

Into an *ilinx* Time

— An Interpretation of an Ayahuasca Experience by a Japanese Anthropologist —

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Introduction

From time immemorial, "drugs," perversely mysterious materials, have enchanted *Homo sapiens*, also a perversely mysterious creature. It is well known that the Neanderthal man did the burial, which suggests they had a heart to mourn for the deceased. On top of that, their soul might have repeated "trips" to the Beyond with their living body remaining in this world. For at the Shanidar Cave in northern Iraq, several kinds of pollen of flowers were excavated with bones of an adult male Neanderthal, among them pollen of *Ephedra*, with a stimulant effect, was also detected(1).

A Neanderthal man intoxicated with drugs—this image provokes some uneasiness to us, keeping daily life normally. It seems to arouse something suppressed and concealed in the depth of our mind and to challenge our sense of "savoir-vivre," which put more value on boring stableness than freedom with anxiety. Of course this inclination to drugs is not inherent solely to the mind of *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*, so-called the Neanderthal man. Needless to say in the case of *Homo sapiens sapiens* or *Homo sapiens*, according to A. Gehlen, no one can deny the possibility of anesthetic or stimulant drug use even in earlier than sapiens stage, for example *Homo erectus* or *Australopithecus*(2).

Stretching wings of imagination with all our might, our ancient ancestors, whose vertical walk had made their hands available, might have strolled around with a bunch of mind-expanding plants in hand, earlier than with a torchlight. The origin of drug use is astonishingly old, lost in the deep mists of time. This depth itself appears to indicate that we human beings are destined to be a fundamentally unfit creature in this world, so that it is difficult and unnatural for us to live in peace and quiet without occasional "trips."

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Our society, which has nearly lost sensitivity for ecstasy, seems to consider drugs as highly risky materials to which strong taboo is attached, and try to keep them away obstinately from the public order. However, all of "drug-related matters," especially certain states of consciousness usually called "ecstasy" or "*ilinx*," cannot be removed completely

from this world, and such intention would lead us only to, as it were, vigorless nihility in a vast stretch of indiscrete, monotonous time and space.

Roger Caillois argued, " . . . each time that an advanced culture succeeds in emerging from the chaotic original, a palpable repression of the powers of *ilinx* and mimicry is verified(3)." Actually, if some sacred mind-expanding plants, called "flesh of the Gods" or "the vine of soul" in "*ilinx*-directed cultures" of the New World, entered into our culture,—it is necessary for us to become quite dead to shame to accept the evaluation of our culture as "advanced" — they may be labeled immediately as abominable "psychotomimetic" or "psychotogen." What's more, usually even a slight consideration would not be given for the reason why such pharmacologically similar materials have been valued in a so drastically different manner in each culture. In fact, "a repression of the powers of *ilinx*" is "palpable" to the letter.

According to the famous theory of play by Caillois, *ilinx* constitutes merely one of the 4 categories, distinguished from other simulation play(mimicry), competition play(agon), and chance play(alea). However, judging from our internal mental state absorbed in various types of play, it is an "empirical fact" that we finally find ourselves in an *ilinx* state, irrespective of the category of play. If human "essence" is play as Caillois and J. Huizinga claim(4), and play leads us finally into *ilinx*, what then? Even though *ilinx* as a cultural mechanism is suppressed in public sphere, the yearning for it would never die away, so it would be the style of *ilinx* alone that changes, from public to private one, sometimes with secrecy. That is to say, *ilinx* has not disappeared completely from our world, and its historical role not yet finished. While measurability as an index of the modernization is coming close for the climax, we see monotonous and homogenized time and space being cracked here and there due to some sorts of secret *ilinx* or many types of mysticism, occultism, and various non-traditional spiritual movements. Such lasting situation is so much suggestive to think better of the "essence" of our human mind.

Chapter 1 Knowing *Ilinx*

What is the content of experiences of drugs or *ilinx* in the concrete? While we pass through a certain special consciousness, what world on earth is disclosed? And what kind of meaning or "a shock" would the experience give to our practice in everyday life?

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Ecuador—a small country in South America, surrounded by Colombia and Peru. In autumn of 1992—It was long time ago—I was in the Ecuadorian Amazon, engaging in my first anthropological field work among an indigenous people, Canelos Quichua. In the upper Amazon Basin, not only in Ecuadorian, but in Colombian and Peruvian also, several

mind-expanding plants or hallucinogens, typically *Ayahuasca* (*Banisteriopsis caapi*) (5), have been used at various cultural scenes such as initiations, funerals, and of all others illness treatment by shamans. The people of Canelos Quichua were naturally Ayahuasca users. To understand their world from the inside, I have tried several times the Ayahuasca, literally means "vine of soul." Here, from consulting my old field note, I would like to reconstruct the most impressive experience of my own (to date).

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It was growing dark after the sunset in the forest. The twinkling of fireflies could be seen here and there. Isaac, an experienced shaman and the head of the family I was dependant for food and place to sleep, went out of his couch and came to the tonight's clients. He usually takes a rest lying for a while to get his body and mental condition better before the treatment. Now, he was ready. Isaac took out a glass bottle, and poured the content a little bit, probably around 20cc, into a container made of a small gourd split in half. Ayahuasca. It was dark brown, faintly thick liquid. Isaac blew his breath carefully, just like we do when putting out a candle flame, and made an incantation in a small voice several times to the liquid. With that, he held out slowly the container to me. For shamans Ayahuasca is indispensable to healing ceremony. Through the intake of this hallucinogenic drug, healers enter in a special consciousness and sing songs (*taquina* in their Quichua language) to invoke spirits (*supai*). In the hallucinogen-induced visions, receiving supports from the spirits, shamans search the cause of disorder and try to remove it (typically magical darts, called *chonta*) with sucking technique (*chupada*) (6). Family members of clients and acquaintances of shamans who happen to be at a healing ceremony occasionally drink the Ayahuasca. It was said that the purpose was to see the deep reality abounded with spirits, difficult to experience in the normal waking life. But I was not Canelos Quichua, a mere foreigner. What kind of visions would come into view? There was no cloud in the sky. It was a moonlit night. The silhouette of the dewy Amazonian forest, illuminated palely by the moon, stood out distinctly. Carlos, son-in-law of Isaak, advised me. "At the moment of drinking Ayahuasca, you must stop breathing and swallow it at a stretch. If you don't do so, the smell is so disgusting that it makes you vomit right away. In addition, gargle with water as soon as you drink Ayahuasca. If Ayahuasca remains in your mouth even a little bit, it will make you feel very bad and induce you to vomit too. And you must not drink water. Because it will make Ayahuasca ineffective." I nodded slightly and gulped the liquid down resolutely.

The taste of Ayahuasca was beyond my imagination. From the viewpoint of the category of taste, it was "bitter," but its appalling ugliness was out of comparison. To create such incredible taste, we might have to boil down "all of the evil of the world"—such

thought occurred to me. In fact, during the next one or two weeks, I could not remember the taste of the Ayahuasca without light nausea and chills running through whole my body.

I laid myself in a hammock, hearing healing songs of Isaac. I did not feel unwell. I was looking absent-mindedly at Isaac singing to the client and the silhouette of the forest extending around, while wondering what effect the Ayahuasca would have on me — approximately 20 minutes later, suddenly I noticed myself fixing my eyes persistently on a star. Ayahuasca became to take effect. When I closed my eyes, geometric patterns appeared instantly. Colores were not attached. The patterns of the light, just like computer graphics, were swirling dynamically in darkness and unfolding one after another. While I lost in admiration, the patterns had taken on colors without knowing it. Red and green. I enjoyed this automatically moving light as an audience for the time being. —Abruptly, a feeling of nausea came over me. The cause of the feeling might be my slight position shifting in hammock. Anyway, I had no way of enduring it and vomited willy-nilly heavily on the ground several steps away from the hammock. But images did not disappear after my throwing up. On the contrary, so many images sprang out one after another, and more and more clearly. Then, a strange thing happened when I returned to the hammock.

