In Search of Sacred Intelligence: Shamanic sensibilities and the evolution of diversity in business

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"The next Buddha will not take the form of an individual.
The next Buddha may take the form of a community;
a community practicing understanding and loving kindness,
a community practicing mindful living.
This may be the most important thing we can do
for the survival of the Earth."

- Thich Nhat Hanh

Introduction

This paper explores, from a systems perspective, the thesis question, "How do the sensibilities of shamanic practices in combination with communal indigenous tools demonstrate a capacity to better inform business management towards sustainability?" This exploration centers itself around a missing link in corporate community management related to the narrow focus of diversity development and the ensuing task to broaden the action of "embracing diversity" as a core value of business. This recovery of deeper diversity awareness towards intercultural competence and beyond can bring business to the doorway of utilizing ancient skills traditionally secluded in the lives of indigenous people and their wisdom gatekeepers.

This paper will systemically work itself towards the thesis question. Primarily, the definition of ritual as an indigenous technology, particularly the ritual of initiation, is explained from the teachings of the Tzutujil Maya. Then, a parallel is drawn between ancient indigenous initiation and modern global initiation, which is identified as the socio-environmental crisis of today. Within these definitions of ritual and initiation, the capacity of modern people to awaken to their own indigenousity is recognized as crucial. The doorway to this awakening is the acknowledgement and relearning of shamanic

sensibilities as a means of knowing the self and the world. Secondly, a description of where Western science meets indigenous technology identifies a bridge suspended between two worlds previously seen as incompatible. Next, current diversity training practices in the business management world and their propensity for a more robust and functional definition as *diversity learning* is explored. An evolved depiction of this work exhibits that diversity learning is an appropriate means to hone in on sustainability management for the betterment of business and all its stakeholders. Finally, other application areas for indigenous technologies and shamanic sensibilities in organizational structures are listed.

Initiation, Indigenous Technology & Shamanic Sensibility

First, it is important to consider the danger in falsely superimposing indigenous life-ways on Western cultures. The degrees of separation can be so vast, that, in most cases, it is only appropriate to utilize the essence of certain indigenous technologies and, with skillful humility, allow the context to shape the outcome. This learning is where the ecology of Western culture's medicinal landscape, modern indigenousity, reveals itself. The concern in this endeavor is to not compromise the original intent when awakening indigenous life-ways in the West.

For example, Martín Prechtel writes about how Native-type practices, particularly initiation, have been touted as remedies for modern peoples who long for a "look of wholeness and belonging in their eyes"[i]. Prechtel, from the perspective of a Tzutujil Maya, explains, "That beautiful wild look *does* belong to all of us but it has been energetically and purposefully whipped out of most people's ancestors. You cannot hope to reclaim for your soul in a single year what two thousand years of spiritual oppression has banished into the furthest reaches of your inner bigness. To have initiations again we'd have to find a way to bring this banished indigenous soul back home to us and we would have to have communities worth coming home to."[ii] Prechtel goes on to explain that true initiation is impossible in the modern world without surrender to the grief that recognizes the cause of this lost relationship. It is important to note that "recognizing" grief is more than mere intellectual acknowledgement of such histories, it is essential to actually exercise the grieving process. "Only then can a useful spiritual vision emerge from what is most ancient in us all that goes beyond the ancestral response and brings us into relationship with our true natures."[iii]

Very poignantly, Prechtel demonstrates the purpose of initiating youth while they are in the prime moments of the "warrior-hero" phase of life, when they are impassioned to battle and "destroy everything that has gone awry in a world that was handed to them"[iv]. However, he states the main enemy of this coming-of-age process is the sudden realization of one's own mortality. "Most village rituals are basically finely tuned and deliberately choreographed disasters aimed at avoiding arbitrary catastrophe and loss of soul."[v] Tzutujil Maya young men are enlisted in an initiatory war against Death. "Armed with an acute oral literacy of courting, poetry, history, and above all a well-developed relationship with nature as a divine female being,"[vi] they go into battle in the underworld

