

DUVERSITY NEWSLETTER

NO. 4 2000

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EDITORIAL



Biosphere 2 conceived by John Allen with the Institute of Ecotechnics. September 26, 1991, four men and four women were sealed inside the complex - which included ocean, desert, savannah, rain forest and farm – for two years

Our policy is to include articles of originality and meaning and we are most proud to include John Allen's seminal paper on the 'Sixth Kingdom' – namely Humanity. John's thesis is controversial and challenges the scientific establishment. In fact, he defines Humanity in *three* ways: as a species, as a kingdom and as a *domain*, the latter being a new concept of classification that stems from biospheric studies. Our view of Humanity as a whole phenomenon is integral to the DuVersity perspective – seeking *new kinds of unity in diversity*.

Information about the methodologies developed and fostered by the DuVersity are to be found on our web site, which we hope to update with new material in the near future. We welcome links with individuals and groups who are engaged in similar work.

Anthony Blake contributes an article on 'meme' theory that provides some background for John's article while



Birth of Ohrmazd and Ahriman from Zurvan, or 'Infinite Time'. On each side are shown the three ages of man. 8th century BC

exploring the implications of the theory in terms of Gurdjieff's ideas and modern writers such as Philip K Dick.

We announce the next seminar-dialogue on 'Methods of the Soul', which is to be held in West Virginia March 22-5, 2001. The idea of *methods* in relation to the soul may seem strange at first. We associate method with rationality and the mind, and rarely with the deeper reality of the soul. However, our view is that the soul is not less intelligent than the mind but *more*. To



speaking of 'methods' of the soul is not to suppose that we know how to make one!. It is part of the DuVersity remit to explore the higher intelligence in which we have our existence, just as much as we have in the material universe.

We draw your attention to the first major publication by the DuVersity: Dr Edith Wallace's *How It All Began and How It Continued: No End!* The book is available at \$33 (plus p & p) from our registrar Karen Stefano. We are also pleased to announce that Dr Wallace is 'Continuing the Quest' at Santa Fe in December this year.

IS ME A 'MEME'?

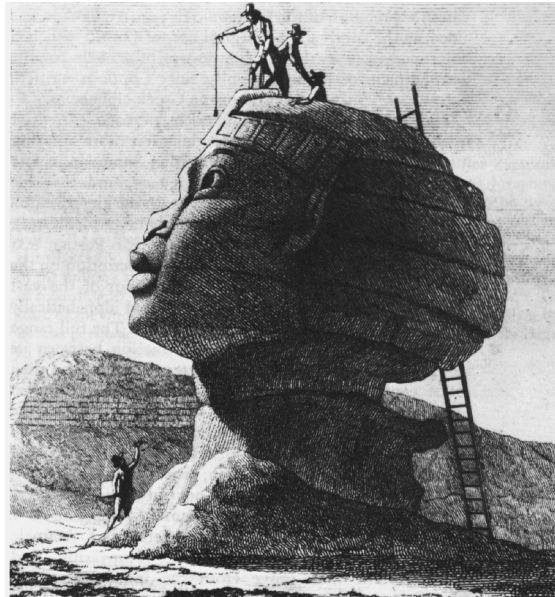
With Susan Blackmore's book *The Meme Machine* (Oxford University Press, 1999) the concept of 'memes' first put forward by Richard Dawkins shows itself as well established in the human mind and continuing to replicate at a high rate. Dawkins, almost as an aside, suggested at the end of his book on *The Selfish Gene* that we should look for units of cultural information that replicate and compete in a similar manner to the way that genes do. The idea took hold and the word 'meme' has almost reached the stage of passing into human vocabulary as an accepted term, for many not requiring any explanation at all.

The history of the concept goes back into the nineteenth century to Wallace, a contemporary of Darwin. In contrast with Darwin, Wallace believed that something other than physical evolution – through variation and selection – was at work in the formation of the human species. This idea continued to survive in spite of the triumph of Darwinianism. It was not simply a matter of religious prejudice. The human capacity for abstract thought, symbolism and language did not seem explicable in terms of survival needs. The large size of the brain, the greatly extended period of helplessness of the infant beyond anything comparable in any other species, and the amount of energy expended in cultural pursuits seemed at variance with the Darwinian model.

In John Allen's article on Humanity as a Sixth Kingdom of life, included in this Newsletter, he offers a whole new perspective on this issue of seminal importance.

Of course, when Darwin proposed his theory, there was no concept of genes. This came much later – and is now reaching its greatest flowering in the present human genome project to map out the total code for humans. It was a major breakthrough to finally come to detect, measure and even

alter the basic units that transmit the pattern of living beings from generation to generation so effectively. As this picture emerged, so we were coming to grips with the universality of another concept: that of information. With the rise of computing science came the realisation that our genetic material, our DNA, consisted of set of instructions for the building and running of organic systems.



Napoleon's Expeditionary Force surveying monuments in Egypt c. 1798

Computers familiarised us with the concept of 'software' versus 'hardware' and led many to suppose that the human brain could be looked at as composed of a software that we tend to think of as 'mental' and a hardware that we think of as 'physical'. It had taken more than two thousand years to turn Aristotle's Form and Matter into a question of 'in-form-ation'. Information seemed to offer a way of dealing with the question of mind, as energy had offered a way of dealing with life and matter with existence. Also, in the new trinity of Matter-Energy-Information, information tended to assume something of the role of the Holy Ghost!

Mememes now seem to be an almost inevitable concept, given the coming together of the concept of genes, the

concept of information and the concept of mind as software. Dawkins' proposal came after others such as that of Waddington who came close to a similar idea in his book *Man, the Ethical Animal*. Karl Popper's scheme of three worlds (1) the world of objective things (such as water) (2) the world of subjective experiences (such as pain) (3) the world of meanings (such as theories) actually anticipates in the third world a view of a realm composed of cultural quasi-objects. Dawkins himself has no theory about what memes consist of or where they can be located, though the overall impression he supports is that they are lodged somehow in the brain, which Susan Blackmore agrees with. However, we should take into account that obvious fact that memes can also be located in buildings, books, plays, dress, etc. that is in 'public space'.

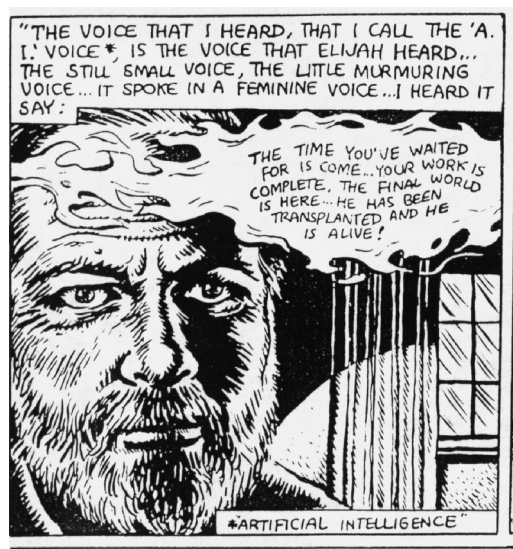
That is why Patrick de Mare insists that mind is not 'in' brains at all but exists 'between' brains.

We should also bear in mind the emergence of a new way of conceiving of the human mind. This was to think of it more as a *receptacle* for information, than as an

science fiction and allied forms of expression. The avant-garde American novelist William Burroughs gave us his view that language itself was akin to a virus that had infected the human race. He even proposed that this has come from outer space! In a more Gnostic mode, Philip K. Dick suggested that there was something he called VALIS – Vast Active Living Intelligent System – capable of providing the information for humans to wake up from their forgetfulness of divine reality. He explored the issue of what makes us human, playing on the ambiguity of humans as automata – or 'replicants' – and as free beings. At the beginning of the century, Gurdjieff had already proposed that humans were just complicated machines, though he also argued that it was possible for them to escape from their slavery.

With the advent of the concept of memes, we now have a way of thinking of human beings as being 'possessed' by units of cultural information that *blindly* seek their own replication. Just as, according to Dawkins, the organic genes blindly seek their own replication, so do memes. In this view, humans are just machines driven by 'thoughts' that operate on their own terms. There is no such thing as a 'thinker'. It is more than strange, at first sight, that such a view closely corresponds to that of a modern mystic, Krishnamurti, who regarded thinking as a process that creates the thought of a thinker! In this respect, we should mention that, when Susan Blackmore takes up the issue of what is left for us in the realisation that we are merely carriers of memes, she speaks of her own experiences of a state of consciousness which is very close indeed to Kirshnamurti's concept of 'choiceless awareness'. The first thing that has to go is our belief that we can choose!

