



Re-stor(y)ing social change

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ABSTRACT

New understandings arise as we encounter the emergent integration of both rational and emotional, physical and spiritual, masculine and feminine through imagination, myth, and storytelling. This expanded space fosters an iterative spiraling process whereby new personal and collective futures emerge from transformative possibilities. Contemplating love and the situatedness of our being creates a space for seeing differently, more inclusively. Thought Woman tells a story of encounters arising from contemplation, framing an emancipatory path toward wholeness and unity, being shaped through becoming, recognizing the interrelated web of life wherein humankind can flourish. Flourishing represents the central focus of the critical accounting project.

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1. Introduction

We approach this rendering rejoicing in the glossolalia of a new day, a new age, an age of the spirit where its endowing manifests as speaking in many tongues. The gift of speaking is bestowed on some, of interpreting on some, and of being present on others, all part of a collective experience, a collective consciousness.¹ The conflicting feelings of joy, wonderment, bewilderment, and anticipation emerge, the becoming of being. We applaud the innovative perspective and courage of both the author and the editors in initiating this stimulating undertaking. We see Pala's² contribution as another engagement with the post normal (rational) logic of soul, spirit, and story.³

Pala provides a text, his story, his journey, with which to engage and interact, deconstruct, reconstruct, interpret, and merge with one's own lived experiences. The text is not an end, even after it concretized in characters on paper. The story unfolds within the joint context of the author's words and the reader's rendering. It is a text *for* – for the reader to translate and then transform, to create one's own interpretation, to create one's own story. The unfolding stories emerge within the joint milieu of the author's telling and the reader's rendering, yielding new and diverse knowings.

We affirm Pala's telling. We respond in kind, motivated by Pala's truths, truths that may not be our truths, but truths authentically shared and, as such, enlightening and energizing. Ours is a different, ongoing, story (Dillard and Reynolds, 2008, 2010), and hopefully, a deepening story emerging from our life experiences, a story of our being and our becoming. Ours is a different telling of a story similar to Pala's, a journey, a search for completion, understanding, compassion, and inner peace, a journey into the present moment and into the paradoxes therein. Both moved by deep sorrow in loss. Yet,

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¹ A parody of Acts chapter 2, the biblical story of Pentecost.

² These stories are personal. In deference to this, we dispense with the customary mode of referencing Pala's "spiritual reflection" as Molisa (2011).

³ See Hines (1988, 1991, 1992), Dillard and Reynolds (2008, 2010).

both sensing meaning and hope in being, awakened by the process of becoming. Each looking, at one level, in very different places, for the same thing: peace, meaning, relevance, fulfillment, sense-making in a post modern world gone mad.

As with Pala, our aim is not to “conform to academic orthodoxy” but to commend alternative ways of knowing. To us, an appropriate response seems to be an intuitive, emotional, spirit level one. Ours is also a search for the lost dimensions of being, a true being emerging out of an authentic becoming. Our search is for a deprived nature, a nature that one senses but does not know, a search motivated by death in its many forms and the liberation of the oneness with that death and the other. We will not address the paradoxes or our logical, philosophical, and hermeneutic disagreements in Pala’s exposé. Others will certainly, and adequately, cover this ground, raising procedural and logical quandaries – departures from the academic orthodoxy. We do not see that as a desirable or productive tack for us to take. We agree with the “spirit” of the presentation and attempt to contribute to its purpose by engaging an alternative rendering. We take Pala’s story *for* us to engage and create our own story. It is a story of our search for hope and emancipation. It is also a story *for*, for the reader to engage and to feel and from these feelings remake it as their own, to see differently, and to share.

Our purpose is to create a space for seeing differently, more integratively. First, we tell a story of emergence of a more integrated society. This possibility arises from an awareness of change. The Green Owl feels the stirrings, pauses, and begins the discovery of alternative emergings, just as Pala appears to be doing. Guided by Thought Woman, these new imaginings frame our path toward an active wholeness and unity. The new thoughts and ideas open space between the calculative logics of representations and action. New beginnings lead to new becomings, as they spiral upward. After our story, we consider the seeds for new imaginings as the fundamental grounds for flourishing, considering levels of knowing that provide context for being and becoming. Exploring this pathway moves toward balanced and integrated understandings as we pursue more holistic notions of being and doing. The doing we address relates to an expanded vision of, and implications for, critical and social accounting. Perspectives integrate and transform combining into multidimensional renderings and emerge as we pause, present in the moment, seeing them anew through imagination, myth, and storytelling.

Thought Woman,⁴ the mother of Corn Maiden; Thought Woman, the mother of being, source of becoming stands before Pala’s story, moving the being, creating the NOW,⁵ teaching, knowing, being the becoming. The woman – the originator of love – the source of life and wisdom; Thought Woman, nudges us toward the awareness of situated being, and with us, creating that being, the present moment. Thought Woman’s cycles of becoming shape the being, from larva to butterfly, the story of life to death, of slavery to emancipation, of spirit to flesh, feeling, empathy, love.

2. Story and the telling

Hence being is indescribable in words and is communicable only by sharing my experiences. (Fromm, 1976: 88).

Stories give us pause as they place our living in relief with the imagined. Within the space between our lived reality and various imaginings, stories ask that we see differently, to be informed differently, engage our minds while stepping outside accustomed patterns, allowing us to think anew. Stories can fashion alternative understandings, affording possibilities for difference, integration, and transformation.

Story creates new space through its telling and its hearing. Our story is of the search for wholeness within community. The story envisions an integrated, inclusive view pointing to the possibility of flourishing. We use the medium as a means of expressing being from an alternative perspective and of experiencing becoming as the process of doing. The new space prefaces an integrative notion leading to new, multileveled knowings.

Ours is a story of (being) – of work, of community, of an awakening, of trying something new. The pause in the moment to listen and engage creates a new space from which emerges a story *for* (becoming), a moment to re-present one’s own experiences stimulated by a different, more complete comprehension of possibility. Including the subjective and intersubjective levels in experiencing and understanding the objective world recommends an approach recognizing equally both the intuitive, spiritual and the rational, intellectual processes and integrating them into actions, accountings, and accountability. Through an expanded view of values, transformative actions and accountings, or re-countings, can be conceived, enabling unimagined possibilities. Including more subjective/spiritual values opens a way to a more holistic engagement of, and by, actors in the society. Our story follows from the Acoma Pueblo creation myth and a previous story-telling calling for a more integrative system of responsibility and accountability (Dillard and Reynolds, 2008). Ours is a story of becoming. It attempts to move toward the “process” alluded to by Pala but only obliquely described or engaged.

2.1. Thought Woman – seeds of new imaginings

Words hung in the mist like leaves unfallen in autumn. Inside, the silvered crone softly stirred the embers to rouse her fire. As it quickened, waves streamed upward. Where they met the entering mist, new shapes formed in the intersection.

⁴ See Gutierrez (1991) for an history of the Acoma Pueblo and their corn maiden story.

⁵ Pala refers to the awareness of situated being as the NOW. We do not find that the use of this term comes easy to us, so we use the term situated being to recognize the realization of being located temporally, spatial, and spiritually in the present moment.

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