in search of Death who has captured their "Spirit Bride". The Spirit Bride truly *is* the young initiate's own feminine self in the mirror of the other world. The youth discovers that, with all his bravery, he cannot fight Death with death, and so he must forge a promise with Death itself in order to gain back his Spirit Bride; he must agree to his own mortality. "*This was not a fake Disney-like event or mock battle. Men had died doing it, but no human enemy was ever attacked, no other race or tribe was demonized as the enemy.*"[vii] Only when the youth has succeeded in this challenge, is he fit to engage in the wholeness of life (masculine and feminine) as it is demanded in all relationships and is he able to move beyond warrior-ness to tempered adult. He becomes akin with a person who has had a near-death experience, which awards him a tangible grasp on the value of life. "Men who didn't fight Death in adolescence were destined to live in a walking death. Already killed, depressed, and dangerous they become wreakers of violence, makers of death, corporate soldiers, and, more importantly, they become destroyers of all that is Female."[viii] Prechtel painfully explains how this youthful exuberance, if not carefully directed, can fall into the manipulative hands of uninitiated cultures that turn the warrior-hero into a nationalistic soldier, an exploitative corporate executive, a gang member, a Nazi skinhead, or various other incarnations that do not serve the positive growth into adulthood that Tzutujil elders have so preciously tended.[*]

If "modern" society walks into its own indigenous landscape, it can be seen that the socio-environmental crisis faced today is an initiatory ordeal. It is an ordeal that forces a look at collective human mortality in the microcosm, and a look at the planet's mortality in the macrocosmic view of Earth as another "body". Unfortunately, modern life finds itself precariously imbalanced on the side of arbitrary catastrophe rather than the wisely practiced choreography of indigenous ritual. Nonetheless, there may be an opportunity to mature in this fatalistic endeavor. Malidoma Somé offers a bit of hope:

Because initiatory experiences are part of every life, the immediate issue for Westerners is perhaps not initiation itself but how one may bring closure to initiatory pain and suffering… Among indigenous people, the whole village and sometimes even a series of villages gathers to welcome the initiates back at the end of their ordeals. It is believed that the greater the number of people witnessing and acknowledging the return of the initiates, the better for them, since an ordeal that has not been witnessed is likely to repeat itself… (In contrast) the most powerful demonstration of this in the West is perhaps the Vietnam War… Is it then surprising that a great number of the homeless are Vietnam veterans?... Lack of community to bring initiatory ordeals to closure also results in a society of consumers who wander the aisles of a supermarket or browse a department store in search of fulfillment… In general, people can come to terms with their suffering only if there is a profound translation of their suffering into larger meaning, that is, if suffering serves a greater recognizable good.[ix]

Perhaps the issue, therefore, is not recreating initiation in a way that dangerously tends towards hollow mimickery of indigenous technologies or towards misuses of the fervent, youthful energy that supports such rites of passage. The issue for Western people becomes recognizing the very real existence of socio-environmental crisis as a collective initiatory ordeal. Then, modern people are faced with the task of creating practical adaptations to eclectic, ancient tools that serve the action of pushing through this crisis

and globally witnessing its conclusion. This insight is not something entirely foreign to Western cultural notions as indicated by the saying that, "Unlearned history is doomed to repeat itself". In this context, what *unlearned* indicates is not merely unknown historical facts which may remain un-remembered, un-talked about, and un-witnessed over time. It is the indigenous social sense, which arises out of initiation, teaching that any initiatory wound worth talking about, if never seen, gets recreated until it is properly witnessed, integrated with the collective community story, and therefore allowed closure so that new learning can occur. From this perspective, Somé shares the wisdom that the more villagers who show up to welcome the youth home after traditional initiation in the bush, the better for the initiates because then they are less apt to unconsciously recreate circumstances that require them to relearn the lessons and relive those challenging experiences in daily life.