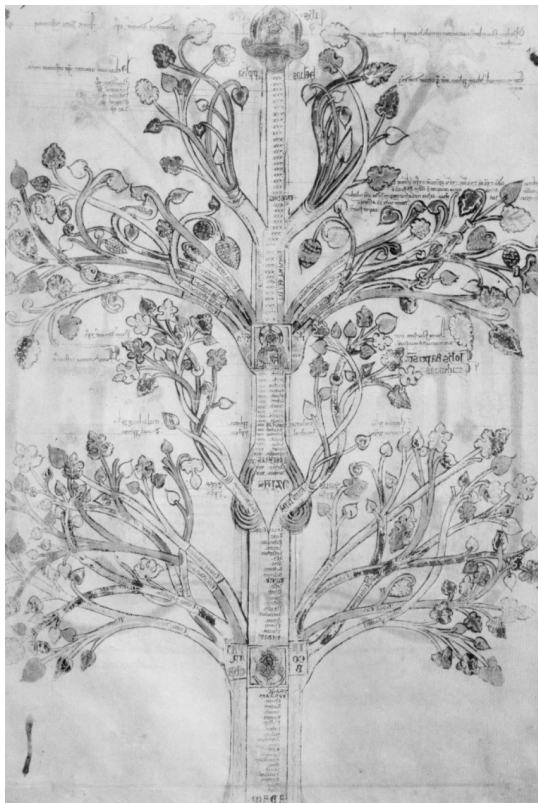
As we suggest in our essay on the 'Politics of Conversation' (last issue) it is now becoming more generally accepted that we can operate in a world where we do not have to believe that 'we think' at all. In general, the idea that there can be an entity



Robert Crumb's cartoon image of Philip K. Dick's 'religious experience'

origin. This began to permeate our modern culture, not least through the influence of

– such as a human mind - that operates as a source for anything is becoming more and more suspect. We now see everything happening increasingly in terms of cycles of process. There is no one favoured node in such cycles or circuits. Anyone who has reflected on their beliefs and ideas at all seriously cannot doubt that what they hold dear has probably arisen in them through influences from the social context in which they grew up. With the acquisition of language, we are cut off from a more primordial state of being and subject to the social complex of which we are a part. If



**‘Tree of History’
based on Jaochim de Fiore
12th century**

we do not acquire language, then we remain undeveloped and not entirely human. The physicist Freeman Dyson once said, “Culture consists of conversations”, a telling observation. We become human by becoming participants in the mutual exchange of memes. The ‘errors’ in replication that naturally occur play much the same role as errors in replication in the

genetic world: they enable variation which is crucial for selection, and hence evolution.

It is worthwhile considering two apparently different kinds of meme replication that humans experience as illustrating the same phenomena. In the case of religion we observe how the competitive nature of memes can lead to the extremes of violence and mass-murder, and the propagation of such ‘senseless’ behaviours over centuries (as in Northern Ireland or the former Yugoslavia). In the case of technology, we see technologies developing, propagating and ‘taking control’ without any regard for what might be deemed the ‘good’ of human beings. The American historian Lewis Mumford drew attention to what he called the ‘megamachine’ of technology that is acting just as if it were an entity in its own right. To say that this technology is created by human beings to serve their ends is highly dubious. In many respects, technology is calling the shots, especially now. Computers have proliferated in human life beyond any reasonable expectation and it is just as if they were ‘parasites’ exploiting human brains for their own ends. Just as it is as if religious beliefs were seeking their own dominance without regard for any tangible human welfare.

The ‘as if’ of these conjectures are turned into ‘it is so’ in the theory of memes. All that a meme ‘wants’ to do is replicate itself – just as a gene does. The drama of it all is that memes must replicate in a way that does not destroy their hosts. Take the example of a religious martyr. Such a person is driven to what amounts to suicide by a meme that he or she carries. Now, instead of this making others regard this meme as a danger to human life, it is often then regarded the more highly and is enabled to replicate faster in the given social group. It does this by being associated with other memes – largely to do with very strong memes we call ‘values’ – that carry it with them. We say to ourselves, ‘If someone can lay down their life for this belief, it must be an important one.’ The Soviets knew this well and held public trials

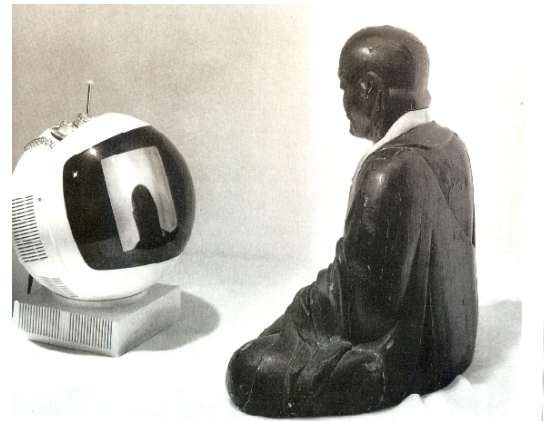
to humiliate and discredit any such martyrs! Of course, the meme-theorist would say that Soviet Russia was itself driven by powerful memes seeking their own propagation. Communism was born with a mission to take over all of human life on the planet!

It seems that many, sensitive to such examples began to believe that thought itself – and language – was at fault. Hence, the cult of the New Age with its tendency to downplay rational thought and advocate silence, what is ‘natural’ and dream states. We might add (as Susan Blackmore does in her book) that such memes were powerfully coupled with others that sought to exploit human gullibility for the sake of profit.

One of Gurdjieff’s astounding claims was that human culture was permeated with dysfunctional memes (though he did not know or use this word) that seemed to be capable of propagating themselves without regard for ‘reason’. He postulated an event in early human history resulting in distortions of human perception and understanding, which distortions continued to be carried on by cultural replication right up until the present day. His theory supposed that some organic mutation arose in the first place which then made humans susceptible to suggestion (amongst other misfortunes). Certainly, the vulnerability we have to suggestion is a terrifying feature of our nature. But it may be regarded by the meme-theorists as simply par for the course.

The interplay between the organic structure of humans and their ‘manipulation’ by memes is simply an unknown. Susan Blackmore argues that our relatively large brains are a result of selection dictated by memes: the bigger the brain, the greater its capacity to store and transmit them. She also argues that sexual selection is becoming increasingly guided by memes, that women tend more and more to mate with men who exhibit strong meme-capacity (such as writers, artists, politicians, etc.). The cult of the pop star can be

understood in such a fashion. We look askance at TV evangelists as a distortion of religion, but the ‘television celebrity’ is successfully competing with the religious leader because the latter is becoming far more significant in the propagation of memes (we might think here of Oprah Winfrey who has taken a role of publicising books for her viewers and bringing the industry millions of more dollars a year while she propagates memes to do with race and gender which concern – ‘possess’ - her).



But, to emphasise the point, we have at present no model for the physical basis of memes in organic terms. The hypothesis that our very organic structure is becoming increasingly under the control of memes is very challenging indeed. It is a hypothesis that strikes home in the face of the prospect of human genetic engineering – an acceleration of the process. On another front, we should consider the emergence of means of interaction such as the Internet, which enable memes to be spread across the globe at a high rate (this is assuming, of course, that verbal communication is significant in their transmission, which appears likely).

What then of the vexed question of who or what we are? In the context of meme theory, ‘we’ are merely complexes of memes – ‘memeplexes’ – and nothing else. We have no souls, wills, etc. at all. Such features as soul and will are themselves ‘only’ memes. Susan Blackmore suggests that such memes will become extinct! We

have to point out that no solid contribution has made by meme theory to the difficult questions surrounding consciousness. At best, consciousness appears as an organic state saturated with memes. Adopting this view, we can see that humans look like crucial versatile devices for the interaction of memes. They introduce a ‘randomising’ element that we now begin to understand is crucial for the maintenance and evolution of all living systems. To put it crudely: the memes that collect together in a human identity cannot be predicted.

