

## The Influence of Gregory and Kohsen

This is a discussion of the similarities and differences between John's views and those of the pair of scientists, Clive Gregory and Anita Kohsen, who greatly influenced him. It is perhaps best read after "Reflections" in NOIT—4. John was an honorary founder member of their Institute for the Study of Mental Images (ISMI) which self-published a number of pamphlets, a book *The O-Structure* in 1959, and a journal *Cosmos* between 1954 and 1966. John used to visit them frequently and engaged in long discussions with them. He was honoured to have been recognised by them as contributing something important to their Institute in the mural he created, though I'm unaware of any influence he had on their writing.

There's no sign in *The O-Structure* of any discontentment with language as a vehicle of communication, so this element of John's thinking appears to have come entirely from his perspective as an artist. There are no signs in *The O-Structure* of John's ideas about accretion or of his attempt to derive spatial concepts from more primitive concepts. Nor is there mention of previously existing universes being part of a multiverse. So John's ideas developed well past the formative influence Gregory and Kohsen had on him.

Where Gregory and Kohsen's influence is clear is in their advocacy of an event-based worldview as opposed to an object-based view. And in turn, their thinking on this can be traced to the work of Henri Bergson, A. N. Whitehead, and Arthur Eddington. They present the dichotomy somewhat differently from John, however. They associate the object-based view with an understanding of the world in terms of causality and inductive inference. While associated with their event-based view, replacing causality, is what they call informational relationships, expressed through the formulation "A is similar to B in respect to C to the extent D". They acknowledge the existence of similarity in spatiotemporal respects, but to my mind they do not adequately show how causal aspects of the spatiotemporal world carry over into their view. Like John, they claim that the concept of an event is more fundamental than that of an object (OS 45), though unlike John, they propose a correspondence between object talk and event talk (OS 13). They take the concept of person to be aligned with the object-based view, though they argue that there is no one-to-one relation between persons and bodies. By contrast, John talks of person as a time-based concept.

John's time-base and passing time resemble Gregory and Kohsen's two independent ways of measuring time, which they regard as two separate dimensions of time. But there are significant differences. Their first dimension of time is introduced for closed systems in which energy is conserved so that there are exactly repeating cycles with no difference in temporal direction. An example would be the periodic time of an eternally swinging pendulum where there is no friction or air resistance to slow the pendulum. In the actual world macroscopic events do not have exact periodic times. And in the actual world in which there are no closed systems short of the entire universe and entropy is increasing, they claim that a second dimension of time, which is one-directional, can be measured. I'm not sure whether they would say time would continue passing, though unmeasurable, once thermodynamic equilibrium is reached, so I can't tell if they think passing time is a fundamental feature of the universe, as John does, or local and derivative. They appear to have added these two temporal dimensions to the three spatial dimensions to make five total dimensions. John found the idea of five dimensions to be an unnecessarily complex and conceptually problematic feature of their system. In *The O-Structure* I see no discussion of John's third component of time – the atemporal, or State 0.

Gregory and Kohsen advance very different concerns in support of the need for an event-based view and the inadequacy of an object-based view of the world. They think there is substantial evidence from parapsychology that an unprejudiced person would find convincing, and they think mental images not formed from perception, such as hypnagogic images and hallucinations are also better understood on an event-based view. They claim an object-based view cannot explain the similarity of all the electrons (and likewise for other elementary particles), and the coordination among individuals in the case of embryology, morphological and behavioural changes in insects from density of crowding, homing and migration in animals, or collective insanity. John did not point to any of this in support of his time-based view. But he undoubtedly gained confidence in a time-based and event-based view from what he took to be a thorough investigation of the scientific evidence that Gregory and Kohsen undertook in the copious reviews of scientific literature they published in *Cosmos*.