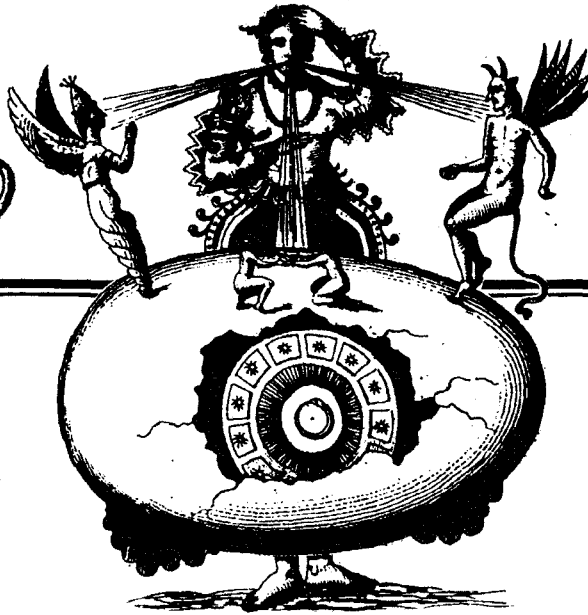


COMING OUT OF LEFT FIELD WITH GRACIE AND ZARKOV

Our resident designer heads, Gracie and Zarkov, continue their aleotonic journey through mythology, philosophy, epistemology, psychedelic drugs and irreverence.



When we last left our investment banker heroes in issue #2, they were about to hold forth on how to invent your own religion.

Gracie: We first ran into Goddess imagery when I was doing manifestation or possession states. Not possession in the sense of blacking out, but possession in the sense of being in contact with an entity who was expressed through dance or facial expression or unusual turns of phrase or changes in voice.

Zarkov: A couple of times these were actually extended raps that Gracie could give.

G: Right, but without losing my sense of personal ego. I was still Gracie, but at the same time I was Circe or Aphrodite or whoever.

High Frontiers: Which Goddess was it?

G: It varied. Aphrodite, Hecate, Athena... eventually we got back to a sort of Sumerian, but sort of generalized...

Z: Goddess of Sex, Goddess of Love, Goddess of Procreation, fertility, definitely agriculture, definitely war... so it sort of fits the Innana complex.

G: When asked, during a contact, they all tended to call themselves "The Goddess," and I am emphasizing the capital letters. That's their terminology.

HF: Does all this arise from psychedelic experience?

Z: We have not been able to make definite contact except in altered states. The interesting thing to us is that we didn't get The Goddess on the tryptamines (until our recent betacarboline experiments), although we know of a person who's had quite a bit of experience with psychedelic states who recently has gotten her own particular version of The Goddess on mushrooms.

Z: My first encounter with The Goddess was the first real contact experience I'd had. I've had contact with about a half dozen different entities since then on various occasions — but what makes this so impressive was that I wasn't a believer in these types of phenomena on a gut level. What I got on that particular contact was very specific advice on how to deal with people in my life. Basically, I was having personal difficulty with certain people who are close to me, when we were just beginning exploratory combinations of MDA and LSD. I fell into a trance, got into this contact, and The Goddess started a rap. It was a lengthy set of situation-specific pieces of advice on how to behave. Now, what was strange was that much of the voice I couldn't understand at the time. The characteristics of The Goddess singing were like fast tape-recorder music, like someone singing too fast to understand. Tonally, it was beautiful. It didn't sound like Minnie Mouse. At the end of the contact, I was symbolically given golden scrolls, and for about six months after the contact, when I ended up in a situation with the people I was troubled about, I would hear a brief burst of this singing, and sometimes I would see in my mind's eye the scroll — and what was strange was that now I understood the advice. Several people commented that all of a sudden I was much easier to get along with, I was paying more attention to their needs, or whatever. I thought, this is pretty strange. There's no way I could tell them why. They'd think I'd absolutely lost it.