We do not pick and choose between memes – they pick us! Or, in more neutral terms, as we accumulate an identity so we form links with corresponding sets of memes. When any of these memes is threatened by a competing meme, the whole system reacts in defence. Many find themselves astonished at the violence and emotion, which ensues when our beliefs are questioned. This reaches into the depths of scientific work. Michael Polanyi in his masterful book *Personal Knowledge* shows how the passionate attachment of a scientist to ‘his’ ideas is critical for the progress of science. We know of scientific martyrdom. It is strange to listen to an argument in the pub while entertaining the idea of memes! We begin to see what is going on as a skirmish between memes rather than as ‘people’ arguing for their personal truths.

Referring back to Gurdjieff again, it is more than interesting that he often describes what is going in himself or some character he is describing in terms of *crystallisation of data*. What could be closer to the idea of memes than that? The twist in the story is the haunting possibility that this might be accomplished *intentionally*. He speaks of the role of teachers and guides concerned with such ‘conscious education’, even though in his account of his own life he seems to be describing a whole series of *accidental* crystallisations. Even supposing that there are such teachers and guides, from where would they derive the memes they would implant and why would they do such a thing in the first place? One

hypothesis has been mentioned already in referring to Philip K Dick: there is a ‘sea of information’ (to use one of Dick’s phrases) that has not been governed by conditions on Earth. Contact with this ‘sea’ enables us to ‘wake up’ – that is, not to be subject to the replicating behaviour of terrestrial memes. The root idea of a source of information that is free of the traumas of human history is an ad hoc hypothesis, which tells us very little. What we arrive at is something similar to the old idea that organic evolution itself came from the action of a ‘higher intelligence’ that preceded humankind. If people now suppose that there is some source of ‘pure’ information it is just to ‘move the goalposts’ as it were. But such questions dig down to the foundations of *who we are*.

In a strange way, those who posit a source of ‘unpolluted information’ in the way we have suggested are supporting the idea of memes. What is the very basis of Christianity? *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and was God*. It is hearing the ‘word of God’ that leads us to salvation.

David Bohm, writing in his last book *The Undivided Universe* about information and the ontology of quantum mechanics, speaks of *active information*. Some information is more active than others. The more active the information, the more it can *in-form* or ‘put the form in’. He suggests that we see the highest realms of active information as the *void*, much as in Buddhism. This may point to the convergence of meme theory and mysticism, a convergence we have suggested earlier. The relatively ‘ultimate’ experience is of *nothingness*. Gurdjieff taught that the inner work of transformation begins with the realisation of one’s own nothingness. Perhaps we need to throw away the idea that this is ‘only’ the prelude to becoming ‘something’. John Bennett in the last year of his life said, “Gurdjieff taught that man did not have an ‘I’ but



Painting by Tasuichi Awakawa

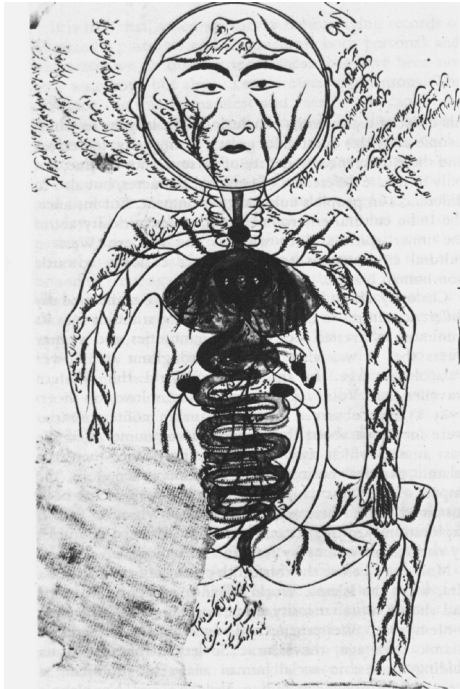
could get one. I say that man does not have an 'I' and cannot get one!"

The theory of memes is most startling in its claim that they operate entirely through replication and competition, upholding Darwinian precepts. Though we might argue that genes and memes are just the

present historical form of what is really Cartesian dualism, the meme-theorist insists that both are in some sense material, both in substance and in operation. However, other evolutionary theorists such as Lynn Margulis continue to argue that the evolutionary process works most strongly in *symbiosis* rather than in *competition*. The symbiotic model would lend itself to interpreting the human 'self' as a symbiotic whole made from the contributions of many memes. Thus, the making of a human self would constitute an open programme, with no apparent limit. We could envisage the emergence of a human totality made from the memplexes of the billions of humans on this planet. What such a megamemplex might 'think' would be quite beyond us as we are now. Such far-flung speculations can be approached by considering the implications of present day research into group mind. It would seem that the endeavour to create or realise such minds can now be looked at as an enterprise beyond any current theory. The relation between 'I' and 'We' might turn out to be the most crucial factor in evolution, but needs to be considered together with the question of the 'body'.

Where memes are 'located' is not merely a physical question of fact. How we locate meanings is part of the memplex of our identity. That is to say: what the *body* is, is related to what it *means*. The location and naming of meanings in the body is an important part of therapy. However, in general for any given culture, there is a set way of seeing the body. This has been beautifully brought out by a recent book by the Japanese scholar, Shigehisa Kuriyama working at the Nomura Institute for Studies in the History of Medicine located in Tokyo, *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine* (NY: Zone Books, 1999.) in which the Greek and Chinese views of the body are contrasted. It is not so clearly appreciated in the domain of 'spiritual practices' many of which presuppose specific qualities of experience and powers of being as belonging to specific parts of

the body. The Hindu system of the *chakras* is widely known and accepted, which is a puzzle. Why should such a memplex have taken hold so pervasively? It is sometimes hard to come across somebody who does *not* believe in this system. The Asian concept of *chi* located in the belly is another



**Islamic conception of human body
from 12th century**

example. Or the 'subtleties' located in the breast – far more complex than the usual assumption about the 'heart' as seat of feeling and less widely known and accepted.

Such schemes are not just alternative 'models' of the body, because they shape what the body 'is' for us. The view we have of the body is integral to our humanity, to being what we are. But the location of meanings extends into the world around us. It extends into the landscape and the artefacts of our existence. We believe in sacred places, in the 'land', but also in institutions and monuments. The actual 'brain' of our minds extends far beyond our organic mass into the whole artifice of the world. The physical location of consciousness is a memetic phenomenon.

Gurdjieff's *Movements* offer an extraordinary method of investigating the physicality of consciousness. In terms of the psychoanalytic language of Lacan it offers a way of bridging the gap between the 'real', the 'imaginary' and the 'symbolic' that can never be reached by verbal language alone.

The experience of the Movements can serve to revolutionise our sense of what consciousness is. The usual distinction of mind and body gradually falls away.

Meme theory requires another *physical* dimension to be complete. As Gurdjieff once remarked, even



thoughts are physical and can be 'weighed'. His Movements offer us a way back into reality. When mind is no longer separate from body it can become *soul*. As William Blake asserted, the body *is* the soul if we can *see* it. This will be one of the themes of our 2001 seminar-dialogue on 'Methods of the Soul', in which the Movements will have an important role.

Which leads us back to what is a meme? It is quite possible that they are composed of the myriad of 'I-impulses' that Gurdjieff speaks of and there *is* a 'Darwinian' level of survival of the fittest. But, in reality, object and subject are two faces of the same 'atoms'. Dawkins' contention that memes 'strive' to replicate themselves then makes perfect sense. Each is a little 'I'. We are on the threshold of a new understanding of how we are composed, and this is not separate from understanding the physical universe in a revolutionary way.

The Sixth Kingdom

John Allen

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John Allen, dramatist, poet and revolutionary scientist was the visionary behind the Biosphere 2 project that manifested Vernadsky's vision of life as a cosmic phenomenon



Establishing humanity's real location in its cosmos would solve innumerable scientific, artistic, philosophical, and personal problems and clear the decks for sailing on the furthest historical voyages creating meanings and transformations. At present the two chief theories of taxonomy not only cause many insoluble problems but uselessly spend a great deal of their exponents' energies in trying to annihilate the other. These two theories are 1) humans are the image of God (which God?) and 2) humans are a species in the order of primates, our closest cousin being the chimpanzee.