At this point, there is validity in pursuing an awareness that Western consciousness can hold around the meanings of "indigenous self" and "shamanic sensibilities". Although there can be no singularly defining aspect of the indigenous self, some of its characteristics might include a sense of belonging to a place, landscape, or ecology, a sense of community, village or people-home, a personal sense of wholeness, balance and completeness. These are only a *few* attributes that could be given to the abstract meaning of indigenous self, knowing that it is undoubtedly vital to *not* romanticize either historical or living indigenous peoples. With this attentiveness, the following story exhibits a profound intersection between Western curiosity and the indigenous self:

Richard Wilhelm, the sinologist who translated <u>The Secret of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life</u> and other works, was once in a remote Chinese village that was suffering from an extended drought. Every kind of prayer had been offered to put an end to the drought, but nothing had worked and the people were desperate. The only remaining choice was to send to a remote area for a well-known rainmaker. This fascinated Wilhelm, and he was on hand when the rainmaker, a wizened old man, arrived in a covered cart. He alighted, sniffed the air in disdain, then asked for a cottage on the outskirts of the village. He insisted that he be totally undisturbed and that his food be left outside his door. Nobody heard from him for three days, then the village awoke to a downpour of rain mixed with snow, which was unheard of for that time of year.

Wilhelm, greatly impressed, approached the old man, who was now out of seclusion. "So you can make it rain?" he inquired. Of course he could not, the old man scoffed. "But there was the most persistent drought until you came," Wilhelm objected, "and then-within three days- it rains?" "Oh," responded the man, "that was something quite different. You see, I come from a region where everything is in order, it rains when it should and is fine when that is needed, and the people also are in order and in themselves. But that was not the case with the people here, they were all out of Tao and out of themselves. I was at once infected when I arrived, so I had to be quite alone until I was once more in Tao and then naturally it rained!" The villagers, the rainmaker saw, were trying to beat the climate into submission when they should have been looking inside.[x]

When Taoist practice demands that people are "in themselves", what does this mean? In the simplest terms, it means that people who are not present in their bodies as an

instrument of living awareness and as tool of perception connected to the greater whole, they are much more tolerant of and apt to behave in ways that disrupt and, at worst, destroy the world around them. The practice of "looking inside" is one commonly eliminated by Western science as superstitious, unverifiable, and disconnected from tangible reality in a culture that focuses almost entirely on making external causes responsible for most of its ailments, both individual and social.

Likewise, many non-Native peoples equally misconstrue the employment of shamanic sensibilities as a source of healing. In his book, <u>The Spell of the Sensuous</u>, David Abram cogently describes the shaman's function as a gatekeeper of the people's path to healing:
To be sure, the shaman's ecological function, his or her role as an intermediary between human society and the land, is not always obvious at first blush, even to the sensitive observer. We see the sorcerer being called upon to cure an ailing tribesman of his sleeplessness, or perhaps simply locate some missing goods; we witness him entering into a trance and sending his awareness into other dimensions in search of insight and aid. Yet we should not be so ready to interpret these dimensions as "supernatural," nor view them as realms entirely "internal" to the personal psyche of the practitioner. For it is likely that the "inner world" of our Western psychological experience, like the supernatural heaven of Christian belief, originates in the loss of our ancestral reciprocity with the animate earth. When the animate powers that surround us are suddenly construed as having less significance than ourselves, when the generative earth is abruptly defined as a determinate object devoid of its own sensations and feelings, then the sense of a wild and multiplicitous otherness (in relation to which human existence has always oriented itself) must migrate, either into a supersensory heaven beyond the natural world, or else into the human skull itself- the only allowable refuge, in this world, for what is ineffable and unfathomable.

But in genuinely oral, indigenous cultures, the sensuous world itself remains the dwelling place of the gods, of the numinous powers that can either sustain or extinguish human life. It is not by sending his awareness out beyond the natural world that the shaman makes contact with the purveyors of life and health, nor by journeying into his personal psyche; rather, it is by propelling his awareness laterally, outward into the depths of a landscape at once both sensuous and psychological, the living dream of that we share with the soaring hawk, the spider, and the stone silently sprouting lichens on its surface.