In the light of the moon, the figure of the hammock could be seen exactly the same way as it had been, however, the red and green geometric patterns were being superimposed on it. Really grotesque. As it became hard to move my body after vomiting, I lay back in the hammock and closed eyes. Neighboring sounds came over with enormous clarity. Chirps of various kinds of insects and birds, and the flow of the river nearby, which I had not noticed 30 minutes before, came to my ears with tremendous vividness. Figuratively speaking, it was as if an old sound equipment with poor quality was suddenly switched to a latest one with the highest quality!

Vomiting relieved me a little bit of discomfort, but I was feeling not so good. The excessively keen sense of hearing could be partly a source of stress. A voice of someone reached me unexpectedly. It seemed to me that it came from somewhere far away, but actually it was of Carlos, who had come close to me imperceptibly. I opened my eyes and saw the red and green geometric patterns again, but this time these patterns were spread all over the face of Carlos, even on the two eyeballs. I turned my eyes away from him irresistibly.

"Makoto, don't you hear any sound?"

"Sound? What sound?"

"Sound of Ayahuasca."

"Sound of Ayahuasca?"

After drinking Ayahuasca, shamans invoke spirits with *taquina*, special kind of songs. However, it is not easy for ordinary people to encounter spirits. "When anything like

'human' appears in the vision, you have to pay attention to it, and try to communicate with it"— I had heard such advice from Isaac. But any measures had not been given in the auditory field. I felt like asking about the "sound of Ayahuasca," but found myself hard to talk.

"It is not good to be here, let's go to the river."

As I felt my body became heavy after vomiting, it was very burdensome to move from the hammock. However, succumbed to Carlos' earnest pleas, I decided to walk to the riverside.

"Don't you hear any sound from across the river?"

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I could not answer him. I had not any trouble to understand what he said, but it was impossible to utter a vocal sound. Whereas the sound of river water became more and more clear. It appeared to me able to recognize each tiny drop of water splash. Besides the chatter and chirping of the creatures in the surrounding forest came over me as if such sounds had been emitted from entities having a "will." It looked like sounds we had accustomed to in the state of normal consciousness acquired marvelous clarity and were accompanied by new "meanings." But any particular sound, or "sound of Ayahuasca" did not come over me.

"I'm hearing many sounds, such as water, birds and insects, but not any special sound."—I barely answered him this way.

"Makoto, look at the sky, the moon and stars." I looked up at the sky. Innumerable stars were glittering against the background of the clear, awfully refreshing night sky. The geometric patterns had disappeared before I knew it. I turned my gaze a little laterally. Just as the moment a slightly lacking half moon came into sight, I caught my breath. The moon had nothing extraordinary in the color and the shape. Probably it would be about the same as the one of last night. However, I felt overwhelming dazzling brightness in this moon, and found the very presence of "the absolute" beyond the sense of aesthetic appreciation. I squinted into the dazzling moon, and stunned in a petrification literally for a while. Around the moon the color was soft pale indigo, and with receding from the moon, the indigo increased gradually the thickness. When lowered my eyes, I found that the dazzling light emitted from the moon changed into blue transparent light and illuminated the ground quietly. This image, tropical plants with rich moisture lightened by this graceful light, was fantastically bewitching. I looked up once again at the sky, and exposed myself to the brightness of the moon. An ecstasy mixed with awe. My body was trembling.

"Are the stars moving? No? Makoto." Thanks to this voice of Carlos, I came to myself. They were not particularly moving. I tried to move some stars intentionally, but nothing changed. The position of stars appeared to slip off when I blinked my eyes consciously, but

it did not interest me so much.

I returned to the hammock again supported by Carlos' arm. When I closed my eyes, a few snakes and lizards crossed on the screen of the geometric patterns, and next, suddenly Dali style pictures appeared. Moreover plants in the pictures started to wiggle slowly and multiply gradually. As for color, brilliant primary colors such as yellow and blue had been added to initial red and green. Soft neutral colors were not seen. I was totally in a sharp and gaudy, richly colored world. It was very hard to control images appearing automatically and incessantly, as I tried with all my might to remove negative ones for instance snakes or lizards. Along with animals of the natural world, images of fantastic weird creatures, so to speak, spooky monsters also came up. Even if I succeeded in removing a negative image, a different negative one appeared again on the instant. This was disgusting so much.

Next, rather than mere appearance of visual images, a phenomenon having a flavor of the sense of touch, something like what is known as synesthesia, happened to me. Seeing a certain person, for example Isaac, who was trying to take magical darts out of the body of the patient with sucking treatment in darkness, or closing eyes and visualizing a specific person,—the difference between "see" and "visualize" had already become indistinct for me—I found everyone human being vibrating. The whole body was trembling finely with tremendous speed. The expression of the face could not be read at all. The distinction between man and woman became vague, and the figure of limbs also became blurred. This reminded me of a familiar scene that we could not distinguish clearly each blade of a windmill rotating at high speed. Sounds of vibration like motor humming noise and the vibrations themselves, both of them reached me without intermission. Those had an effect not merely on the skin surface, but rather "invaded" me and shook the "core" of my body.

This was shocking. What's more, this experience, unlike the previous ones I had had in the sense of sight, accompanied an intuition that I was touching an essential part of life that had been concealed so far. And it was not human beings alone to vibrate. Animals such as frogs, lizards, insects or birds, and a great variety of tropical plants also, namely all of life were vibrating at the frequency peculiar to each life form. In the case of animals, basically the frequency was short and quick, and the reverse was the case of plants. Various types of vibration came over to shake me and make me feel a numb sensation. It was unclear which was shaking, my body or my mind. Or rather, there was no way to distinguish them. "<I> am shaking"—to describe this situation, no other way. I was at the mercy of a whirlpool of vibration, a wonderland that a great variety of life were weaving out. Now as if I synchronized with neighboring vibrations, I myself began to vibrate.

At this point, I felt a fear. It looked like I could barely endure through any images, however negative or demoniac they might be. Experiences in the sense of sight, in which the extent to commit myself is relatively low, would be at the most "unpleasant

experiences" from the standpoint of, as it were, "no-changing-I." However, in the case of experience in the sense of touch, the subjective self gets necessarily involved. No one cannot stand by as a mere spectator, as a matter of course arises "fear of changing myself into something else."

Struck with the fear, I tried to breathe deeply and slowly. Breathing is a kind of bridge connecting consciousness and unconsciousness, or mind and body. As many types of meditation methods point it out, by controlling our breathing, sometimes we find a way for the unconsciousness or find us able to control almost physical, visceral emotions that are hard to control by intention. In fact, we cannot continue to cry or be angry while breathing deeply and slowly. "Deep breathing" is the simplest and the most effective way to recover our composure in any critical situation.

I kept aware of my own breathing and made my breathing somewhat more deeply. However, I noticed at this time having difficulty to breathe. Although being in the Amazon at 300 meters above sea level, I seemed to have fallen into lack of oxygen at high altitude somewhere in the Andes. While this light air hunger lasted for a time, my hands and feet became dull, and gradually paralyzed. That made me anxious for my physical body in physiological terms. However, I reflected that the Ayahuasca I drank had been prepared by Isaac, who had gone together with the plants for a long time of 30 years, so this would not become a problem of life or death—and tried to keep on deep breathing, feeling difficulty of breathing itself. Actually, the vibration did not come out when my breathing was stable. Nonetheless, once any disturbance of breathing occurred and this frame of self-supporting got loose at all, instantly my own vibration began again. If I let things take their course, it would be completely unpredictable to where I go. The vibrations from outside, from all directions, "attacked" me consistently. Like a Buddhist priest disturbed by illusions of evil spirits in meditation practice, I kept on struggling against "fear of vibration" depending solely on the control of breathing.