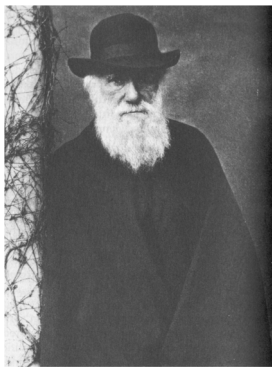
The chasms of difference between humans and Gods and humans and apes are so gigantic that most of us find these doctrinal disputes between Creationists and Evolutionists who insist on their ape

taxonomy to be the blind arguing with the blind and would like to leave these ideological fossils to their repetitious arguments. However, the control and use of these two opposed texts by theological and scientific institutions which have great power over our private and public lives have impelled me to deconstruct the text that humans are best classified as a species in the order of primates and to share what I regard as a realistic taxonomy of humans by integrating the findings of science since Darwin and Wallace's day, by building upon their Theory of Evolution.

Religious arguments are based on faith so facts are unimportant. As Tertullian famously, and ferociously, said, "I believe it because it's absurd." However, for the argument that humans should be classified as a species of the order of primates to be called scientific based as it is on Darwin's mid-Nineteenth Century knowledge and cultural worldview must stand up to and answer critique. It must change if it cannot do so. This text offends commonsense to the point that popular antagonism to those claiming to represent the theory of evolution by claiming humans are an ape species or a sub-species of a family of the order of primates leads in America to either throwing out all references to evolution in many public schools or to teaching both theories equally in a sort of plague on both your houses gesture of anger and contempt. It is not the difficulty of understanding the importance of complex scientific theory that causes this reaction. There's no resistance to teaching quantum mechanics or relativity. However, classifying humans as a species of ape is so repugnant to observation that many are driven to hold the factually ridiculous theory of creationism in biology while remaining sophisticated physical scientists with respectable positions and to doubt the use of science except to produce technics of some sort or another, but certainly not to understand the universe since these people rather self-appointedly claiming to represent science do not understand that humanity's ecological role in the biosphere and its

probable future is as different from ape species as apes are from bacteria. Of course, all of us descend from the same origin, though Darwin himself qualified that statement by saying from one or a few.

Nonetheless, the Theory of Evolution does not classify humans; evolution theory, now called neo-Darwinian, since Darwin also knew nothing about genes, shows genetic changes in living forms can lead to differential changes in any given lineage by the means of natural selection. How those changes are classified is the province of another science, systematics or taxonomy. Taxonomy existed before the Theory of Evolution. Darwin used taxonomic



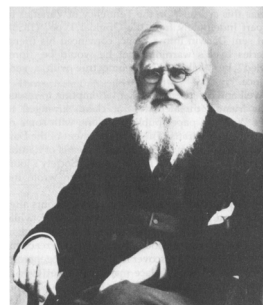
scientists to guide himself in working out the Theory of Evolution. For example, Darwin, on the basis of his detailed naturalist observation first thought the variety of small birds he saw on

the Galapagos Islands meant they were of different taxonomic groups, but learned from a taxonomist in London that they were all members of the same family. This knowledge permitted him to realize that these species had originated from a common source and differentiated because of the differences in the flora in the Galapagos.

The Theory of Evolution has no vested interest in any particular taxonomic classification, other than it be as accurate as possible in reflecting the descent of a given life form and fruitful in inspiring further advances in knowledge. Taxonomy deals with what and the Theory of Evolution with how. The evolutionist Stephen Gould, past president of the AAAS, writes, "Taxonomies are theories of knowledge, not objective pigeonholes, hatracks, or stamp albums with places preassigned. A

false taxonomy based on a bogus theory of knowledge can lead us badly astray."

Now Darwin and the co-discoverer of evolution theory, Wallace, both grappled with the place or taxonomy of humanity in the evolutionary history of the planet after they had discovered the mechanism of Natural Selection operating upon variations in life forms. Wallace thought that the difference between animals and humans was a chasm, implying a classificatory level of kingdom. Wallace, living close to nature, looked at thought for the source of this chasm and made some dubious studies in the world of thought forms; Darwin, living in the new industrial jungle, swung toward minimizing the chasm and he classified humans as a species of primates most akin to the apes and made extraordinary studies in the great similarity of emotions in humans and mammals. Eibl-Eibesfeldt in the 1960's proved in exquisite cross-cultural studies that emotional expressions were invariant across those difference demonstrating that human motor patterns expressing emotion were indeed determined by their animal descent. The fame of the discoverers of natural selection does not rest on their taxonomic scientific achievements.



Wallace lived in the jungle biome of Malaysia and Darwin in the center of the industrial world in an agricultural biome formed out of a temperate zone forest. Wallace had no great connection with the imperial establishment and Darwin forged intimate links with the London power centers, especially the Linnean and Royal Societies and the Athenaeum Club. When Wallace first sent in his formal discovery of the theory to the Linnean Society of London, Darwin contacted his powerful friends who made sure that both papers were presented at the same meeting of the Linnean Society, which was perhaps technically

questionable, but certainly ethically, esthetically, scientifically, and humanly right since Darwin had held back from publication of his Theory for twenty years mainly because of his incredible scrupulosity for perfection.

In the mid-Nineteenth Century we must remember not only did no one know about genes, but the biosphere had not been discovered as an observable entity, ecological science had not been invented, and only two kingdoms had been recognized by taxonomy, the plant and animal kingdoms. The potent kingdoms of the prokaryotes, non-nucleated cells, and eukaryotes, nucleated cells, and of the fungi were also, like humans, shoved by the procrustean classifiers, taxonomists, systematists of the time into species of plants or animals. Further, the extraordinary roles of cellular, fungal, and human life forms in the biosphere equivalent or greater than the plant and animal kingdoms languished under this arbitrary dictum. The science of culturology or ethnology had also not been founded. In other words, both Darwin and Wallace suffered in their taxonomy both from a false theory of knowledge, epistemology, and from certainly incomplete and to an extent bogus knowledge about paleontology. In epistemology they both accepted the hardcore dichotomy of spirit and matter with Wallace experimenting with the first to learn about humanity and its different destiny from animals and Darwin with the latter to learn about humanity and its common fate with animals. Whitehead's discovery of process as an epistemological approach and Einstein's discovery of relativity and quantum approaches and ethnology's discovery of elements of culture, memes, as possessing their own rules for transformation and evolution were available to neither man. Paleontologists did not know what forms, if any, had evolved in the time between when the apes existed with no humans and when the apes existed with humans or what exactly was the line of descent of humans.

Darwin and Wallace's sound knowledge based on the exhaustive studies of animal form and function and geological period that led them to discover the Theory of Evolution was based on their profound field and in Darwin's case also laboratory work and consultations with breeding specialists. They both also worked closely with taxonomists. Even then, however, questions as to the nature of a missing link between primates and humans were raised. Today Five Kingdoms are recognized, but humans are even more uncompromisingly categorized as a species by textbook writers and a small regiment of relentless logicians insisting that their assumption of a "selfish gene" plus Natural Selection explains everything not only about beetles but humans and their cultures. The Gene in the Machine replaces the Ghost in the Machine. Some of these have gone so far as to classify humans as a "mere" (the favorite word of this species of scientists, rivaled only by nothingbuttery) subspecies of a family of the primate order. When this argument takes the place of discussion of opposing points of view, experience tells us that an ideology is constructing and informing the text.

There are many consequences to be logically deduced from the classificatory variants on "humans are a species of ape" and which are extrapolated by ardent admirers of the ecological power of bacteria and the emotional power of animals. Since species have a limited lifetime in the Biosphere, then any given species qua species is ultimately insignificant in the total picture of reality compared to the kingdom bacteria. Humanity is comparable to chimpanzees and other high mammalian species in that they are all expected, geologically speaking, to be extinct in a short time.

