

Map vs the Territory and the Santiago Theory

by

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In his book, *The Web of Life*, Fritjof Capra writes about the Santiago Theory, ST, of Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela. In doing so he has popularized it and imbued it with fame. We are glad that he has done this since the Santiago Theory speaks to our deep instincts about its accuracy and therefore merits as wide an audience as possible for its impact and value in thinking and perception.

The Santiago Theory challenges in a very profound way the accepted thinking by the scientific community and philosophy that reality is a pre-given. We, in turn, by virtue of our birth, are thought of being parachuted into it. Now, in it, through our sense of Vision, Audition, Kinaesthetics, Olfaction and Gustation we access information from this pre-given reality. The information in these modalities is our representations of what we see, hear, touch, smell and taste. A representation of a thing is NOT the thing itself. The corpus of our representations is the basis of the different kinds of maps that we have about this pre-given reality in all its incredible many forms.

From this came Alfred Korzybski's assertion that the map is NOT the territory.

Now the Santiago Theory says that from the structures within us unfolds our reality. Since we all have similar structures, the reality that unfolds is similar. The Santiago Theory does not say what the structures are. Here in this paper we will propose what they are.

Since reality unfolds from our structures, the logical tilt is to conclude that the territory is the map and the map is the territory.

If this so, it puts to question the position taken by generations of General Semanticists, Neuro-Linguistic Programmers and Neuro-Semantic Programmers that the map is NOT the territory and the territory is NOT the map.

So, what are these structures in us?

We propose to index what they are through a metaphor.

Let us suppose that you own a beautiful south sea island in the Pacific, like Anthony Robbins. On this island you have built the most incredible beautiful villa, like Anthony Robbins.

You have invited certain houseguests. They are now finally coming together in your marble patio overlooking the Pacific Ocean. They are all going to co-participate in one of the most cultured and civilized human activities. They are going to share English High Tea.

Now your guests include the following:

George W. Bush

Ariel Sharon

Yasser Arafat

Pope John Paul II

Ayatollah Khomeini

Osama ben Laden

Hugh Hefner

Pat Robertson

Oral Roberts

Jim Bakker

Jimmy Swaggart

Monica Lewinsky

Jane Fonda

Ted Turner

Vladimir Putin

Jacques Chirac

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Hilary Clinton

How long do you think it will take before you will have one of the most tumultuous contretemps in you lovely patio.

We agree that they all have similar structures but they create different maps of their world. What are these maps? Where and what do they derive from.

Since 1991, we have proposed, in our work *Don't Ask WHY?! that human ontology is a derivative of the kind of life blueprints that we have in us. They include the following:*

Race and its History	Family and its history
Language and its history	Religion and its history
Culture and its history	Politics and its history
Law and its history	Social system and its history
Ethics and its history	Morality and its history
Myths, lore and traditions and their history.	

These are the structures that give to a person his way to understand himself/herself, others and the world that he lives in. These blueprints are also known as semantic paradigms. They constitute a coherent whole that we call the Hierarchy of Paradigms, (HOPs).

If a person's HOPs are tight

The question is by what manner and way does a person get his understanding of his reality. The answer is tied in with the meaning of the term. "I." What and who is "I?"

We propose that "I" is NOT any of the outer personalities that one puts on for the benefit of this world or for one's private benefit. It is not any of the outer social roles we play in order to get our wants and desires, needs and greeds and the cover for one's worries, anxieties and fears. Such things are passing and ephemeral.

We suggest that the "I" is the meta function, m(f). As a proposition it was first discussed in our work, *Power and Elegance in Communication*. We cite here a part of a quote from it that deals with the m(f):

Our fourth attribute is the META FUNCTION.

With this we can have "the about" of any thing or consideration. In this way we enjoy the ability to go to other logical levels of thoughts on any subject; and we can entertain other abstractions that relate to it. For example at the:

1st logical level, I am typing this.

2nd, I am aware that I am typing this.

3rd, I am aware that I am aware that I am typing this.

4th, I am aware that I am aware that I am aware that I am typing this, and so forth.

It is by this meta function that I can have an awareness of an awareness of an awareness ... and so on. In turn, it means that I can have a representation of a representation of a representation ... and so on. It is to have the ability to have an opinion of an opinion of an opinion ... and so on. The meta function has been designated as our ability to abstract; and to have abstractions of abstractions of

abstractions ... and so forth. It has been described as our ability to have an "aboutness" of things.

It is because animals do not have this endowment, in as full a scope as humankind, that your pet dog cannot complete these steps of abstractions to No. 5, in the example below:

1. I hear footsteps.
2. The footsteps are the master's.
3. The master's footsteps are heavy and tired.
4. Therefore, the master is tired.
5. Master had a bad day at work.

Each step ensues from the preceding one. Each step is a derivation, or an abstraction from its antecedent. Each step is only possible because of the endowment of the meta function. By the meta function it is possible to gain for oneself a rich set of distinctions.

However, in the professional context:

1. The meta function is poor when a person cannot generate a rich and useful set of distinctions. A sad case example is of a person born with an IQ below 90.

or

2. Because of certain paradigmatic structures a person is compelled within the boundaries of a specific semantic kernel/file. An example of this is the person caught in some internal state such as Anger, Anxiety or Depression. In these instances the person cannot generate a rich range of "the aboutness" of their position. It is depressing to talk to a chronic depressive.

Dennis K. Chong & Jennifer K. Smith Chong: *Power and Elegance in Communication* People Paradigms and Paradoxes C-Jade Publications Inc. 1996 page 11 - 13.

We would therefore, diagram the relationship between the structures and the m(f) in this way: