

INFORMATION STRUCTURES AND ABORIGINAL ONTOLOGY

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Aboriginal information structures are situated within an ontology of the Cosmos which I have represented metaphorically as this:

The Cosmos is like a vast cloud. Here and there you can see different patches of light and shade and almost make out recognizable shapes and forms. The rain is falling in a mist, here and there from different parts of the cloud, the drops splashing into the ocean below, each droplet creating an impression, becoming an incarnation. Waves roll across the ocean connecting all the “places” in the water where each droplet has made an impression and become *something*. Finally the sun peeks through the mist and the waters begins to evaporate, drawing the droplets from their respective “places” back up into the sky to reform the cloud and the cycle continues.

The vast cloud is Amawurrena,¹ the “stuff of original creation,” on the “other side.”

The patches of light and shade, forces for forming.²

The mist, the “stuff of original creation” on “this side.”

The droplets, the givers of life,

The impression each drop makes in the waters, a mould,

Each drop, a material incarnation.³

Within certain incarnations, a vital spirit.⁴

Connections between the moulds, activated by the power of Amawurrena.

Waves f(F)orm,⁵ roll through, wisps of whitecap connecting part of one to the other.

¹ If small-n “nothing” is *nar'a:bina*, literally “no-thing”— the absence of things—then capital N-nothing is Amawurrena—what remains in the absence of things.

² What I have posited as “Structures” after Mark Burgin, “Ideas of Plato in the Context of Science and Mathematics” (*Athens Journal of Humanities and Arts*, July 2017, pp. 161–182).

³ *amamalya*, the real as in “Warnamamalya” the term for “people.”

⁴ Amugwa. Also refers to the animated aspect of inanimate things such as in *anggarra amugwa*, the glowingness of the coals, or *augwungwa amugwa*, the gushginess of the stream.

⁵ Defined by an enveloping lightness of being (*awarrawalya*) that defines the *kind* of thing something is in terms of balance and proportion in relation to others of like kind—a geometric-shaped “shadow” of radiant light.

Interpreted theoretically as this (read top-to-bottom and across):

anti-thesis ---> thesis ==> plurality = II

nothingness ---> being ==> relationship (part-of-one-in-the-other)

Juxtaposed against,

thesis ---> anti-thesis ==> synthesis = I

something--->opposed by something else==>resolved into unity or one destroys the other

Information at “ground level” in the Aboriginal world (here with reference to the people of the Groote Eyalandt archipelago) moves in two directions, across to “see” into another dimension, and laterally to connect with other people. The above theoretical interpretation moves in both insofar as it is formulated by myself here in our terms but owes its source to seeing across in theirs (David Turner,

Life to the Power of Nothing, Revised and Expanded Edition, Rock's Mills Press, 2021, pages 39-45.)

Information collected in “seeing” occurs in specific circumstances such as playing the didjeridu and tapping sticks during mortuary ceremonies and extends to the Amawurrena of *awarrawalya* (“Structures”), though not Amawurrena itself, and to the *amugwa* or vital spirit of a person just after their death. The circumstances promoting these experiences are a preoccupation with grief and participation in the repetitive rhythms of instrumental music and song, both of which lead to the suspension of everyday thought patterns and preoccupations and the opening of the mind.

Information transmitted laterally also passes through the same process of ceremony, the routes it takes activated by separate but interdependent congregations of people in performance and through interdependent relations between songs, each connected to another in part-of-one-in-the-other terms both locally and, it seems, spanning the continent (*Return to Eden, a Journey Through the Promised LandScape of Amagalyuagba, third edition*, Rock's Mills Press, 2021).

Information collected in “seeing” translates “on the ground” into the First Law of Initiation: If you have something someone needs and they make that need known, then you must empty yourself and give *all* of it to them.