Z: One of the other types of psychedelic experiences that we clearly try to distinguish from "contact" is where we will have strange trains of thought or borderline visions where the archetypes come out and play around, perhaps the great God Pan, Hera, Innana, Ishtar... but you've not got a clear case of an entity sitting down on the beanbag chair next to you and giving you a rap, but

all of a sudden you have an understanding, or a thought that wasn't in your head before... that you can identify with the archetypes.

G: Or facial changes which we see in each other. That's one of the other ways of using sex magic — you can, while fucking, look at each other and watch faces change. We've had the Pan entity show up.

HF: How'd you do it?

Z: If you want to go into a trance, usually the best way is MDA first, 100-150 mgs., then LSD about 150-200 mcgs about a half hour later. The other way is a moderate dose of LSD — moderate meaning 150-200 mcgs — enough to definitely be high, and then anywhere from 3 to 4 hours later, a fairly high dose of MDA, 120-200 mgs., and then play these sorts of games, e.g. sex magic, ritual, etc.

G: The mescaline/LSD mix — we used mescaline first followed by LSD — can provide tremendous insights into psychological states, into neurotic ways of thinking, and can help you blow those right out of the water. The mescaline/LSD mix is particularly interesting because it seems to bring some of your neurotic programs right up front where you can see them working. It brings it up on the screen and shows you just what that strange loop is, just what that incorrect thought is.

If you're always doing the same drugs at the same dose in the same setting repeatedly, you're probably not getting anywhere. And we've found that one of the best ways to make sure you keep making progress is to vary things. Vary the substances you use, vary the dosage, vary your set, vary your setting. If you always do it outdoors, do it inside in the dark for a change. If you always do it inside in the dark, go outside and do it.

Read. Between your trips pick a particular topic that you want to study — something you're going to work on, a particular historical period that interests you, a particular issue in art or music, and spend the whole week studying that. For example, say you want to explore body language and representation of the body. Read *The Nude in Art*, read *Seeing Through Clothes*, do some mirror meditation with your own body, do some yoga, do all those things the week before and then trip and do body-oriented things and talk about it. You get much more material than just saying "I want to have a body-oriented trip" and taking some drugs.

Z: We argue continually about the purpose of psychedelics. But I think our position right now is that it beats bowling. It's very interesting to do. It's a form of research. What can you say about substances that ask "How would you like to see travelogues of a planet 13 light years away?" and you go "Why not?" and you see visions of sea serpents that turn into beautiful naked women, and back into sea serpents. The voice then says, "You know, you should think about that, there's a message there for you," and you go "Well, okay." It beats

worrying about whether the Reagan tax package is going to pass.

G: You get a lot of insights into any area of study. Noetic anthropology is the term we use, which I think is borrowed from Terence (McKenna). Sometimes we try to figure out just how can you get into the heads of the people who were around in pre-dynastic Egypt? Or just what was going on in Minoan civilization? Trying to figure out what was going on back there, especially since much of that historical material is difficult to interpret because we're living in a post-patriarchal culture, is of interest.

Z: The edge of pre-history to history, as to what really happened...

G: ...is an area that interests us particularly because we think it speaks very specifically to the human dilemma of modern times. That is, "What do we as a species and individuals do now?" One of the most important things we think we do — and certainly we do it for each other — is to inspire optimism and a sense of purpose. I think there's a widespread feeling of despair, of not being able to do anything about the destiny of the human race. I think it's important more and more to psych ourselves up to think in a heroic sort of way about what action each individual can take. I think these kinds of studies — including the work on your own head, including the work on periods in history — are absolutely essential to understanding ourselves. And understanding yourself is the single most important step anyone can take in terms of maximizing the likelihood of the human race not only surviving, but moving on to a better kind of existence.


HF: Do you identify the patriarchal stage with scarcity consciousness?