Lynn Margulis writes in her classic, *Microcosmos*, studying "the very short term geological future, we can say that mammalian extinctions and replacements, including our own, will continue". Margulis is one of those who classifies present

humans as members of a subspecies, brothers to Neanderthal who only lasted about a 100,000 years, a very short geological time indeed. Margulis follows those who classify humans as a subspecies in a family, hominidae, equal to the ape family, pongidae, in the primate order. Stephen Gould following the 'mainstream' sums up his vast evolutionary and paleontological knowledge to call humanity "a tiny and accidental twig on the ... tree of life". Twigs, of course, come and go with the seasons (geological changes). However, no kingdom has ever yet gone extinct nor is there any reason to think that any will since the taxonomic status of kingdom means that the life form in observation has generated a branching radiation of forms into every bioregion of the biosphere and is a sturdy branch of the tree with definite potentialities that could easily live as long as the entire tree, that is, until a solar eruption or cooling or giant meteor impact should drastically change Earth's conditions. These connoisseurs of human cosmic meaninglessness have greeted every new scientific discovery of greatness of the Cosmos as further evidence of the smallness, insignificance, and ephemerality of humans. Of course, each such discovery, galaxies, genes, biospheres, quarks, evolution, magnifies human contemplations and multiplies human powers and increases human significance, magnitude, and probable duration. But to those scientists whose teleology includes the goal of no goal for humans the lowest possible classification that can be assigned humans without violating their epistemology and required specialist knowledge proves their point of the meaninglessness of human life. This type of thought, that, for example, the earth revolving around the sun, and the sun around the galaxy, and the galaxy around some larger unit, rather than the earth being the physical center of the universe, or that the human mind operates with three brains, one of which has two lobes and that it is not a prefabricated unity diminishes humanity denotes the reflex of nihilist philosophy or religious dogmatism, rather than a logical, or even psychological deduction. For

example, such advances in knowledge could be used to show the world of values and meanings has advanced millions of light years in space and billions of years in time over the insipid space-time limitations of ancient Middle and Near Eastern theocosmologies. Such advances also show that humans now have the option of settling in many different centers of this expanded cosmos and attaining asymptotic to cosmic immortality in companionship with the other kingdoms in space biospheres.

Physicists, astronomers, and planetologists often use these advances to demonstrate new meanings and possibilities which of course imply a long lifetime for humanity and its companions in artificial biospheres .

In the dynamic world of life sciences, however, away from the dogmas of certain taxonomists who are always well-funded by the scientific establishment of the imperium, now masquerading as an economium, new discoveries directly connected with evolution theory force more and more real time life scientists to treat



humanity as an order, a class, a phylum, or as a kingdom. Julian Huxley, one of the creators of the neo-

Darwinian synthesis of genetics and theory of evolution treated humanity as a kingdom. Huxley wrote in his masterpiece, *Evolution in Action*, that "a new method of transformation has become available... in the human sector of evolution... the method of cumulative experience combined with conscious purpose ... has produced a new kind of result, in the shape of transmissible cultures; the main unit of evolution in the human phase is not the biological species, but the stream of culture and genetic advance has taken a back seat as compared

to changes in the transmissible techniques of cultural advance... not only a more rapid tempo (of evolution), but a new kind of tempo—an acceleration instead of a more or less steady average rate over long periods.”

Konrad Lorenz, the co-founder of Ethology, animal behavior, and certainly a deep friend and admirer of that kingdom of profound passions and fantastic adaptive functions, viewed humanity as a kingdom. Lorenz considered a human culture as defined in the science of ethnology or culturology to be the species exemplifying the new kingdom, and that the accelerating rate of evolution noted by Huxley was explained by the Lamarckian nature of this “new kind of result”, namely that the inheritance of acquired characteristics became possible in the world of memes. The human kingdom, which I propose be called *Symbolia*, since this is the main way cultural elements, called memes by Richard Dawkins, can be transmitted, now contains probably 10,000 species and there are fossils of previous cultural species found by both archeologists and historians of perhaps another 10,000. The study of cultures would obviously be extraordinarily increased in breadth and depth by the impetus of this classification. And what study would be of more use practically and contemplatively to humans of any culture today when ethnic battles, oppressions, and even attempted cultural exterminations are the major source of wars and disturbances today?

Both of these great evolutionary scientists, Huxley and Lorenz, his student, viewed the creation of culture as Biosphere’s youngest kingdom. Genetic evolution and phenotypic experimentation had led to an upright running big brained life form that could combine the powers of both genetic and memetic mutation and selection to produce the extremely adaptive mechanism of cultural teleos or goal-driven activity participating as a co-evolutionary partner with those parts of the biosphere totally following the non-purposeful Darwinian-Wallace theory of mutation and natural

selection, that is, the previously evolved five kingdoms. In addition the new kingdom soon drastically changed the subspecies and some say species compositions of many animal and plant species and genera: the canines and rosaceae being only two examples of a rapidly increasing many by introducing value-driven selection as well as natural selection. Value or purpose driven or highly influenced is not to say these values are absolute in any way. Certain values of culture A may be considered factually disastrous or even anti-value by culture B. Purpose driven or influenced is not to say that some of the driving values are not bizarre in the extreme, such as selecting mutations for survival in order to produce the brainless but sleek muzzled collie. Go forth and multiply, get rich quick, headhunting, and prohibitions of pleasurable activities have met tremendous oppositions from cultures with different purposes. The Theory of Evolution must include both the neo-Darwin-Wallace mutation and Natural Selection which Darwin later constructed into Survival of the Fittest to more fitly survive in the Spencerian ideology of capitalist British Empire, and the three step evolutionary process introduced as Huxley pointed out by the invention of culture, namely, meme mutation or discovery, cultural selection to achieve goals, and Natural Selection. Oh, where are the Hittites of yesteryear, Villon might have written.

The discovery of the Australopithecines, unknown to Darwin, proved whom humanity had descended from. The missing link, because it had gone extinct, had to await the discovery of its bones in a remote pit in South Africa. One order stood between the order of primates and the first order of protohumans in the taxonomy proposed by Johansen as did some five or more million years of evolution. The order which stood upright came before the hominids began their big brain evolutionary spurt. E. O. Wilson felt compelled to challenge the taxonomic dogmatists to a degree and declared humanity was at least

an order thereby indicating that he considered humanity as possibly a Class as are reptiles, birds, and mammals. The taxonomists of humanity in this imperium based on military power and the economium based on financial power have been proved to stand as anti-scientific in their “nothing but” a shortlived species claim as are the literalist interpreters of that much revised antique codex adopted by an earlier imperium some 1700 years ago to guide the beliefs of their freedom seeking subjects. The “missing link” had been found but far more research monies are still spent on studying chimpanzees than on Australopithecines and Homo Erectus. Virtuosos of meaninglessness are financed ever better by those who now wish the world to adopt as universal the goal of a twenty per cent return on capital investments per year no matter the extinctions required of human culture species. Richard Evans Schultes points out that this type of extinction of species is certainly as drastic as the extinction of animal species.

Wilson has tried to construct a socio-biological text to preserve humans’ animal status and even that at less than a phylum. This foray, done without much assistance from the findings of ethnology, gleams with such insights as his contention that there is a universal cultural prohibition of brother-sister incest because biologically there is a human disinterest of brothers in sisters sexually. The Incas and Pharaohs both, of course, used just that breeding program with as much success as any other royal breeding program, and the severest cultural conditioning and sanctions have not prevented many dramatic events of that kind even in cultures one of whose driving purposes is to widen the definition of incest as widely as possible and enforce obedience to its avoidance by the extremist of measures.

My own awakening to a necessary and then compelling interest in this area of taxonomy came about when designing Biosphere 2. I started out conventionally enough by using

the Five Kingdom approach on the biospheric part of the design and trying to get species also of the ninety-two phyla as identified by Margulis. It soon became obvious that on a purely biological survival basis humans took as many resources as most if not all of the other phyla. I soon understood that ecological criteria are not taken into much account in taxonomy. When calculating what humans needed in order to survive and advance culturally, psychologically, and technically for long periods of time, I found *that they had to use about the same scale of biospheric production as each of the recognized five kingdoms*. Checking the use of Biosphere 1’s production and resources, the same basic fact was found to be true. Humans and their cultural infrastructure use about 50% of the water and over 40% of the biomass production in Biosphere 1.

Humans with their cultures and technics are found as ubiquitously as are the recognized kingdoms of eucaryotes, plants, fungi, and animals, and are tracking the bacteria down to thirty thousand feet and in boiling hot springs, and have taken the other five kingdoms into space where only the bacteria may have been before, conveyed by meteors from as yet unknown origins.