Still, the current commodification of "nature" by civilization tells us little or nothing of the perceptual shift that made possible this reduction of the animal (and the earth) to an object, little of the process whereby our senses first relinquished the power of the Other, the vision that for so long had motivated our most sacred rituals, our dances, and our prayers.[xi]

In the above representation of the shaman's ability to access portals of perception it is clear that the sensuous world is at once the vehicle and the messenger. The Western tendency to become preoccupied by questioning the reality of spirit is irrelevant when one grasps the value of this relationship between shaman and the many other layers of existence. It is the shamans' agreement to engage themselves with such sensibilities that

opens the landscape of their awareness to realms normally inconceivable to non-Native acuity.

Re-discoveries in Western Science

In the realm of quantum theory, the Western scientist is shocked into accepting the death of a separate, "objective observer" of empirical analysis. In contrast, the shaman is undoubtedly familiar with this inevitable and dynamic relationship where engaging with realms invisible to human faculty is a normal state of existence. The shaman already accepts the quantum reality and is informed about how to be effective in this awareness. Margaret Wheatley's book, Leadership and the New Science, explores how quantum physics, fractals, and the emergent dance between order and chaos may serve to better shape human-constructed organizations. "There is no objective reality out there waiting to reveal its secrets… Unseen connections between what were previously thought to be separate entities are the fundamental ingredient of all creation… We begin to see ourselves in much richer dimensions, to appreciate our wholeness, and hopefully to design organizations that honor and make use of the great gift of who we humans are."[xii] Although Wheatley places her vision for human organizations in the framework of the so-called "new" science, there is clear evidence that this revelation in human consciousness is nothing new. Brian Swimme expresses his enthusiasm for this convergence of old and new: "The new cosmic story emerging into human awareness overwhelms all previous conceptions of the universe for the simple reason that it draws them all into its comprehensive fullness. And the most amazing of all is the way in which this story, though it comes from empirical scientific tradition, corroborates in profound and surprising ways the ecological vision of the Earth celebrated in every traditional native spirituality of every continent. Who can learn what this means and remain calm?"[xiii] One of the most striking examples of human organization emulating the lucidity of "new" science can be seen in aerial photographs of African settlements with fractal architecture.[xiv] Indeed, "fractal architecture is not simply a typical characteristic of non-Western settlements… Their design is linked to conscious knowledge systems that suggest some of the basic concepts of fractal geometry…"[xv]

In this place where Western science meets indigenous technology, a bridge is suspended between two worlds previously seen as incompatible. But if fractals can inform leaders of modern organizations as well as architects of indigenous settlements, then it is not unreasonable to consider that indigenous social skills and healing techniques will also deepen the Western capacity to more effectively handle human relations and to heal its own troubled societies. Ken Wilber explains that the reason *only* the modern West does not have access to what he calls the "Great Holarchy" is because consciousness cannot be "really real" from within the "flatland" of a monological agenda that collapses the dimensions otherwise familiar to human reality.[xvi] However, that access is being re-opened to the West. Strangely enough, in the most "traditional" places, there exist seemingly unlikely candidates like the professional corporate community whose cultures are ripe for such renewal. It makes sense that *one* of the platforms for this renewal would

be diversity training because transcending the monological agenda requires a variety of means to support each human being's inherently unique genius to do the work at hand.

Diversity Learning

The current treatment of diversity in Westernized business for the most successful global companies revolves around cross-cultural savvy and profitability. Although there is widespread agreement that diverse management teams offer greater innovation and a broader spectrum of solutions to problems that were otherwise decided upon in a unilateral fashion, the value of diversity within corporate culture is not explored to its deepest foundations. The basic observations about the business case for diversity involve enhancing productivity, being better able to market to diverse customers, gaining an advantage in attracting the best talent in a changing workforce where women and minorities are more prominent, and benefiting from various cost-saving effects, such as decreased job turnover, that the diversity investment creates.[xvii] Included in the "best practices" for valuing diversity are setting the context for change by linking diversity to the organization's goals, providing ongoing communication, demonstrating committed, knowledgeable leadership, rewarding effective diversity management, measuring results, providing ongoing training, consistent review of organizational systems and culture, and the involvement of employees in "how to get there".[xviii]