—How much time has passed? The healing of Isaac had been over before I noticed it, and the family of the patient were sound asleep breathing peacefully. The vibration had fairly calmed down and merely faint pulsations were lingering. I hit upon an idea to move to my tent. Though I was right on the equator in the tropics, it got quite cold at the dawn. If not wrapping my whole body up in sleeping bag securely, I would probably catch a cold. Sleeping in the open air in the hammock would make nothing go right. "Get a grip," I murmured to myself, staggering along several steps, I managed to reach my tent and put myself in the sleeping bag one way or the other. It was about 9:00 p.m. I forgot completely to have intended to put time on record, yet I saw then approximately two hours had passed after the intake of Ayahuasca. Slight difficulty in breathing continued, and some of gorgeously colored monsters appeared again. Although I lay comfortably in my sleeping bag

in my tent, it was not yet possible to sleep soundly.

Unexpectedly, some words of Carlos that I had heard at the riverside crossed my mind.

"Makoto, think about your country, try to think about your family. Don't you see anything? "

Images with vivid red, blue, yellow, and green colors distracted me from concentration, but I barely focused on things about Japan, first of all my family and friends. It was not long before I had the sense of seeing thoughts of a few people anxious about me. At the time, though it was well past the scheduled time to return home, I had not given them any hint of return at all, even hardly wrote one postcard. It was me that was irresponsible and sloppy. Nevertheless, they would not blame me for such ungrateful attitude, but only wish my safety and soundness. I could not help feeling so sorry. It was already around 10:00 p.m. Breathing control was not necessary anymore. Images with brilliant colors had disappeared. This situation made me possible to reflect on my former careless conduct. To be more accurate, it seemed as if it made me possible to grasp "who I am" naturally without deliberate concentration, or as if it forced me to understand myself intuitively. Of course, the real nature of myself was nothing more than a "swell-headed fool." Realizing my real nature, I became more grateful than ever for favors given by my family and friends to me. I felt like crying. Coming out of the sleeping bag, I sat down on the ground and smoked one cigarette slowly in some gentle mood I had never known.

The effect of Ayahuasca was about to be lost. Simply some clear sensations remained. Nevertheless, my experience itself would not come to nothing with the disappearance of pharmacological effect. Its psychological, spiritual shock was so deep and strong that I could not regard whole my experience as a "mere illusion," and sleep in peace and wake up next morning as nothing had happened. The world of Ayahuasca would remain in my memory as a kind of indelible, so to speak, "personal archetypal scene." I crawled into my sleeping bag again and thought over a series of events in this evening with my eyes shut. The moon that I had gazed up near the river came into my mind. The word "piety" should be applied to the emotion emerging spontaneously just when one encountered that sort of special scenes—such idea occurred to me.

Chapter 2 Thinking Ilinx

It is not easy to grasp experiences of hallucinogen totally. My experience hitherto described is merely one example. A large number of experiences have been reported all over the world, and there exists differences between cultures, and between individuals too. Even in the case of same person, the content of experience could considerably vary day by day, or one by one. The effect of hallucinogen is influenced substantially by the mental and physical conditions of the person who takes it, also by social and cultural environments. It

is impossible to forecast precisely the outcome beforehand. A decoction of Ayahuasca, taken with close friends or family members under the guidance of a reliable shaman surrounded by rich nature of tropical rain forest, or a small piece of paper of LSD-25, swallowed in loneliness regardless of illegality in a showy but inorganic city space, both of them are pharmacologically classified in the same hallucinogen, however, each subjective experience cannot be never the same.

We can find an attempt to understand comprehensively such variety of hallucinogen experiences in the study of "Altered States of Consciousness"(hereafter ASC)(7). As people easily guess from the term itself, ASC has not been studied exclusively in relation to hallucinogen. Various types of meditation, extreme sleeplessness, thirst and fast, inhalation of smoke or incense, playing percussion instrument etc. • • • many kinds of "ilinx" are included in ASC. The basic principle of ASC introduction is to "let motor, sensory, and cognitive functions decrease or maintain as it is to the most"(8). The resulting ASC is said to have general characteristics as follows.

- a. Alterations in thinking
- b. Disturbed time sense
- c. Loss of control
- d. Change in emotional expression
- e. Body image change
- f. Perceptual distortion
- g. Change in meaning or significance
- h. Sense of the ineffable
- i. Feeling of rejuvenation
- j. Hypersuggestibility(9)

But here I cannot bring myself to change into a disinterested observer to examine "experiences of ilinx" of all ages and cultures, and present the whole picture of them(10). Rather than that, I want to stick to my own experience to search for and understand its significance and release it into a wider context. From "records of observations" by observers who don't try ASC by themselves, ASC as something relevant to the practice in our life would not come to light. On the other hand, from eccentric and risky "memoirs of hallucinogen/drug experiences," it is difficult to find messages that could reach and impress ordinary people who don't have a similar "ilinx time." Based on this premise, I would like to make an interpretation on my own experience, and then go exploring beyond that.

[transformation of perception—geometric patterns]

In my experience illustrated in Chapter 1, at first geometric patterns that reminded me of computer graphics developed brilliantly, after that more concrete images such as snakes, lizards, human beings, and monsters etc. appeared. Of these images, the mechanism is elucidated with regard to the initial geometric patterns. It is called "phosphene" in the field of neurophysiology.

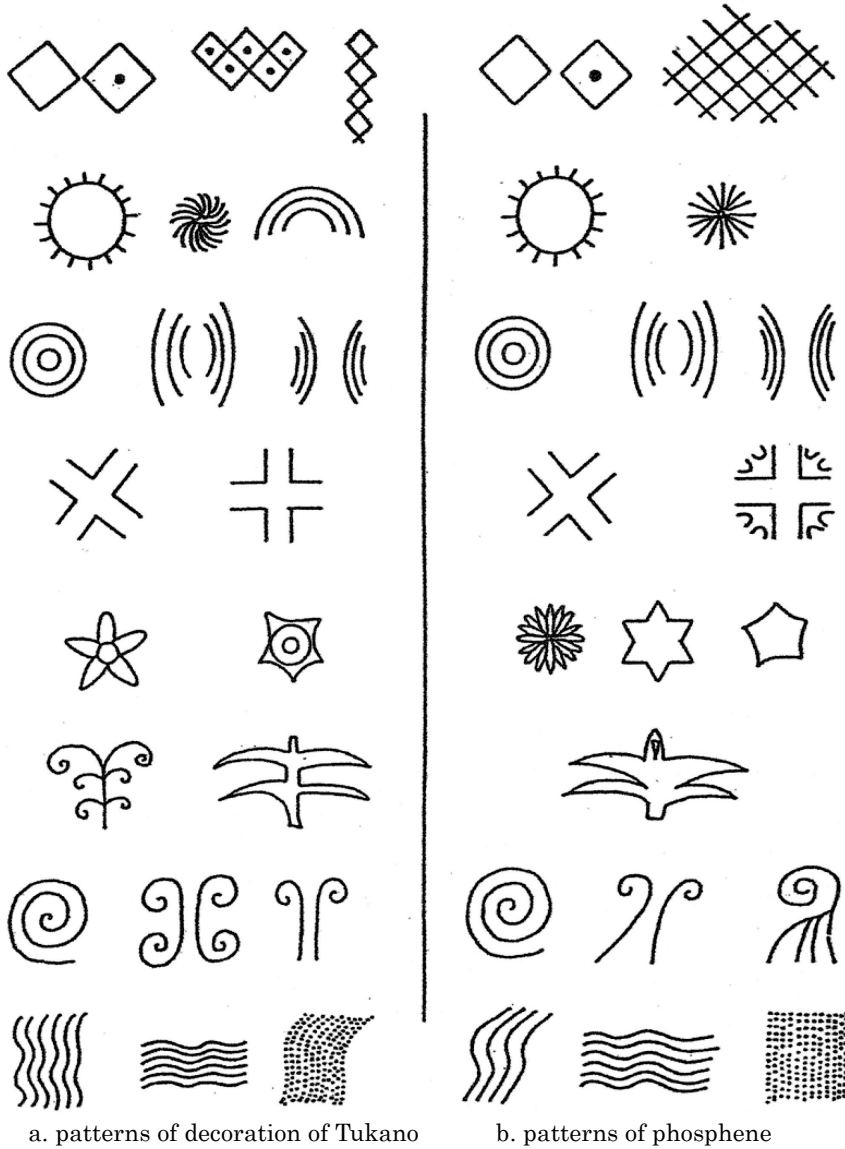
We don't "see" all the time objects existing in the external world. When we press our eyeballs or give a certain electrical stimulation to the brain, with the interaction between eyes and the nervous system in the brain, sometimes patterns of light appear without any source of light. Such patterns of light, arisen neurophysiologically, are named phosphene. This phenomenon appears in various situations, for example, in sensory deprivation, at the moment just about to fall asleep, when we wake up suddenly in a dark room, or in times of stress and fatigue, being struck with a strong emotion, being hit badly in the face so as to "giving off sparks" etc.. Moreover, together with fast and meditation, the intake of hallucinogen can be added to this list according to Reichel=Dolmatoff, who investigated an indigenous people in the Colombian Amazon, Tukano.

