to eradicate, suppress and hide their cultural consciousness. We also experience continued societal shaming and degradation as people who dare to step beyond the rules of their social fields with 'alternative' concepts. I propose, that in our great heroic journeys in life, we have forgotten the celestial power of our archetypal Great Mother and therefore, lost our way within the struggles of the underworld.

Disconnection leads to neglect and devaluing. Devaluing leads to the loss of sustainability resilience and ultimately, extinction, and the loss of sustaining life. But we may have a saviour. The source of our consciousness, and renewed awakening, may be continuing to shine upon us from the celestial realms, and awaiting our cyclic return of transcending illumination. A homecoming of reconnecting the arcane wisdom of consciousness with intellectual integrity.

This evocative and somewhat philosophical reflection culminates the transformation of knowledge I received by conducting this research. I had 'expected' to find a Sacred Feminine signifier in our deepest past. But what I didn't expect, was to observe how deeply embedded in humanity are the

metaphors within every action and behaviour of every culture. I am now committed to deeper immersion and taking my research to the next level.

I observe a disruptive change in societal attitudes. Our understanding of past cultures is evolving rapidly due to advances in science and technology. For the past two million years or more, hominins have moved, built seafaring craft, and travelled vast distances. Modern humans have migrated out of Africa for around two hundred thousand years. They moved into Southeast Asia and possibly Australia around 100 KA. They have lived in the Americas for tens of thousands of years more than the original hypothesis of crossing the Baring Strait 15,000 KA. From around 50,000 KA there were mass migrations out of Africa. Migrations occurred in ongoing waves—not single-time specific events. There were many reverse migrations globally. Civilisations and societies navigated by the stars across land and sea. They frequently interacted, traded and inter-married. Many were marauders and displaced former people, fathering children from their women. We now recognise that ancient societies were not isolated, primitive tribes but rather dynamic and interconnected societies that travelled extensively while interacting and trading with one another.

New perspectives on ancient migrations and alternative consciousness open further opportunities for increasing our understanding of life and ‘big questions’. My research praxis ultimately examined the external relationship and embodiment of consciousness in culture. This forms part of a larger study of ongoing inquiry. However, insights arising from the research supported my forming hypothesis in conceptualising the origins and nature of cosmically derived codes.

Future Research

From Mircea Eliade’s profound and comprehensive cross-cultural tracing of the history of religions, archetypes, and myths I found reinforcement of my proposal that has Sacred Feminine at its core as the Sacred. I also gleaned evidence that others had come very close to a similar conclusion—possibly did not quite make the final connections that I have made because of the period and societal worldview they were positioned in while making their research. They were less challenged by science seeking quantitative provability when embracing the other as a ‘mystical’ or godly source. However, they did not have the benefit of modern science and technology—of Ancient DNA tracing. They could not reassess human migrations and early intelligence and capabilities.

I applied the panpsychism metatheoretical model to correlate the necessary holistic links to my research. From this action, I formed my hypothesis. I was inspired by contemporary astrophysics knowledge recently being revealed in Indigenous Australian cultural astronomy. I was further

inspired by research findings that trees respond significantly to cosmic rays, in the dark sky, in addition to sunlight.³³⁶ I deduced sunlight, circadian rhythms, and lunar gravitational patterns have significant effects on humans. The operations of celestial bodies and planets as aspects of the primary forces must have also a physical impact, just as they influence other planetary species. I muse at the metaphorical 'drag' of the archetypal mother Mudungkala and the idiom of her raking up prehistoric waters around the Tiwi Islands. Does this creation motif also symbolise the gravitational drag across the warped space-time portal, of the astronomical precession round of the archetypal Great Mother, by the major celestial bodies? Perhaps this is a myth worthy of science fiction. Or potentially, there are hidden layers of meaning in the metaphorical language of cosmic symbolism. I aim to investigate. As Rupert Sheldrake stated,

"If the sun is conscious, it may be concerned with the regulation of its own body and the entire solar system through its electromagnetic activity, including solar flares and coronal mass ejections. It may also communicate with other star systems within the galaxy."³³⁷

I conclude this research on 'Sacred Star Songs' with my goal of continuing studies into the anthropology of consciousness. It has multi-disciplinary intersects, including scientific inquiry into external influences on consciousness—such as migration patterns in other species. However, I note similar studies on universal patterns of human connections to external cosmic influences are limited. I intend to progress my research with cultural ethnographies to gain deeper insights into the transmission of alternative consciousness, in symbolic motifs and archetypal metaphor. By adopting a panpsychism framework, I will apply actor-network theory to explore the phenomenal relationship of consciousness from an ancestor and cosmic perspective of 'the other'.

³³⁶ Peter W Barlow, "Moon and cosmos: plant growth and plant bioelectricity," in *Plant Electrophysiology: Signaling and Responses* (Springer, 2012).

³³⁷ Rupert Sheldrake, "Is the sun conscious?," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 28, no. 3-4 (2021).

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