Although these practices exhibit a genuine and valuable effort to reshape business culture in a way that reconciles its discriminating past, therein lies a stage with the potential for a much greater performance. The core failure of status-quo diversity training is that diversity is superficially defined by race, gender, sexual preference, etc. rather than by the more significant legacies of these superficial indicators like cultural practice, ancient wisdom and social technology. For white people, holding these superficial definitions evokes guilt and gives no credence to the valuable legacies in their own backgrounds. These definitions of "diverse" others, as they have evolved in the past 50 years through the work place, deliver the message to those who fit the definition that in order to be okay in Western culture all one has to do is have a seat at the table. However, the offer on the table is that becoming masculine, white and powerful is the only ideal. This framing of the situation may seem crude, yet such a generalization is meant to express a thematic truth of business experience in the West.

If business people were to consider an atypical approach to diversity that includes not just the above mentioned superficialities but genuine access to ancestral legacies, indigenous technologies and community management practices, there is good reason to believe that a catalytic strengthening of corporate culture in alignment with socio-environmental regeneration would occur. In research done on group growth, it is shown that some groups have peak experiences of sustained creativity and trust. Such experiences were observed to occur when "(a) groups have been in sensitivity training in semi-weekly sessions for eight or nine consecutive months, (b) when groups have been in around-the-clock 'marathon' sessions for thirty or forty hours with little or no sleep, or (c) when

groups have been in twelve-hour sessions daily for twelve or thirteen consecutive days."[xix] This type of enduring, intimate process training closely resembles an inclination towards ritual. In remembering that indigenous rituals are "finely tuned and deliberately choreographed disasters aimed at avoiding arbitrary catastrophe and loss of soul,"[xx] there is a sense that bringing groups of people together, in corporate culture or otherwise, so that they can collectively exercise their ability to problem-solve is a universal human need.

Diversity learning, in its most relevant and effective format, will come to signify the cultivation of internal development that connects people to their personal power with the result of being more able to serve their purpose in life's work. Race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. *do* matter, but it is the job of true diversity learning to operate as if and until such things do not matter; it is a job of inclusivity that grants people access to one another's multiplicitous dimensions in such a way that nourishes the capacity to create together. Then, diversity is no longer a prescription of proportions between different categories of people and it becomes a discovery of how to do work together.

While business is compelled to steer itself solely towards the bottom line, perhaps the best avenue to reclaim the indigenous self in business is through a sense of purpose and wholeness in work that undoubtedly enhances profitability. James Hillman writes,
I merely want to speak of working as a pleasure, as an instinctual gratification- not just the "right to work," or work as an economic necessity or a social duty or a moral penance laid onto Adam after leaving Paradise. The hands themselves want to do things, and the mind loves to apply itself. Work is irreducible. We don't work for food gathering or tribal power and conquest or to buy a new car and so on and so forth. Working is its own end and brings its own joy; but one has to have a fantasy so that work can go on, and the fantasies we now have about it- economic and sociological- keep it from going on, so we have a huge problem of productivity and quality in Western work. We have got work where we don't want it. We don't want to work. It's like not wanting to eat or to make love. It's an instinctual laming. And this is psychology's fault: it doesn't attend to the work instinct.[xxi]

Indigenous perspectives about life work with purpose can surely help heal this "instinctual laming" of the Western psyche. Malidoma Somé writes about the Dagara people's sense of work: "Most work in the village is done collectively. The purpose is not so much the desire to get the job done but to raise enough energy for people to feel nourished by what they do. The nourishment does not come *after* the job, it comes *before* the job and *during* the job. The notion that you should do something so that you get paid so that you can nourish yourself disappears. You are nourished first, and then the work flows out of your fullness."[xxii] Satisfying work does not require enticement. People are easily enthused about what they do well, and that enjoyment of work is only enhanced when there is a feeling of collective accomplishment. This effective social arrangement of village morale surrounding work ethic is clearly an example of where Western business culture would benefit by opening its definition of diversity practices.