The people of Tukano have applied geometric patterns experienced in Ayahuasca inebriation to walls of their big house (*Maloca*), ceramics, and their bodies etc., as a motif of decoration. Reichel=Dolmatoff pointed out the similarity of patterns between the geometric decoration of the Tukano people and the phosphene experienced by subjects given a certain electrical stimulation to their brain(cf. figure. 1 on the next page).

However, the geometrical patterns that I saw were more complicated than those shown in fig. 1, and what impressed me so deeply was the wondrous elasticity and dynamism of transformation, not the shape of each pattern itself. In this respect, we might not have to be particular about specific details of the patterns in the figure. Nonetheless, the basic argument of Dolmatoff as "the appearance of geometric patterns accompanied with hallucinogen is a neurophysiological phenomenon, phosphene," is still acceptable. It is partly because we can easily find some description of geometrical patterns in almost all publications dealt with hallucinogen experiences (11), additionally, when I showed my sketch of geometrical patterns I saw to the Canelos Quichua people, they gave me nods of assent to it unanimously. As long as it was a purely physiological phenomenon, we may not need, say, read "something overflowed from the unconsciousness" into the geometrical patterns I experienced.

By the way, I already had some knowledge about the relation between phosphene and hallucinogen at the time of the experience described above. Besides today is the times computer graphics has been generalized widely to the extent that some video artists interested in phosphene are exploring new perception worlds in combination with music.

fig. 1 Comparison of decorative patterns of Tukano and phosphene (12)



The situation has changed from the times when the geometric patterns were always compared to "images of kaleidoscope." Thus the light patterns appeared before me were what was possible to be reproduced easily by modern media technology. Undoubtedly those images were remarkably beautiful, but there was no possibility for me to appreciate the wonder that the "people of kaleidoscope" could have had. In the both senses that it was an expected event of "the appearance of geometric patterns," and was "within the range of my past image experience," the dance of gorgeous color and light was, no more and no less, "a confirmation" for me.

【transformation of perception—concrete images】

Since sometime around the disappearance of geometric patterns, I encountered snakes, lizards, and weird monsters, and thrown into an ecstasy at the sight of the moon, subsequently became lost at the mercy of "the world of vibration." When we experience something new, particularly shocking one, we tend to seek for the significance of it, or some interpretation for understanding it. What the hell were those snakes, monsters, or "vibrations"? Did they have any meaning? Why did such weird images come out? Such questions sprang up involuntarily. When I asked about that to Isaac, he replied as follows. "Everything you saw is what *Ayahuasca Mama* (mother of Ayahuasca) revealed to you. It can be said that Ayahuasca Mama tests you. Anyway, if you find something like human being, speak to it. it is a spirit (*supai*)." In an "ilinx culture," people have a system of interpretation in common to some degree. Apprentice shamans ask for teachings to their master shamans, but at the same time they receive teachings from certain supernatural beings, which we have denominated as "spirits(espíritus/esprits)." In the visions of Ayahuasca, at first those apprentices can only wait and see such beings, then gradually communicate with, and finally summon and control them as their own servant spirits. Identities of those beings are vague at first, but they acquire distinct characters increasingly. With the accumulation of such communication with the spirits, apprentice shamans cultivate their inner spiritual world accordingly. The content of their inner worlds are not necessarily common with other ordinary people of their communities or other shamans, so that is quite personal. Nevertheless, no matter how idiosyncratically an apprentice shaman build his spiritual world, as far as he(13) is recognized as a shaman, his world would be approved even if hard to understand, and he would not be considered insane even if can be object of awe. To put it another way, there is a general recognition as follows—"Shamans(*yachaj*) are those who tell us ordinary people sometimes pretty mysterious things based on communications with spirits, but what he tells is probably right." This public approval makes each shaman capable of exploring each spiritual world individually without hesitation in collaboration with those spirits.

Of course our culture does not approve such type of interpretation. "Culturally approved interpretation" for us would be like this—"Monsters? Vibrations? Such things are foolish illusion. They can't have any meaning at all." Nevertheless, "the world of vibration" affected me so seriously that the interpretation our culture provided did not make any sense for me. At that time I needed an "irregular" and "convincing" interpretation that would approve of my experience itself in some way or other. In that sense, the interpretation of Canelos Quichua, like "the world of vibration is a trial the mother of Ayahuasca imposed on me," though I would write it down in my field note as "their" understanding of the world with due respect, did not fall into place for me, neither.

Provided that we take the meaning of "approve" more broadly, our culture appears to have another interpretation for this type of experience. For example, the experience of vibration may be interpreted as follows—*Some mental content—it is hard to characterize as decent—usually called "the unconsciousness," which does not surface or is prevented from surfacing in everyday life, lies in the depths of mind. Among scholars of human mind, some claim the universality of some mental content at the bottom of the unconsciousness common to all human beings, or even to all life forms . . . , anyway, your unconscious mental content may be symbolically expressed in ASC caused by the hallucinogen. If so, it is important to be aware of the mental content itself that couldn't but take the form of "vibration," as a result of whether "condensation" or "displacement," and necessary to integrate it into your ego. In a word, the vibration itself was an illusion, but a deep meaning may be hidden there—*

However, my intuition told me "the world of vibration" was a hard fact. In other words I felt, as it were, "undeniability" or "a sense of immance" toward it. Therefore that psychoanalytic interpretation mentioned above, as the vibration itself was an illusion after all even though we could draw some symbolic meanings from it, did not touch me to the heart. "People will say, 'By all means, that was a mere imagination.' However, this imagination, having to the extent of such intensity, it is 100 times more real(réel) than reality(la réalité)(14)." Henri Michaux gave words to his own experience of mescaline (the active ingredient of hallucinogenic cactus) like this. Also Carlos Castaneda, who was said to have experienced various kinds of "non-ordinary reality" under the influence of hallucinogenic plants with Don Juan, an indigenous intellect of Yaqui, living near the border of Mexico and the United States, wrote as follows. "Don Juan behaved toward these states of non-ordinary reality not 'as if' they were real but 'as' real(15)." Both words of Michaux and Castaneda didn't seem to be just a rhetoric, or jeu de mots. As the sense of "undeniability" almost always accompanies experiences of hallucinogen, it is not easy at all to become free from feeling that sense. To be honest, the world of vibration was, for me, no other than a "reality" itself.