Simply recognizing this fact, that humans had to be considered metabolically on the scale of the other kingdoms in Biosphere 2, was only half the solution. Humans in the experiment had also, to survive, to have a way of life (culture) that had a purpose (minimumly to survive in, master, and discover the laws of a biosphere different in many respects from the biosphere in which they had developed), a technics, and a thorough communications system (*cybersphere*, which I first called a nerve system) designed into Biosphere 2. In effect, Biosphere 2 was Noosphere 1, as Josef Gitelson, the Russian biophysicist and biospheric scientist often called it. The necessity of finding a practical solution to building an operating model of Biosphere 1 forced me to recognize the truth of Huxley’s and Lorenz’s insistence that

humanity was a kingdom profoundly intertwined with the entire biosphere just as the other kingdoms and also profoundly altering the nature of the biosphere with its needs and its abilities to satisfy them and that the evolutionary mutation that allowed this new kingdom to survive and evolve further was indeed the adaptive radiation of cultures, a transmissible and rapidly adaptable set of behavioral units, or memes. That the genetic basis of humans probably is species-specific in the sense that humans from any culture can commence the breeding process with a human from any other culture may be true, certainly if the statement is slightly modified to stating that in the continuum of cultures there is no barrier to a two step commencement of the breeding process between any two reproducing populations. However, the end of the breeding process, birth, can only take place if the baby is born by the procedures of one culture if the two cultures are different. The baby cannot be born by the mother hanging from a tree and the mother lying anesthetized in a hospital the same time.

The evolution of a new breeding pattern is the generator of new kingdoms. From the animal sperm-egg mutation to the human sperm-egg-culture mutation is such a change. When a new breeding pattern generates enough adaptations to radiate throughout a biosphere this ecological success confirms the taxonomic status of kingdom. Fungi developed the method of embryos developing from spores.

As Biosphere 2 design progressed after I studied the data from the Test Module experiments and my experience inside, I was forced to consider the matter more deeply and concluded that a biospheric uncertainty principle operated at the biospheric scale, too large for humans to see (our view from space can only see one-half the Biosphere) just as the quantum level is too small for humans to measure without interfering with the accuracy of either the position or momentum measurement of the photon. The biosphere

is so large that measuring humans' cultural requirements and influences exactly interferes with the accuracy of measuring their metabolic needs and influences. Measuring their metabolic needs and influences exactly interferes with the accuracy of measuring their cultural requirements and influences. Therefore, just as in quantum mechanics, I had to devise a *quantum biospherics* in which the design included a way to exactly measure humans as to their metabolic needs and reciprocities (for example, water and oxygen which must be present in certain quantities) and another way to measure humans as to their metaphysical or cultural necessities (for example, books, kitchen, laboratory, schedules, privacy, etc.). I had to switch my studies back and forth between metabolics and metaphysics to arrive at what at last appeared to me to be a representation of the human group, my quantum, in a manner that satisfied all my design necessities and has provided the master key for my projects and problems since 1987 when I gave the go ahead for Margaret Augustine to mark out the site from which she could build the apparatus that would house the biosphere experiment. Thirteen years does not rank with Darwin's heroic thirty years of preparation to commence publishing his results, but that much effort does mean that I am not rushing into print and that much testing, dialogue, and reading evolutionists is incorporated into this first notice of my preparation of the book, *The Ascent of Humans*, the natural and cultural selection of the sixth kingdom, descended from a subspecies of the phylum *Crania* which descended from a species of the order of Walking Apes which descended from the family of the *Pongidae*, and whose future genetic-memetic evolution includes the possibility of mutation into the domain, *Demiurgia*, by using the methods of accelerated evolution noted by Julian Huxley.

The result of all this is that to locate humanity properly, that is, to accord with all past scientific data and to generate fruitfully new scientific data, and to allow

the fullest range to the contemplative benefits of science, and to open the widest range of advance of the ecology of technics and the technics of ecology, ecotechnics, I found I needed three levels of taxonomy. On the first, that is, as a life form without culture participating metabolically reciprocally with all other life forms, I used the classification of *Crania*, a phylum, with the notion that an upright running big-brained structural plan and life strategy of neotony for humans identified them as a phylum since the operative structure had passed from the lower two brains and vertebrae to the cerebrum being the activating factor in the body design. The attainment of phylum level took place with the mutation from *Homo Habilis* to *Homo Erectus* who proceeded to break out of the few econiches in which *Homo* could survive to spread throughout the continents and nearby islands of EurAsAfrica and became able to deal with any felines, canines, *ursae*, crocodiles or snakes.

The mutation from the phylum level took place with the invention of culture between 40-60,000 years ago which led to oceanic travel and the settling of Australia and the conquest of the Arctic which led to the settling of the Americas and placed the human kingdom in a position to radiate more rapidly than any kingdom since the first bacteria and to be found in any biome of the Biosphere by the early twentieth century with Shackleton's expedition into the Antarctic interior. Within sixty more years the new kingdom had made an adaptive radiation into space and was gathering data to adaptively radiate onto the Moon and Mars.

Designing and building Biosphere 2 soon brought me into an even more intimate contact with those intrepid groups and courageous thinkers in Russia and the United States determined to start the adaptive radiation of the new kingdom onto Moon and Mars and thence to planets yet unknown around other stars, perhaps with stops along the way on some of the outer Moons. To build into Biosphere 2 elements

that would be useful to this aim, and aims had been introduced into evolution by the selection of human cultures as part of the Biosphere, would require the beginning of designing a nerve system that would be, so to speak, the missing third lobe of the cerebellum, the cybersphere, the lobe that, connected by computer with the same hands and brains and eyes of the human kingdom as the first two lobes would provide memory, communication, feedbacks, and simulations of consequences of acting on in complex systems on such a scale as to make this third lobe a collective lobe into which any group quantum could plug. A group quantum I defined as any set of *Crania* who are united by a common aim, that is, they have at least a sub-culture. All humans descended from the ancestral group(s) that invented culture are part of at least one group quantum, in other words, part of the human kingdom, which I called *Symbolia* for its primary method of transmitting memes.

At this point I was struck by the proposal of a taxonomy that demanded a level beyond kingdoms, just as ancient kingdoms had a word for another level of similarity when these kingdoms existed in a more comprehensive similarity that they all recognized. In Greek, this was called the *ecumene*. The taxonomic proposal was to use the word domain for those large aggregations of similarities in form, function, and scale that played decisive roles in biospheric creation and maintenance. It proposed that archeobacteria, the bacteria that lived in anaerobic, non-oxygen, econiches, the bacteria, and the eucaryotes were these fundamental domains. Each of these three is associated with fundamental changes in the Biosphere, what the Russian, Lapo, calls Bygone Biospheres. The eucaryotes provided the springboard for the three great kingdoms of animals, plants, and fungi from 600-800 million years ago.

The bacteria changed the composition of the atmosphere to high oxygen and low carbon dioxide from low oxygen and high

carbon dioxide and the archeobacteria formed the first biosphere in which small increases in oxygen from their byproducts allowed the bacterial mutation(s) to adaptively radiate.

It then occurred to me that if a true mastery of both earth biospheres and artificial biospheres could be combined and, after that, if a successful adaptive radiation occurred of space biospheres on the Moon and/or Mars, that humans would then have to be classified as the *Fourth Domain* because the combined efforts of humans, archeobacteria, bacteria, and the eucaryotes would be required to make such an effort succeed. Such a mutation of memes and development of themes to deal with different cosmic worlds would bring about the fullest development of the evolutionary potentialities contained in the human genetic-memetic pool, that is, the ethnosphere, or the range of values, teleos, goals, in human cultures, the technosphere, or the range of memes embodied in extra-biologic useful objects, and the cybersphere, or the third lobe, as described above, including communication from vast distances such as interplanetary via virtual reality imaginations in the third lobe, and finishing the creation of the noosphere.

To realize the noosphere, Vernadsky, the founder of biospherics, called for the fullest



integration of scientific knowledge and its several methods into human reason, without the loss of its artistic, romantic, and freedom loving knowledges. The *noosphere*, or

sphere of intelligence, is the point where Buckminster Fuller envisioned the micro-incisive and macro-comprehensive anticipatory synergetic design becoming the norm of human behaviour. This point still lies in the future but the proper taxonomy of

humans will move that point closer to reality.