The world of business can be viewed through an ecosystemic lens where sets of interdependent relationships are inextricably woven into other contexts and systems-natural context, cultural context, political and legal systems, social and civic systems, and, of course, the economic system.[xxiii] Thus, the professional person operating in an intermediary position between varied organizational microclimates can sympathize with the need for a shaman's capacity to perceive, predict, and manage both sickness and health. This valuable keenness is where shamanic sensibility enters the central nervous system of corporate communities that are in urgent need of re-visioning their way out of some fatal socio-environmental diseases. Business shamanism cannot and will not exist on the edge of culture. In recognizing the demands of bringing shamanism into the unlikely monological world of business, it is imperative that the business shaman learns to navigate a path to the center of this challenge. It is time for the monk to leave the monastery, to paraphrase Buddhist teacher and author, Thich Nhat Hanh. In reflection about the truth and urgency of this challenge, David Abram gracefully and carefully warns:

Psychotherapists and some physicians have begun to specialize in "shamanic healing techniques." "Shamanism" has thus come to connote an alternative form of therapy; the emphasis, among these new practitioners of popular shamanism, is on personal insight and curing. These are noble aims, to be sure, yet they are secondary to, and derivative from, the primary role of the indigenous shaman, a role that cannot be fulfilled without long and sustained exposure to wild nature, to its patterns and vicissitudes. Mimicking the indigenous shaman's curative methods without his intimate knowledge of the wider natural community cannot, if I am correct, do anything more than trade certain symptoms for others, or shift the locus of dis-ease from place to place within the *human* community. For the source of stress lies in the relation *between* the human community and the natural landscape.

Western industrial society, of course, with its massive scale and hugely centralized economy, can hardly be seen in relation to any particular landscape or ecosystem; the more-than-human ecology with which it is directly engaged is the biosphere itself…

From an animistic perspective, the clearest source of all this distress, both physical and psychological, lies in the aforementioned violence needlessly perpetrated by our civilization on the ecology of the planet; only by alleviating the latter will we be able to heal the former. While this may sound like a simple statement of faith, it makes eminent and obvious sense as soon as we acknowledge our thorough dependence upon the countless other organisms with whom we have evolved. Caught in a mass of abstractions, our attention is hypnotized by a host of human-made technologies that only reflect us back to ourselves, it is all too easy for us to forget our carnal inherence in a more-than-human matrix of sensations and sensibilities. Our bodies have formed themselves in delicate reciprocity with the manifold textures, sounds and shapes of an animate earth-our eyes have evolved in subtle interaction with *other* eyes, as our ears are attuned by their very structure to the howling of wolves and the honking of geese. To shut ourselves off from these other voices, to continue by our lifestyles to condemn these other sensibilities to the oblivion of extinction, is to rob our minds of their coherence. We are human only in contact, and conviviality, with what is not human.[xxiv]

If Abram's warning is heeded, then the organizational landscape has the capacity to enable this coherence that is made possible through relationship with other humans, with the more-than-human, and with the vastness of the greater world in its animate and sensate wholeness.

Other Applications

Other areas of application for the integration of shamanic sensibilities, indigenous technologies and an expanded definition of diversity practices include:

- *Leadership development:* Leaders that have access to a wider variety of skills and who have embodied them through doing their personal work are the most adaptive and capable of getting out of their own way to support organizational excellence.

- *Decoupling organizational design from dysfunctional hierarchy:* Redefining the roles and responsibilities of people within an organizational structure so that another functional option beyond hierarchy exists mandates a willingness to look at other social designs. Indigenous villages are one of the best places to start. Transfer of knowledge, mentoring, building something that is bigger than one's own lifetime to support a positive legacy and a generational sense of time, identifying the genius in every individual for the health of the collective, and dedication to personal healing are some of the characteristics of indigenous design.