G: That notion plugs into something we've been talking about recently which is based on John Pfeiffer, the paleoanthropologist, and his book on prehistoric cave art, *The Creative Explosion*. He talks about the transition from an early hunter-gatherer pre-historic period in which, for tens of thousands of years, during the early development of the human race, the species evolved under conditions so different from what we have now that it's very hard for us to imagine being those kinds of people. Living where game was so abundant, where gathering things to eat was so easy that there was an enormous population growth on the part of the human race, which has resulted in a fight against scarcity ever since.

Z: We're talking tens of thousands of years.

G: But I think that 8-10,000 years is what is normally considered the start of the patriarchal period. And I think that it was in response to that feeling of wanting to wrest control because you could no longer count on the goddess to pour out her abundance for you with very little effort. Perhaps after the move to space, we'll be able to enter a period of unlimited resources where we can get back to that kind of "normal" human psychology which we haven't seen for 10-15,000 years. And in that sense, I'd have to say... Yeah. We've got a goal.

HF: What is your impression of the sort of hardware/software argument about moving into space? The hardware as the sort of masculine Western roadtrip and the software is... well, some people carry the argument as far as to say that we can move there spiritually or psychically, perhaps even rather than physically.



G: The issue of hardware and software, like the issue of male and female, black and white, day and night, is the old dualistic bugaboo that has been plaguing most of humanity one way or another for a long time. And I think we've got to get past it. I think that we are both our hardware and our software. Right now our hardware dies, and that's a real limitation we're stuck with. When we figure out how to make the hardware immortal, that'll solve the hardware problem. On the software question — we don't know what happens to the software when the hardware dies. Does the software go somewhere else? We don't know where that somewhere else might be. Is there a way to separate the hardware from the software so it doesn't matter if the hardware dies?

Z: There's a lot more information "out there" than has physical reality, and it just so happens that there are things that occur physically like this glass. But there are a lot more things "out there" of all kinds and shapes which probably aren't made out of silicon dioxide like this glass, or carbon and water like we are.

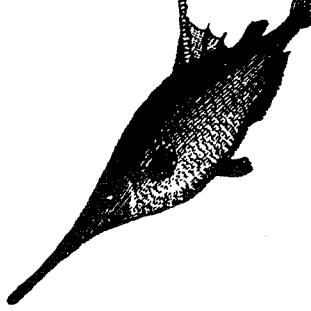
What you see on psychedelics — you just don't know whether they exist or not. One of the strangest trips so far put me on this other planet subjectively for three days. Objectively for 4 hours. But on that planet the sun came up, I got warm, the sun went down, I got cold, I could swim, I could eat, I could make love to the inhabitants. I looked at my boots, the details were there — I mean, I was *there*. I've never had a vision like that before — it's always movies on the eyelids.

G: I would certainly be in agreement with Leary and Wilson and other people who emphasize life extension, that we should get the hardware to work as well as possible and as long as possible because right now it's the most powerful tool we have for manipulating what we perceive as reality. Somehow I have an intuition — although it's only an intuition and not something I would try to claim as true — that there's something very important about being embodied. That's a very real problem for us as conscious entities to solve. Why be embodied? And why is embodiment such a temporary, painful and sloppy sort of solution?

HF: Do you think that some people, on psychedelics, might be grinding their neuroses even deeper?

Z: Definitely. That's a real good point.

G: I think that's especially easy to do with LSD if you believe that it loosens your imprints and conditioning and allows you to re-imprint and recondition. If you re-imprint and recondition with the same stuff that you had when you began, you reinforce whatever neurotic programs you already have.



Why is embodiment such a temporary, painful and sloppy sort of solution?

HF: Do you think psychedelics should be used by a large number of people — that it's necessary in order to move in time and space and eliminate the neurosis in humans? How many people should use it? Antennae for the species?