"Cognition" is virtually a subjective act of division of the world. Consequently whatever division is made, we cannot substantialize the resultant articulated world of meaning, or "reality." To put it figuratively, we should not accept "reality" as such naively without attaching a parenthesis to it. Come to think of it, we live in a world where people tend to assess the realm experienced in normal consciousness(Ordinary State of Consciousness, hereafter OSC) as the unique and reliable reality, and events experienced in ASC are to be rejected as "hallucination" or "illusion" without reserve, no matter how relevant they are to life of the person who pass through them. On the other hand, for many indigenous peoples of the Amazon, the world of spirits revealed in ASC is an exact "reality." According to

Michael Harner, in the case of Jivaroan people who live in the south side of Canelos Quichua, normal waking life is regarded as "false" or "a lie," and the realm that they get into through the Ayahuasca or *Brugmansia spp.* (another hallucinogenic plant) is "real(16)."

"Sober reality" of our society and "Ecstatic reality" of Amazonian societies that spirits or magical darts fly around—although the appearance is completely different, both of them are "realities" supporting people living in each society, so each one can be said to have same value. What is more, there may be no use here asking which one is more "objective." For the reason of acceptance as a solid reality is not based on the fact that this or that reality has universal objectivity, but so far as actually being shared among people, it appears to be provided with an air of "objective-ness."

I had no choice but to interpret "the world of vibration" from the viewpoint of such, so to speak, "multi-layered reality." Originally anthropological practice should be to "live in plural realities at the same time," in other words "live together with difference." Such practice must encourage us to appreciate not only "different realities" of other cultures but also of ASC. In that respect, I realized clearly that I had been indulged in ethnocentrism in the field of cognition (Cognicentrism)(17). If I genuinely understood that so-called reality was intrinsically accompanied by parentheses, I would not have been shaken so much. Of course it is impossible to be free from ethnocentrism completely for ordinary people like us. Only an unattainable thing, just like utopia, has a qualification to become a permanent ideal. What we can do is nothing but to put ourselves in the everlasting process of making aware of our unnoticed ethnocentrism. "The world of vibration" reminded me of such things, so it has become for me an "educational" experience par excellence.

Such personal thinking as stated above settled my nerves more or less, but what if I had not changed my stance of acknowledging one sole, fixed reality and substantialized the world of vibration? What if I had considered the world of vibration as an exact reality without parentheses? In that case, I would have been obliged to change my past way of understanding the world. Although this situation should be settled down with a passive, unclear way, like "vanishment of the experience with the passage of time"—almost all experiences of hallucinogens might have taken this course—but more positive way to reorganize the world and construct a new world based on the vibration could be another conceivable possibility. Of course if we came to have a completely original understanding of the world, or a totally non-shared articulation system, probably the labeling of insanity will be applied. However, in the case of that some sympathy and approval of it from others was accompanied for some reason or other, the state of affairs would take a turn for something that could be called development of a new world of meaning. It looks like this situation has some possibility to cause an emergence of a cult or religion. Suppose I, advocating "cosmology of vibration," possessed great charisma and attractive

personality,—it is utterly an unrealistic, fantastic idea—the people who show sympathy would begin to take on a tone of "believers." And if the number of such people increased, along with that I organized them reasonably and arranged rituals to let them experience the world of vibration, it would be a birth of an "hallucination cult/religion." Furthermore if I sophisticated the cosmology of vibration and made an effort sincerely getting over complications with established religions, it would lead to acquire a nature that really deserved to be called "religion."

According to the interpretation to be applied afterwards, various types of meaning are given to the experience of "the world of vibration," and canalized it into various directions. And the result of the interpretation will change into the context of next experience and give a sense of directions for it, and in some cases for the course of life ever after. The world of vibration is one "reality," but it accompanies parentheses as other "realities" does, so we cannot substantialize it—having chosen such interpretation, I did not begin to work hard at the elaboration of a creation myth for the establishment of a "hallucination religion" parallel with Brazilian Santo Daime, União do Vegetal, or Barquinha(18).

[loss of meaning]

"The world of vibration" was what disturbed my previous world understanding, and threw my articulation system into confusion. Besides such experience could possibly become a starting point to develop a new world of meaning, depending on the interpretation applied. Incidentally, even in the case of not having "hallucinations" in a narrow sense, or "perceptual distortions," sometimes we experience this world with totally different significance. That is, as it were, an "experience of hallucination without hallucination" that has an effect directly on our sense of meaning not through the agency of perceptual change. As we live in the "forest of symbols," making an order of meaning by articulating the world in every dimension from the concrete to the abstract, this kind of experience is critically important. It can be said that the change of perceptions, only if it disturbs this "forest of symbols," will be able to have a substantial influence on our life. When gazing at the moon, I was immersed in exactly that "hallucination experience without hallucination," yet sometimes similar experiences have been portrayed, for example in *The Doors of Perception* of Aldous Huxley (from here, I want to take up not exclusively experiences of hallucinogen but also various ilínx in literature widely, in addition to my own one. Because as to such delicate field, it becomes more difficult to give a full account of personal experience, so I feel the necessity to check my experience against other people's. This checking would be beneficial not simply to readers, but also to myself, for it certainly deepens my understanding of my own experience).

Huxley left us a fine description of his experience of mescaline. "The other world to

which mescaline admitted me was not the world of visions; it existed out there, in what I could see with my eyes open. The great change was in the realm of objective fact.(19)" The flowers arranged in a vase in front of Huxley surely existed there, but he perceived the "flowers," as the moon for myself, in a completely different manner as ever before.

• • • Plato seems to have made the enormous, the grotesque mistake of • • • identifying it(Being) with the mathematical abstraction of the Idea. He could never, poor fellow, have seen a bunch of flowers shining with their own inner light and all but quivering under the pressure of the significance with which they were charged; could never have perceived that what rose and iris and carnation so intensely signified was nothing more, and nothing less, than what they are • • • pure Being • • • (20)

Huxley gave words to his experience as perceiving "pure Being" of the flowers. This perception coincides precisely with my actual feeling when I was gazing at the moon. Such an "actual feeling" or perception seems to indicate a situation that we(Huxley and I) were deprived of meanings attached ever before to the flowers or the moon. This is clear from the next quotation. "• • • the eyes recovers some of the perceptual innocence of childhood, when the sensum was not immediately and automatically subordinated to the concept(21)." Also in Huxley's effort to represent "pure Being" using the expression "Is-ness(22)," we can make sure of the above supposition indirectly. Whenever we face some object of the external world, a flower or the moon, certain personal or/and cultural meanings come into our mind spontaneously. A rose does not appear as a pure and simple rose, but sometimes as "one kind of plants" classified in the subfamily Rosoideae in Rosaceae family, sometimes as "a symbol of love" adorned with various kinds of flower language. And at other times it may appear as "a catalyst" to guide to some personal sweet memories, still other times as "a piece of merchandise" for bringing home the bacon. When such "meanings," as it were, a good deal of symbolic fetters and chains attached around, are removed, the rose changes into something impossible to call, and its newly acquired overwhelming presence gives a fabulously striking impression on us.