- *Inter-organizational collaboration:* Traditionally, organizations live in competition with one another. Indigenous collaborative sophistication specializes in creating a way for every work to be fully supported because of a core realization that the bigger, collective work cannot be done alone. Therefore, competition remains a stimulus rather than a destructive mode of scarcity. Insights from indigenous gift economies provide some insight to this refined approach.

- *Human Resources services:* HR can be the organizational mirror. Evolving HR to adopt the systemic perspectives native to indigenous design means it can be the place where people are made aware of the whole body of the organizational rather than just the part they live in their daily work. The whole informs the purpose and direction of the parts and determines the interdependent landscape of the organization.

- *Disruptive innovation:* Understanding ancestral legacy and the capacity to break historical patterns as synonymous with disruptive innovation is key. For example, the current business trend to develop new markets because of saturation in Western markets requires *disruptive innovation,* or fresh ideas that creatively interface with peoples and places that business has traditionally ignored for the purpose of profit. Many of these "new" markets are the world's four billion poor who live on less than $1,500 per year. It can be difficult to navigate and sustainably transition towards genuine service to these markets unless tools of awareness such as the ones this paper focuses upon are present.

Conclusion

Perhaps, just as emotional intelligence and its virtues have infiltrated the common language of business leadership and management, sacred intelligence will also begin to find footing through people who possess skills that dance with the deepest parts of this critically ailing global condition. The reality of the situation demands immediate attention, but as the cultural icon of Western genius himself, Albert Einstein, said, "No problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it." In the spirit of such clarity, it is suggested that indigenous technologies creatively adapted to Western social conditions and employed with shamanic sensibility offer the world of business, among others, a doorway to a different consciousness that is required to solve such profound problems. In the hopeful words of Martín Prechtel, "A new culture would have to develop where humans and their inventions are not at the center of the universe, and where God too is not at the center. What could be at the center is a hollow place, an empty place, where both God and we humans could sing and weep together as a team pushing magical words into that sacred Hole. Maybe together, the diverse and combined excellence of all cultures could court the Tree of Life back out of its frightened and fugitive existence in the previous layers where it was banished into the invisible by our scared literalist minds, dogmatic religiosities, and forgetfulness."[xxv]

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[i] Martín Prechtel, *Long Life, Honey in the Heart*, 1999, Penguin Putnam Inc., p.355.

[ii] Prechtel, p.355.

[iii] Prechtel, p.356.

[iv] Prechtel, p.357.

[v] Prechtel, p.357.

[vi] Prechtel, p.359.

[vii]Prechtel, p.359.

[viii] Prechtel, p.359.

[*] **note**: The Tzutujil girl's experience of adolescent initiation is not described, probably because Prechtel is a man without privilege to that information.

[ix] Malidoma Somé, *The Healing Wisdom of Africa*, 1998, Penguin Putnam Inc., p.281-283.

[x] Sandra Ingerman, *Medicine for the Earth*, 2000, Three Rivers Press, p.134.

[xi] David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, 1996, Pantheon Books, p.10, 28.

[xii] Margaret Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 1999, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, p. 9,11,14.

[xiii] Brian Swimme, *The Universe is a Green Dragon*, 1984, Bear & Company Publishing, p.162.

[xiv] Eglash, p.20-38.

[xv] Eglash, p.38.

[xvi] Ken Wilbur, *A Brief History of Everything*, 1996, Shambhala, p.249.

[xvii] R. Rosen and P. Digh, "The Business Case for Diversity"(based on *Global Literacies" Lessons on Business Leadership and National Cultures*), *Executive Diversity Services*, 2000.

[xviii] Rosen & Digh.

[xix] J.Gibb & L.Gibb, "The Group as a Growing Organism", in *Group Development*, 1978, McGraw-Hill, p.105.

[xx] Prechtel, p. 357.

[xxi] James Hillman, *A Blue Fire,* 1989, Harper Perennial, p.172.

[xxii] Somé, p.68.

[xxiii] Walter Link, Sustainable Management class notes, "The Business Ecosystem", September 2004, Presidio World College.

[xxiv] Abram, p.21-22

[xxv] Prechtel, p.362