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### "VOIDS" AND STRUCTURING OF A 'CORPORATE UNCONSCIOUS' IN THE LAST LABYRINTH



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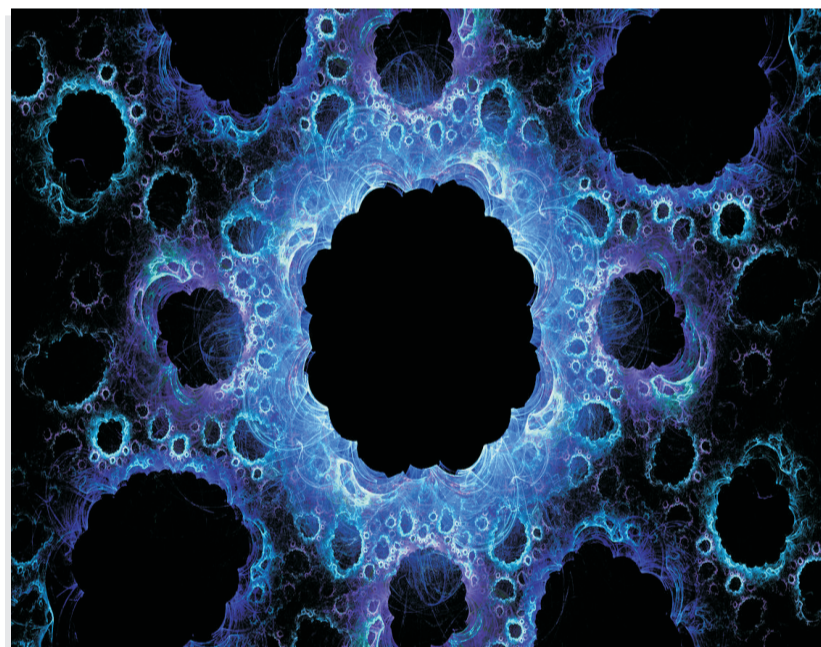
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#### ABSTRACT:

Som's 'having mode' of living is a product of his Great Mother structure/Corporate Unconscious and he suffers all the time from "a grey cry . . . I want. I want. I want". He suffers from the "hunger of the body" and the "hunger of the spirit". Therefore, the last labyrinth is created by a corporate unconscious moving from smaller voids to a big void, a self-caused deadening by an ego unable to differentiate itself from its cultural matrix/the Great Mother Structure/the Corporate Unconscious.

#### KEYWORDS

*The Great Mother Structure, Corporate Unconscious, Hunger, Labyrinth, Deadening, Psychosis, Lust, Symbols of Regeneration.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Som's 'having mode' of living is a product of his Great Mother structure/Corporate Unconscious and he suffers all the time from "a grey cry . . . I want. I want. I want" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 11). He suffers from the "hunger of the body" and the "hunger of the spirit" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 11). In fact he confuses one with the other. His having mode of living does not allow his emerging ego to differentiate itself from his Great Mother structure in spite of his knowledge that he had been to Harvard where "a quarter million had been spent" on his "education" where he did a paper on Pascal and "knew of Krishna . . . of Buddha at Sarnath . . ." (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 11). He also knew of the futility of money but all his knowledge could "do no better than produce the same rusty cry: I want. I want" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 12). What he has learnt is to acquire companies and women through his "manoeuvres" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 12). What he needs is the "trust" in "this whore of a city" that "did not love" him even though it eyed his money. He does "not trust" himself or his "men" or his "fate" or "the ceaseless travel on the social wheel". In fact he travels "between the empty home and the cluttered offices" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 63).

The last labyrinth for Som Bhaskar is the objectified structure of his cultural matrix/Corporate Unconscious in his psyche or his Great Mother structure from which his consciousness is unable to gather meaning and differentiate itself in a mature self or into an ego with soul or meaning. In this structure Som's consciousness finds itself splintered or objectified due to his methodology of search for meaning or self. Som Bhaskar's Great Mother structure has greatly been influenced by the impact of his mother, father and grandfather.