Z: Number one, as thorough-going libertarians, we believe they shouldn't be regulated. Period. But personally, I do not recommend, particularly given most people's education and personalities, that large numbers of people should take psychedelics. On the other hand, I don't think there's an elite, an elite priesthood, no matter how it's defined. Being generally against authority, the last thing in the world I want is anybody getting control of who does and who does not use these drugs. That's worse than having them illegal. The use of these drugs should be an individual's independent and thoughtful choice.

We live encased in a lot of delusions. Many of these delusions could have foundations which date back to pre-history. One advantage psychedelics allow you, if you pursue them with any kind of care, is the ability to move outside the local delusions to try to see alternatives. For example, we may be able to put off a major war on this planet for a few more years, but 100% prevention forever of nuclear war, given the current thoughts and the current circumstances, is unlikely. Something has to change. Many people who are involved in space and computers, whether it be financing or technology, do psychedelics for inspiration. Some of the inspirations provide reasons for space migration — one could be escape, one could be shifting the world scarcity equation to make peace more probable.

More deeply than that, you can make significant repairs to your head, you can become a happier human being, you can become healthier, you can become less deluded, you can become more effective and make a stronger contribution in the real world using these drugs. Leary said that everyone who is on the leading edge in any of these things has come to terms with psychedelics in some fashion. That's certainly true...

Z: Our current science is the outcome of the Western heresy that individuals can understand the universe. We have culturally let science be taken over by a bunch of reductionistic technicians. The great scientists of the recent past — at the beginning of the century — would have very little to do with the reductionist philosophy.

G: It's only really in the last 25 years that new models, new mathematics, new ways of describing the universe in the abstract have developed that might do a



better job. Like catastrophe theory, fractal mathematics, Prigogine's theories of dissipative structures, etc.

Science, in the classical sense, is now very much in the position that the Church was in the 16th century — as "The Model" that would describe everything, the motion of the planets, how living systems work, how to be an ethical person, etc. We don't so much need a new model or a new paradigm as a whole bunch of new models and new paradigms, and to learn ways to apply those to the domains where they fit best.

Z: That's what we mean by science: hard Baconian facts. It should be pure empiricism. You give DMT to ten people. They've never had DMT before, and you tell them only that they might see something. If nine out of ten of them come back with descriptions of elves, and four of them use the word elves unprompted, we think you should investigate the phenomenon of elves seen on DMT. Twentieth century research into the mind is about as advanced as Lavoisier's chemistry in the eighteenth century.

G: Coming out of left field is the thought we'd probably like to leave you with. There's a lot of research in numerous fields. Intelligent people are working on all sorts of problems. No one knows where the next answers will come from. I think fewer come from a society that says you should limit what you think about to these dozen or so topics that are socially acceptable. You're more likely to get better solutions to more problems in an atmosphere that maximizes the freedom of individuals to choose whatever topics they're interested in, and to follow that interest as deeply and as thoroughly and as weirdly as they feel is necessary.

Z: I'll close with a quote from one of my favorite people, Socrates. He said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." What else is there to say?

And we've chosen to close with a passage from the paleoanthropologist John Pfeiffer's recent book *The Creative Explosion*:

"Think of the hundreds of thousands of useless things that are going on in the world somewhere right now. There seems to be no limit to what people will do, provided it is sufficiently off-beat and has never been done before. All the new games and experiments and assorted forms of dare-devilry, everything from double somersault ski-jumps, walking tightropes between skyscrapers, and setting the record for the most parachute jumps in a 24-hour period, to wrapping cliffs in cellophane, swallowing new drugs and combinations of drugs, playing Dungeons and Dragons, attempts at levitation, and on and on and on. Such activities represent the cutting edge of evolution, human-style. They are analogous to the random genetic mutations of organic evolution. The vast majority of mutations are harmful or useless, and so are the vast majority of off-beat activities. But someday as society changes at a mounting rate, one in a billion may pay off, and it's impossible to predict which one."

Note: the collected writings of Gracie and Zarkov, Notes from the Underground, will be published by High Frontiers Press in the Winter of 1986. Watch for it!