Don't interfere/Words!/Between me and the sea
(Shuntaro Tanikawa, "Journey 4 Alicante")(23)

Now then, what if such "liberation from meaning" enlarges its sphere of influence more and more, to the extent that meanings detach one after another not only in the dimension of "the concrete things," but in the dimension of "the abstract matters" such as human relations or ideas about norms and values? Considering those who live a hard life full of

suffering, bound firmly with an existing meaning world and regarding it as an accomplished fact, we can expect that such an experience will give them a sense of radical freedom. A Japanese sociologist Yusuke Maki points out "an enigmatically coincident pattern of conversion" of Japanese class B and C war criminals executed on-site in Southeastern Asia after the defeat of the WW II (24).

• • • They were brought out from a local POW camp and went to a building in which the court was to be in session, given the death penalty, and came back to the camp again (comment : at this point, they must have been in ASC). On the return way to the camp, they realized stunning beauty not ever noticed in a brook reflecting the sunshine, trees in blossoms, and the bush itself. Although they ought to have passed through the same way to the court, and they had fought in this island for several weeks, their eyes had never met such a brook, blossoms nor the bush. These scenery and moments, for the first time, suddenly seized, dazzled, and fascinated them • • •

There are some records of similar cases, for example, of attempted suicides by throwing themselves under a train who found astonishing beauty of the sky in a flash (25).

What about the "nature" after broken up their meaning world formerly articulated in accordance with "the value system of Imperial Japan based on the Emperor system" or with "a sense of mission as a soldier of the Imperial Japanese Army(26)," by which they had been bound so firmly in their past life? What is it like to be the misery that forced one person to lie on the railroad ties? In the case of that that misery grows and deepens more and more inexorably to the extent that goes over a certain threshold, suddenly the blue of the sky "infiltrate" all over the person for the first time, and that blue itself transforms the misery into "nothing important at all"—such psychological turning process may be within the range to which our imagination barely reaches.

However, what we should take into account here is the fact that "liberation from meaning" is, without implication of value judgement, nothing but "loss of meaning." If so, for ordinary people like us, enjoying life thanks to having various types of emotions in common from mutual exchanges of culturally shared "meanings," this situation can be considerably "scary." No matter how convincingly one says that the existing meaning world has not substantial grounds so that it is after all "fabricated," we tend to end up clinging to it, feeling bored or/and oppressive. People are not always so clearheaded nor don't fall into a critical situation so frequently. Although a Japanese poet Shuntaro Tanikawa wrote "Don't interfere/Words!/Between me and the sea," but usually we find the sea of hometown more familiar, remarkably endearing. It is because there exists definitely a small but precious meaning world resulted from memorable events in our life "between me(us) and the sea."

(we should probably notice that the sea in Tanikawa's poem was the Mediterranean Sea, which he encountered while traveling in Alicante, Spain, in other words, unfamiliar land irrelevant to previous "memorable events.") It looks like we have a irresistible tendency to require and go after meaning incessantly with untiring zeal, so unless we make a radical change in our attitude of such asking for meaning, "loss of meaning" would result in, not "liberation," but "exclusion" from meaning. It should not be surprising that experiences with a common point in the sense of "loss of meaning," like the experience of flowers of Huxley or my experience of the moon, have been characterized sometimes as thoroughly negative ones.

That reminds me of a famous passage of Sartre's *Nausea*. In this novel, in which the author's own mescaline experience is reflected strongly, the protagonist Roquentin loses meaning of everything, such as a root of a chestnut tree, park gates, a bench, and himself.

... The roots of the chestnut tree were sunk in the ground just under my bench. I couldn't remember it was a root any more. The words had vanished and with them the significance of things, their methods of use, and the feeble points of reference which men have traced on their surface. I was sitting, stooping forward, head bowed, alone in front of this black, knotty mass, entirely beastly, which frightened me.

... existence had suddenly unveiled itself. It had lost the harmless look of an abstract category: it was the very paste of things, this root was kneaded into existence. Or rather the root, the park gates, the bench, the sparse grass, all that had vanished: the diversity of things, their individuality, were only an appearance, a veneer. This veneer had melted, leaving soft, monstrous masses, all in disorder — naked, in a frightful, obscene nakedness(27).

The reason why "this black, knotty mass" "frightened" Roquentin is because he faced "loss of meaning" without giving up that "asking for meaning." The mind of Roquentin, ousted from the forest of symbols, makes us think of a sense of schizophrene in a sort of unwilling existential wandering. The sense of a girl of schizophrenia that I quote next is exactly "the loss of meaning" indistinguishable from Roquentin's.

... Because everything seemed smooth like a mineral, separated and have not any relation each other, shining glaringly, and tense, I felt fear so much. For example, when I looked at a chair or a pitcher, I didn't think about the directions for use or functions—I mean, I felt a pitcher not as a thing into which we pour water or milk, or a chair as a thing to sit on, but as things that lost the names, functions, and meanings. In other words, everything became "object," and began to live or exist"(28) .

At its final stage of "the loss of meaning," such risk of chaos, or even schizophrenia is open to us. It is not too much to say that this is the most serious risk in experiences of hallucinogen, or more widely speaking, in experiences of *Ilinx* generally. In that sense, it is agreeable that Clifford Geertz emphasizes the value of conceptualization for us, namely the preciousness of our meaning world based on articulation.

• • • thing we seem least able to tolerate is a threat to our power of conception, a suggestion that our ability to create, grasp, and use symbols may fail us, for were this to happen, we would be more helpless, • • • than the beavers. • • • without the assistance of cultural patterns he(man) would be functionally incomplete, • • • but a kind of formless monster with neither sense of direction nor power of self-control, a chaos of spasmodic impulses and vague emotions (29) .

Nevertheless, here we should remember that "the loss of meaning" is also "the liberation from meaning." Huxley's (flowers) experience and Roquentin's one were not so different from the viewpoint of "cognition." "The loss of meaning" itself is by nature neither positive nor negative. Its negative phase emerges clearly only when "asking for meaning" is added. "The loss of meaning" would not necessarily result in fear of chaos.

A Japanese writer Kenji Miyazawa left a poem named "Aomori elegy" containing the following passage.

When sensing is too fresh
Its conceptualization is a mechanism
For a living organism to defend itself
Not to go insane
You should not cling to it indefinitely(30)

To use Kenji's words, it was Roquentin and the girl of schizophrenia who were put in a situation impossible to "defend himself/herself," no matter how hard they might have tried to do, and it was Huxley who did not try to do, and actually did not defend himself (Tanikawa was the one who expressed his yearning for such experience in the form of poem). No sooner had we faced "loss of meaning," or "sensing too (much) fresh," than we asked for meaning, then tried to canalize the experience into an existing articulation system and suppress the memory of an encounter with a state in which articulation itself did not work at all—it was such way of "defending" or "conceptualization" that Kenji found against his conscience.

In any case, the state of "loss of meaning" never continues forever. When an ecstatic

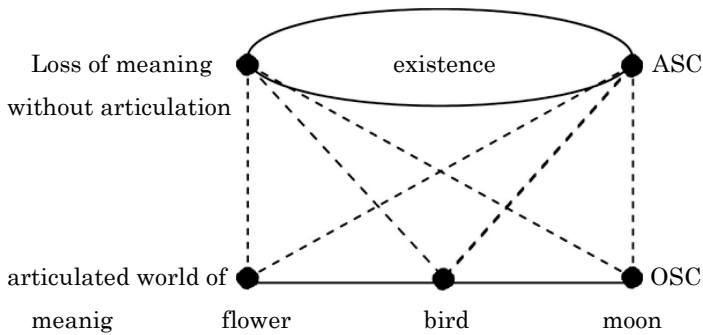
ASC passes away and we come back to OSC, the original articulated world of meaning also returns at the same time. The moon, once impossible to call, recovers former meaning(s) as a satellite of the earth, or/and the native place of Princess Kaguya, the heroine of a famous Japanese folk tale *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter*, for instance.