The successful design, building, and completion of a sustainable, co-evolutionary Mars settlement would prove conclusively the arrival of this stage of human development past a kingdom into a *domain*, an integral positive vector in the epic unfolding of the implicate universe that can, through dramatic (possible and actual failures) stages develop into a quasi if not actually immortal ever evolving cosmos. A space biosphere evolving and flourishing (biomass and biodiversity and cultural diversity) on Mars can only get there by first establishing a noosphere on Earth because only a noosphere here will understand the necessity of checking all its Earth derived biodata on Mars to ensure its objectivity. And a noosphere will probably only arrive on Earth by successfully completing a Mars on Earth model on Earth to prove that such an approach can work on Earth and be allowed to adaptively radiate over the planet.

The major piece of non-scientific superstition holding back the accomplishment of this task is not religion, it is the determined assertion that humanity is a short-lived meaningless ape is an assertion that sits at the table of science only because it has not been deconstructed as to the interests it serves and served when it was first foisted on the most profound theory ever developed by human minds, Darwin's and Wallace's Theory of Evolution. Bates was in that quantum group as the third, but gave up and gave his beetle collection of adaptive radiations to Darwin. Apehood is a taxonomy that serves those who treat other humans, not to speak of animals, as a means to their ends and don't want a bad conscience or a bad press. After all, we are all only a shortlived ape species.

Not only does the taxonomy of *homo* as a species of ape deconstruct to an apologia for the devaluation of life by the imperiums and economiums and educatoriums, but it flouts science itself by ignoring the discovery of the vast length of time, at least

5,000,000 years in which *Australopithecines* stood upright followed by *Homo Erectus* growing its brain size and structure and then by modern humans who probably 60,000 and certainly by 40,000 years ago created culture as a coherent, stimulating, complex body of behaviors performable by *Crania* that could be mutated meme by meme several times a generation, each time taking about the time it takes a bacteria to ingest a new piece of DNA while accumulating ever more information and at intervals discovering ever more powerful principles by which to organize that information. These groups of humans thus created the beginning strategy of a kingdom so recognized by some of the greatest of evolutionary scientists in spite of all contumely they suffered for it.

It is not science for the present existential masters of scientific funding and publications to ignore that deep conflicts exist over the taxonomy of human beings. Neither *Science* nor *Nature* publishes any comments on these conflicts. The American Association for the Advancement of Science and its British parent remain silent and continue to publish the nothingbuttery texts as if they were accepted by all life scientists. Darwin and the Theory of Evolution are not threatened by recognizing the alternate taxonomy of humans as a kingdom. Darwin and the Theory of Evolution and indeed all science is threatened by making Darwin's mistake about the status of humans into a dogma which happens to suit the interests of the present set of powerful people who have no real liking for any search for truth about the world that does not promise ideological backing for manipulation of humans. They subsidize some science willingly only because some scientists turn themselves into technicians for war and superprofits. Some sciences such as toxicology gain major funding only through outraged public pressure. Science as a whole is also weakened by all within who have refused to raise publicly in a sustained and thorough way their legitimate questions as to the factual bases for present 'mainstream'

acceptance of variants of humans being a short lived subspecies of a family of the primate order taxonomy and not to put forth alternatives that include all the new facts of paleontology and the contrasts between ethology, animal behavior and ethnology, human behavior, and the discoveries in neurology, linguistics and ecology. The requirement for fruitfulness in scientific hypotheses must also be honored, and, as Stephen Gould noted, taxonomy is not a set of pigeon holes.

The Biospheric Uncertainty Principle states that: looked at as a metabolic member of the biosphere, humans should be classified as a phylum, *Crania*; looked at as member of cultures performing technical operations transforming every element on the planet earth, indeed creating new elements appearing on earth, and having adaptively radiated throughout the biosphere with their unique breeding strategy humans should properly be classified as a kingdom, *Symbolia*. I propose this taxonomy for scientific and public use and I believe the consequences of that adoption will open up whole new lines of research, of artistic productions, of new design criteria for technics, and a general lifting of spirits and hopes for the future.

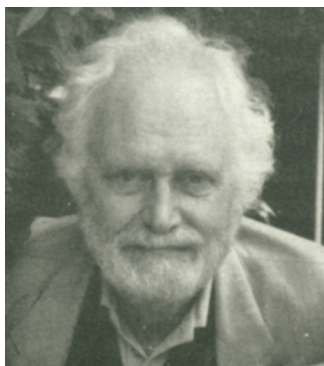
However, the processes called evolution never stop as long as there's life. If humans succeed in creating a sustainable co-evolutionary million-year-old biosphere on Mars or Moon they could then be properly classified as a domain, *Demiurgia*. I project that this is the direction certain cultures will take. World-making together with the other three domains is our evolutionary potentiality. With the synergy of evolution by mutation and natural selection on the genetic level of all the kingdoms together with mutation and natural and cultural (directional) selection on the memetic level which descended from mutation and natural selection on the genetic level humans could reach that destiny unless destroyed in a cosmic cataclysm. Realistic taxonomy must cease its denial of the kingdom scale role of humans in the Biosphere. The truth is,

humans are now intertwined with and central players in the Evolutionary Theater as Hutcheson called it.

We are here to stay as long as the Biosphere.

As Charles Darwin said, "How can anyone not see that all observation must be for or against some view if it is to be of any service." I propose the following taxonomic view of humans which has for me and I think will for anyone using it whether for or against provide extraordinary and plentiful observations of much of reality systematically covered up by the constructed text of mid-nineteenth century human classification although certainly we learned immense amounts about apes, monkeys, australopithecines, and hominadae from being for or against it. With this taxonomy, for or against, science will learn extraordinarily and plentifully and helpfully about humans, about ourselves and that process will be supported by the whole kingdom not funded only by the main benefactors of the previous hypothesis.

Our ancestor was *Crania*, Homo Erectus; our kingdom, the sixth, is *Symbolia*, Homo Sapiens; our descendants will always be *Symbolia* and *Crania* but they may also make the Biospheric Uncertainty Principle take account of the fourth domain, *Demiurgia*, at last well and truly Homo Faber.



Patrick de Mare

HUMANITY – emergence of a global experience

March 15-9, Baltimore

The seminar-dialogue held in March 2000 was marked not only by the remarkable assemblage of presenters (as listed in our last issue) but also by an enhanced sense of *koinonia* or 'impersonal fellowship'. One reason might have been the relatively low numbers who attended, affording greater intimacy. Another was certainly the open attitude of the presenters who took an active interest in each other's work.. But a key factor was undoubtedly the convening of 'median groups' by Patrick de Mare that took place twice a day. Patrick himself writes about the event:

"This consisted of a workshop entitled 'Humanity' sponsored by a movement known as 'Duversity' which was launched in 1997 by Mrs Karen Stefano, a psychologist from West Virginia where the central office is situated, and Anthony Blake who resides in Scotland and is a writer of considerable intellectual experience involving physics, mathematics, philosophy and history, encounters with David Bohm and John Bennett, and with the organisation known as the Baltimore Center for Holistic Health, now in its twentieth year, which is well known for its reputation as a centre of alternative medicine. For me, the primary significance of 'Duversity' is its emphasis on dialogue, notably in the publications by Anthony Blake entitled 'Structures of Meaning' published by the UNIS Institute in 1996, and also 'Towards a Science of Dialogue' in 1997, and earlier in 1995 'The Triad', a special issue by UNIS. The present seminar-dialogue was the fourth of a series and the present workshop . . . was opened by Anthony Blake with a comprehensive run-down of world history.

"Duversity has a current membership which is steadily growing of some 40 members,

and recently Anthony Blake and Karen Stefano came to hear of my work which I have termed 'The Median Group' – large enough to introduce a socio-cultural dimension (as distinct from the family hierarchy) and small enough for every participant to be able to speak within 11/2 hours – in fact a very old constellation practised by the hunter-gatherers thousands of years ago, and which optimally consists of 17 members. In this instance at this seminar-dialogue I was given the opportunity to convene a twice daily group – but unfortunately it was more a seminar of some 50 people as distinct from 17, and therefore could not represent a true median group. It did indeed become 17 at the last meeting, and emerged as a very representative Koinonic meeting.”