Som loses his mother at the age of fourteen and the shock of her untimely death introduces to his emerging ego the inadequacy of material wealth, religion and above all Krishna, whom his mother worshipped. He believes that his mother died of "cancer and Krishna . . . the God. My mother believed Krishna would cure her and flushed her capsules down the toilet. Krishna sat on top of her bureau and smiled and smiled until she was dead" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 57). He had also watched cancer eating away his mother's lungs while astrologers, quacks and physicians claiming to be the descendents of the Greeks, "lied" to her, "the whole rotten bunch," and "swindled" her out of "thousands" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 68). It was on their strength that she refused to believe it was cancer. His mother's untimely death, at one stroke, cuts his emerging ego from its cultural and spiritual support system and he feels in the "cavities" of his "skull the same strange hollowness roared endlessly" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 26). He grows up with a consciousness "that money was dirt, a whore. So were houses, cars and carpets" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 11). His emerging ego feels itself crisis-ridden in emerging from the Great Mother structure which is characterized by wealth and its inadequacy, faith and its inadequacy, life and its lack of meaning in the face of death. Som's spiritual quest receives another crisis from the inherent structure of his Great Mother through his father's quest for the First Cause. His father believed in "science" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 26) but also believed in the "paradox" that "science cannot solve the problem of causes because there are causes behind causes" and he is after the "fundamental unity in the construction of the universe" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 27). He is a scientist who wants the "evidence of God" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 27) from the mystics just like the scientists do, he even wishes to run an "experiment" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 27) for it. Som has seen his father developing melancholia after his wife's death; his own Great Mother structure has received the scientific search for a spiritual meaning in the order of the universe from his father's search for the

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First cause. His father's search after his untimely loss of his wife was to know whether there is some order in the running of the universe and whether the first cause governs the cycle of "Birth, Growth, Decline and Death" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 27). His father dies of "Melancholia" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 72) leaving Som with the hollowness of a "millionaire" at "twenty five" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 10). Som's Great Mother structure receives dualities of faith and insecurity, science and beyond science, material wealth and "interrogations" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 156) both from the predicament of his mother and father.

His Great Mother structure is also influenced by his grandfather who "was a man-about-town, a gourmet, fond of women and drink" who twice lost fortunes "without losing a night's sleep" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 156) and "Anything to do with God embarrassed him" who "was reckless, happy, unburdened by philosophical speculation" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 156). Som inherits "the afflictions of both" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 156) of them i.e. his father and grandfather. He calls the "interrogations" of his father and "unburdened" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 156) indulgence of his grandfather as "afflictions" because being a part of his Great Mother structure, they led his emerging ego into "unbearable entanglements" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 157). The duality of components in Som's Great Mother structure determines his consciousness, and his emerging ego finds itself in difficulty in disentangling itself in its 'having' mode of relationship with the outside world and the hollowness emerging from its own depths.

Som inherits from his grandfather an indulgence in material pleasures as a way of life but all his womenising and boozing "had not settled anything" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 156). This is because unlike his grandfather, Som is not blessed with the lack of consciousness. His emerging ego cannot remain forever at the highly narcissistic level of uroboric incest. Uroboric incest gives the protection to an undeveloped ego symbolized by the safety or regression into the protection of the womb of one's Great Mother structure. In Som the "voids" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 47) or spiritual hollowness is proportional to his indulgence in the material pleasures. In his 'having mode' of being, he treats others as not living beings but as dead objects to be acquired into 'consummation of reduction' where the objects once acquired enter into his consciousness as dead things and thereby deadening a part of his consciousness. He tells Anuradha "It always happens to me, as soon as I get something I had badly wanted. It means nothing" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 138). What he wants is the pleasure of narcissistic regression into his Great Mother structure. But the objectification or deadening of his self makes him feel the "voids and the empty spaces within and without" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 47). The Uroboric regression is accompanied by the rhythm of emergence in his ego and he cannot keep his ego contained in the pleasurable depths of his Great Mother structure. The ego is very much alive towards its deadening which results from its narcissistic perception of outside reality and events as mere objects either feeding or depriving his ego from its narcissistic pleasure in its present state of 'having mode' of living. The voids, in fact, are signs of awareness in its emerging ego about its state of funk where ego is in consummation of reduction with the objective reality. Som rightly sums up the state of his self as the "terrible vacancies of lokalok" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 47). He realizes "It was the voids and not the guava groves that I had walked through that morning my mother died; and voids too in her room in Bombay; and voids each time an affair ended; and the morning my daughter was born, and on and on. Voids all" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 48).

'The manifest' in his consciousness is constantly disturbed by the 'unmanifest.' The 'having mode' of corporate living reveals its limitations in terms of voids within and without but the voids at the

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same time show the crisis of consciousness, due to the contradiction in his Great Mother structure, bringing alive the disturbances from his deeper self or the depths of unconscious as a 'discourse.' The rhythm of emergence is inbuilt in his Great Mother structure/Corporate Unconscious which is characterized by the modernist duality of faith and doubting, life and the threat of death, pleasure and spiritual hollowness, material wealth and its inadequacy. This duality and rhythm of emergence in an emerging ego, in a 'having mode' of living, leads it to a crisis of consciousness where the rhythms of regression and emergence exist almost as reflex actions. Treatment of others— beings and events—as objects results in an awareness of ontological deadening or self-objectification or a disturbing hollowness or "voids" (Joshi, *The Last Labyrinth* 47). Therefore, the last labyrinth is a movement from smaller voids to a big void, a self-caused deadening by an ego unable to differentiate itself from its cultural matrix/the Great Mother Structure/the Corporate Unconscious.

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