However, some people, being a very few in number, cannot return to an established meaning world when coming back to OSC. The shock received in ASC being too much strong, (s)he becomes not able to feel actuality toward the former articulation system. As stated above, any articulation system is not capable of assuring universal objectivity. Hence it is impossible to point out to the person under such situation his/her misunderstanding from the viewpoint of epistemology and convince him/her of validness of any kind of articulation system. What we should and can do is, apart from the problem of truth or falsehood, considering hardship the unfortunate stray person have gone through, solely to invite him/her to enter into "our" articulation world, saying "if you don't mind that it's merely one of many possible worlds."

By the way, in most cases we return to an established meaning world together with the transition of consciousness to OSC. Nevertheless the sensation experienced in ASC remains in our memory, and this memory undermines very often our trust in the former articulation. In this respect, whether it is an experience as "liberation" or whether as "exclusion," basically it makes no difference. "How to select the way to return" is as well important as the experience itself in ASC, or more than that. When put in such a betwixt and between state, youths from "advanced cultures" such as Japan, Europe, USA etc. meet and part in Goa in India, a tropical moratorium space for example. There exists chance encounters and pleasant talks with fellow travelers having similar trauma or bliss experiences. However, most of them cannot get sufficient comprehension on their own experiences, so in the end they spend idly holidays in Goa, leaving things up in the air. Otherwise, abandoning asking themselves what significance that shocking ilinx time might have, they come back to their own countries and try to adapt intentionally to each articulation system.

Such "way to return" will make "liberation from meaning" an empty dream to go away in a short time, or after all an "illusion." It is to land at the world of meaning without compromising the aspect of "liberation from meaning" that we should be after. If this is the case, our articulation system will become a kind of "transcendent" one like "simultaneous realization of articulation and non-articulation" that Zen Buddhism aims, for instance. To borrow words of a great thinker Toshihiko Izutsu, to return to the ordinary world not with a sense of "cutting off fragmentarily a small divided part of reality into in some case a flower, and in other case a bird," but with a sense that "the whole reality is a flower and a bird(31)." (cf. fig. 2 below). When that state is realized, a flower and a bird would be

fig. 2(32)



separated and infiltrated mutually at the same time, because they are not articulated in the depths. We are in the liberation from meaning while being in the world of meaning. Now that it has come to this, expressions used in normal articulation such as "a flower is existent," or "a bird is existent," become not appropriate. For such expressions have a strong connotation that "a flower" or "a bird" is a thing distinguished clearly from other things, so it becomes difficult for us to guess the non-articulation-ness in the depths, that is to say, all are infiltrated each other. Since the whole existence becomes a flower or a bird, our "articulation" must change from "a flower is existent" into "existence is flowering(33)," in both verbal expression in OSC and our subjective feeling. The world in which "existence is flowering," "existence is birding"—fearful nihilism never creeps into our mind there. We are sure to be able to savor not only the liberation from meaning, but also exuberant fulfillment of meanings.

This kind of "charts of transcendence," in which the whole is integrated into a part, or the whole manifests itself in the form of a part, has been shown in various ways from ancient times. "Indra's net," famous in Hindu and Buddhist philosophy, would be one of visual expressions of that—a net laid over the palace of the Sakra Deranam Indra(deity of Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism) has many knots with precious stones attached. And each stone is glittering reflecting all other stones like a mirror. Furthermore, when we pay attention to any one small stone reflected on the surface of a stone, again it reflects all stones on the surface with much smaller scale. Brilliant precious stones reflecting each other endlessly. Similar sensitivity toward transcendence can be found in poesy of a poet sensing eternity in a moment.

To see a World in Grain of Sand
 And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
 Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
 And Eternity in an hour. (William Blake, "Auguries of Innocence")(34)

Experiences of "loss of meaning" without any chart are going to end up in a kind of articulation like "cutting off a small divided part of reality fragmentarily into in some case a flower, and in other case a bird," and fall into boring mediocrity with substantializing it. Of course charts of transcendence without experience are no more than a guidebook of an unknown land never to go. Without compromising experiences with that boring mediocrity "to defend ourselves," and turning down the temptation of nihilism, we must release the shock into the midst of our normal daily life itself. The charts exist purely for that.

However, once provided with both an experience and a chart, everyone would not necessarily come to be able to spend "days of transcendence" immediately. The existence of tradition called "ascetic practices" shows how stubborn we have been. If anything, what we should emphasize may be as follows. For those who experience a shocking ilinx time, such charts sometimes sink deep into their unsettled mind and help them recover from it, and from there they must start to walk anew on a well-trodden but rugged and narrow path by themselves.

* * *

Experiences of "ilinx time" lead us to sometimes construct a new meaning world, at other times to fall into a state impossible to call meaning into existence. No doubt other types of experience exist innumerable, but experiences that cause any change in "meaning" are only worth considering, and also worth living through, as long as we are the inhabitants of the forest of symbols.

We live in the times of individualism of modern age. It should be said that individualism is a sort of paradoxical ideology that gives rise to differences successively between personal category and community's one. In such times, It is intrinsically impossible to have a dream that we put down roots deeply and lead a peaceful life supported by some reliable cosmology. We cannot find it available except in memories in old, bygone days to call for ilinx to have in common or to (re)create, as it were, the primal scene of our nation, as Caillois suggested. The way to and from ilinx left for us, and at the same time deserves close attention, it may be opened only in the direction of "transcendence" as "existence is flowering." Apart from giving a glimpse, it is not easy, and is accompanied by serious risks. However, it is through just this "ilinx" that we can see a certain ultimate aspect of human existence. For that, as Kenji put it, we "should not cling to it indefinitely" to defend ourselves.

Notes

*This essay is based on the following article, "Memai no Toki" (Ilinx Time) in *Gijutsu toshite no Shintai*(*Human Body as Techniques*, Nomura&Ichikawa eds. Taishukan, 1999), so the content is overlapped with that "Memai" in many parts. However, rewriting an article in other languages, particularly in the case of in some language with completely different vocabulary and grammatical structure from the original one, is an experience akin to writing a new article from the beginning. It requires so many revisions all along the line. Therefore this English version may give (a small number of) the people who have read the Japanese version totally different impression. In any case, I would appreciate it entirely if you (re)read this essay and make comments critically from various viewpoints.

- (1) Furst, Peter, *Hallucinogens and Culture*. Praeger Publishers, 1976, pp.4-5.
- (2) Gehlen, Arnold, *Ningen-gaku no Tankyu*(*Anthropologische Forschung*). translated by Kamei, Takiura et al., Kinokuniya, 1970, pp.160-161.
- (3) Caillois, Roger, *Man, Play and Games*. translated by Meyer Barash, Univ. of Illinois Pr, 2001 (Reprint), p.97. I changed "vertigo" for "ilinx," and "simulation" for "mimicry" after Caillois' original term.
- (4) Judging from findings of ethology, definitions of "human essences" like "*Homo ludens*" (man the player, or humans as a playing animal), including "*Homo faber*" (man the creator, or humans as controlling the environment through tools), "*Homo loquens*" (chattering man, or humans as a talking animal), or "*Homo demens*" (mad man, or humans as the only being with irrational delusions), cannot be seen as exactly correct. For instance, chimpanzee's termite fishing using rod is fairly famous, and it has been known that they have at least potentially some ability of symbol operation. It looks like such expressions are something like "eyeglasses with colors" that each thinker needs to put on to see and understand human nature. In addition, I think it no use criticizing this lack of strictness. Since the problematization of "human essence," or the question of "what makes a human being a human being?" runs parallel with the question of "what makes me I?" or "what am I?," we cannot help looking for "human essence" regardless of whether an exact answer exists or not. After all our asking for the definition of human essence comes from a "practical" necessity for "reliable ground of identity." That is the reason why various loosely-defined "human essences" have been accepted and functioned as stories assuring our identity, or as meta-stories urging us to reflect our identity.
- (5) "Ayahuasca" is the name prevalent basically in Ecuador and Peru(as "*aya*" means soul, and "*huasca*" means anything long and narrow, e.g. vine, string, snake etc. in Quicha/Quechua language, so *aya/huasca* is generally translated as "vine of soul"). However, this plant has so many names—in Colombia, people call this plant "*yage*" or "*yaje*," and in Brazil, "*caapi*," for example.

Botanically it is a liana plant classified into Malpighiaceae family, but "Ayahuasca" is also the name of liquid resulted from decoction for several hours adding leaves of "*chacrana*" or "*yaji*"(*Psychotria viridis*, Rubiaceae family or *Diplopterys cabrerana*, Malpighiaceae family). The leaves of "yaji" or "chacrana" contain an alkaloid DMT(dimethyltryptamine), and the liana contains harmaline, harmine, D-tetrahydroharmine. DMT is inactive by ingesting alone, so we

must add a certain material called "monoamine oxidizing enzyme inhibitor" to activate DMT in our body. It is harmaline, harmine, and D-tetrahydroharmine in the liana that functions as just "monoamine oxidizing enzyme inhibitor." That is to say, we cannot expect desired effect with the intake of the liana or leaves alone, so the combination of both plants itself brings a strong mind-expanding "Ayahuasca" into existence. We have no choice but to be astonished for such sophistication of folk pharmacology of (unknown) Amazonian indigenous people.

Of course these plants or decoction are classified into "hallucinogen" in modern pharmacology, but in so many Amazonian indigenous societies in present Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, and western Brazil, they are no other than "sacred" plants or liquid that their ancestors have taken for several thousand years.

- (6) To get the whole picture of the healing ritual of Canelos Quichua, please refer my article, "Genkakuzai to Chiryō"(Hallucinogens and Healing), *Psychedelics to Bunka(Psychedelics and Cultures)*. Takei and Nakamaki eds., Shunjusha, 2002.
- (7) With regard to the definition of ASC, Ludwig proposed a famous one as "any mental state(s), induced by various physiological, psychological, or pharmacological maneuvers or agents, which can be recognized subjectively by the individual himself(or by an objective observer of the individual) as representing a sufficient deviation in subjective experience or psychological functioning from certain general norms for that individual during alert, waking consciousness" (Ludwig, Arnold, "Altered States of Consciousness," *Altered States of Consciousness*. Charles Tart ed., Doubleday, 1972, p.11).

In anthropological context of shamanism, ASC is occasionally called SSC (Shamanic States of Consciousness), and the definition of Ludwig has been criticized once in a while from this point of view. For example, Michael Harner claimed that SSC could coexist with alert, waking consciousness, and Richard Noll acknowledged the validity of the definition by Charles Tart as "qualitative alteration in the overall patterning of mental functioning, such that the experiencer feels his consciousness is radically different from the way it functions ordinarily"(Noll, Richard, "Shamanism and Schizophrenia: A State Specific Approach to the Schizophrenia Metaphor of Shamanic States," *American Ethnologist*. 1983).

- (8) Ikemi, Yujiro, "Hensei-ishiki-joutai(Altered States of Consciousness)," *Shinkei · Shinri · Seirigaku to Ishiki no Sho-joutai(Various States of Nerves, Psyche, Physiology and Consciousness)*. Tama publication, 1985, p.40.
- (9) Ludwig, op. cit., pp.15-20.
- (10) To grasp the whole picture of Ayahuasca experiences, I recommend Benny Shanon's *The Antipodes of the Mind: Charting the Phenomenology of the Ayahuasca Experience* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2003). This is really a tour de force. For those who have a good command of Japanese, Tatsu Hirukawa's *Higan no Toki(Time in the Other Side)*. Shunjusha, 2002) is also highly recommendable. Perspective of this book is wider than the former.
- (11) I note here two examples of Japanese anthropologists. Ishikawa, Motosuke, "Mexico ni okeru 'Seinaru Kinoko-girei' no Taiken"(An Experience of "the Sacred Ritual of Mushroom" in Mexico), *Minzoku-gaku Kenkyu(The Japanese Journal of Ethnology)* Vol.31, No.7, 1967, p.300. and Miyanishi, Teruo, *Maya-jin no Seishin-sekai heno Tabi(A Journey to the Inner Space of the*

- Maya*). Osaka Shoseki, 1985, pp.215-217.
- (12) Reichel=Dolmatoff, Gerardo, *Beyond the Milky Way: Hallucinatory Imagery of the Tukano Indians*. UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1978, p.45.
- (13) Certainly there exist female shamans, but at least in Ecuador and Peruvian Amazon, male shamans predominate over female ones in number overwhelmingly, as far as I know. Therefore I adopt the personal pronoun for male, "he."
- (14) Michaux, Henri, *L'infini turbulent*. Mercure de France, 1957, p.107.
- (15) Castaneda, Carlos, *A Separate Reality*. Penguin, 1971, p.12.
- (16) Harner, Michael, *The Jivaro: People of the Sacred Waterfalls*. Natural History Press, 1972, p.134.
- (17) Harner, Michael, *The Way of the Shaman*. Harper & Row, 1980, p.xiv.
- (18) Nakamaki, Hirochika, "Hajime ni Ekitai Ariki: Brazil ni okeru Genkaku Shukyou no Souseiki" (In the Beginning was the Liquid: Genesis of a Hallucination Religion in Brazil), *Tousui toshite no Bunka* (Culture as an Intoxication). Nakamaki ed., Heibonsha, 1992.
- (19) Huxley, Aldous, *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell*. Granada, 1960, p.14.
- (20) *ibid.*, p.15.
- (21) *ibid.*, p.21.
- (22) *ibid.*, p.15. This expression was formerly used by Daisetsu Suzuki, a famous great Zen-messenger to the West.
- (23) Tanikawa, Shuntaro, "Tabi 4 Alicante" (Journey 4 Alicante), *Korega Watashi no Yasashisa desu* (This is my Goodness: A Collection of Poems of Shuntaro Tanikawa). The Shueisha Library, 1993, p.116.
- (24) Maki, Yusuke, *Kiryu no Naru Oto* (Whistling Sounds of a Current of Air). Chikuma, 1977, pp.174-175.
- (25) *ibid.*, p.175.
- (26) *ibid.*, p.175.
- (27) Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Nausea* (La Nausée). translated by Lloyd Alexander, New Directions, 2007, pp.126-127.
- (28) Miyamoto, Tadao, *Seishin Bunretsubyou no Sekai* (The World of Schizophrenia). Kinokuniya, 1977, p.206. Miyamoto said "such experience is not uncommon among sufferers of schizophrenia" (*ibid.*, p.205).
- (29) Geertz, Clifford, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Basic Books, 1973, p.99.
- (30) Kenji, Miyazawa, "Miyazawa Kenji's 'Aomori elegy' and two other poems," translated by Tomiyama Hidetoshi and Pronko Michael
(http://www.meijigakuin.ac.jp/~gengo/bulletin/pdf/24HidetoshiTomiyama_p171.pdf).
- (31) Izutsu, Toshihiko, *Ishiki to Honshitsu* (Consciousness and Essence). Iwanami, 1983, p.178.
- (32) This figure. 2 is based upon the figure put in *Ibid.*, p.175.
- (33) Izutsu, Toshihiko, *Islam Tetsugaku no Genzou* (A fountainhead of Islamic Philosophy). Iwanami, 1980, p.115.
- (34) Blake, William, *Poems and Prophecies*. Max Plowman ed., Everyman's Library, 1975, p.333.