John Allen whose paper on 'Humanity as a Sixth Kingdom' appears in this issue was also a presenter.

WORKING GROUP

June 19-25 Virginia

The design of the Working Group seminar has been evolving for some years. Our intention has been increasingly to permit and enable a way of learning that is not based on authority or teaching of any kind, yet provides structure and a way of making meaning for those involved. We have also been – for both historical and research reasons – involved a wide spectrum of methods and wanted to integrate these into a working unity.

This year in June we adopted seven methods that repeated each day: experiencing, social dreaming, movements, collage, dialogue, structural communication and ILM. These methods and the structure that integrated them can be found described in the article 'Event Design' that will be appearing on our web site in the near future. A full report on the event compiled by participants will also be posted. For the

moment, here is just an excerpt from the section on *experiencing*.

EXPERIENCING

Introduction by Anthony Blake

The word 'experiencing' is a neologism connecting 'experiment' and 'experience'. It is intended to mean 'experimenting with the stuff of experience'. The neologism is used primarily to distinguish the practice from the general and largely vague way of 'meditation'. The latter word is in its origins an English equivalent of the Sanskrit *dhyana* which can be variously understood as 'concentration' or 'sustained thought', as opposed to dispersal and fluctuation. However, 'meditation' has become a generic term for sitting with closed eyes and following some guided visualisation or recitation of a mantra.

The present practice of experiencing has emerged from work with techniques inherited from John Bennett. These were then called 'morning exercises' and derived in their turn from indications from G. I. Gurdjieff with inputs from various other sources such as Taoist and Sufi methods. Gurdjieff's own indications, as far as we know them, were based on two main ingredients: (a) the distinction and fusion of 'I' and 'am', (b) the distinction and blending of sensation, feeling and thought. These exercises were active on the part of the subject and they did not rely on images but on some more direct 'sense' of quality of energy.

Following in this tradition, we have begun to explore what is essential in this active method. To do so, we have had to depart from accepted practice in one important respect: in the past, practitioners either did a set exercise in silence or were guided through by an instructor. Indeed, being guided through by someone who had previously established the exercise in himself was and is considered to be the right way of being initiated into the exercise. With Mr Bennett, we had groups doing an exercise who met at other times

and were able to report on their experiences and ask questions. Our main departure from this tradition has been to allow and even encourage comments to be made by any participant during the exercise or 'experiencing'. Though the session is directed by one person, he or she is open to what is proceeding in the rest of the people.

This means that (a) the exercise itself is exploratory and is not a member of a set canon, and (b) any statements made by participants feeds back into the process through the guiding person. In an idealistic sense, the 'guide' could be seen as 'the voice of the people', bringing to expression what is emergent in them as it happens.

The generic form of experiencing first looks into 'containment' – in various ways, such as 'presence', 'location', 'body', 'perception', etc. - and then looks into what differentiations can be made in the stuff of experience 'within the container'. The kind of differentiation made depends on background understanding of the human composition. Still, for the most part, we follow the guidelines of a threefold distinction, crudely understood in terms of 'thought', 'feeling' and 'sensation'.

What an experiencing is about cannot be defined apart from those who are actively engaged in it. We feel it is important to follow the indications of Rumi, for example, whose phrase *fihī ma fihī* ("in it what is in it") sums up the hermeneutic approach we follow. It is very important indeed for all those involved to seek out and continue to seek out the essential meaning of what they do and not rely on the person in the authority role to define meaning for them.

It came to me that here was something integral to what the 'exercise' IS. I now believe that having, for example as may happen, a diversity of descriptions is a great benefit. The whole idea that 'we' did the 'same thing' needs to be held in question (though not dismissed out of hand).

I will just say that my guiding initiative or the main influence upon me at the time this was designed came from meeting an old friend, another student of Bennett, who was giving a series of lectures on mysticism according to the four main levels of 'mental energy'. I was constantly occupied with the question of moving between different levels without being fixated on what these were, i.e. it was not coming from a mental model. There is some general kind of pattern concerning the state of the facilitator and that of the participants.

Experiences

Written by participants

The hypothesis of experiencing is that the "stuff" of experience – thought, sensation, feeling – can be objectified, spoken of, and thereby shaped. It is similar to what was formerly known as Morning Exercise or Sitting, except that this year an important distinction was made between operating from a mental model and participating in an action. It was therefore an experiment in participation where members of the group, using the practice of self-observation, actually tried to describe what was happening for them in the moment.

For me writing these words on the page like this deprives it of its essence, sucking the life out of it. It becomes intellectual, a mental model, and sounds like every other "meditation" that is described prescriptively or retrospectively. What we need for this is a virtual reality module into which each reader could enter, participate, and change the shape of the whole.

However, with this limited tool I can at least try to describe my experience. The first awareness is that of "waiting." Waiting because this is not something that one does, *per se*. It is an experience that comes, that surrounds, that becomes a container. This container is, at first, the body, sheathed in skin, coursing blood, held by bones and muscles. We can experience this physical containment, experiment with it. The quality of attention becomes important here.

Deliberate random movements, at first external then internal, keep one from passing over into dreaming. These movements first pass unnoticed, then are noticed, then deliberately made, and are accepted into a larger container.

And there is the world “outside” – sights, smells, sounds, the feeling of the air across the body. And that becomes the container, accepted into the container, finally used to fuel the container because, after all, they are here now as well.

And then you see that it is, after all, only like remembering and forgetting – it really is nothing new. It is something you have known all along, but forgotten. You slip back into the remembering, and when you forget you remember you have forgotten and are remembering again.

From here any number of journeys can be taken, shaped, and described. For me the speaking was very difficult. I wanted to try it because it was an interesting experiment, intellectually. But I was afraid of diminishing my own experience and, even more important, that of the others. But the few times I tried it, speaking felt similar to opening my eyes, which was also very difficult. Both seem to ground the experience in everyday reality, making it more possible to, later and in reverse, bring the “knowing” into the ordinary experiences of one’s life.

I was in a semi-meditative state during these early morning sessions. The “stuff” of experience I experimented with was the containment of my developmental quest which till Sweet Briar was insanely synoptic but lacked depth of intelligence, in other words, considered thought and emotional commitment. The medallion design of the room’s oriental rug became a container. It was colorful, seemingly chaotic, but ordered. It had horizontal and vertical symmetry flowing artistically out of a tetradic center. The border was scalloped providing openings permeable to the

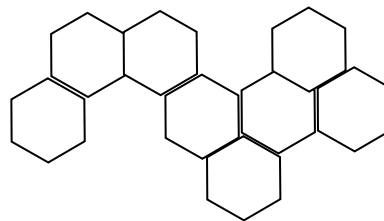
outside world. There were many small blossoms within the medallion suggesting molecules of meaning for me. The molecules were related to each other through different patterns.

As the week unfolded, I realized my medallion or mandala was a horizontal plane. It lacked a deep foundation of meaning and thus showed-up in my life as helter-skelter. As a result of Sweet Briar, my quest has taken on new form. Stop filling-in the tapestry of ideas and concentrate on awakening intelligence and making meaning.

SYSTEMATICS

May 5-7 Delaware

This was first in gathering together practitioners and thinkers who wished to develop the key ideas on systems thinking introduced by John Bennett in the 1960s. We were able to hear of various lines of application, as well as review history and some theory. One of the outcomes of this meeting was the realisation that systematics is greatly helped by the use of *logovisual technology* – the method that evolved out of *structural communication* (see last issue and ‘DuVersity in China’ in this). This method embodies much of John Bennett’s research into learning and provides a working tool for handling the *processes* involved in making systematics work.



A complex ‘molecule of meaning’

James Patton is looking into running courses making systematics more widely available and appealing to people. Anthony Blake is writing a handbook on LVT (logovisual technology).

DUVERSITY IN CHINA

One of our members, Nicolas Lecerf, invited Anthony Blake, the Director of Studies of DuVersity, to Beijing to bring elements of Gurdjieff and Bennett's methods and introduce them to friends and colleagues. At a plant run by Chinelafarge we introduced managers to the *logovisual technology* that has been developed out of the pioneering work of John Bennett in the 1960s into *structural communication*. For this exercise, we used the phrase 'Beehive Processing' because the working tools of logovisual technology are usually yellow hexagons that build into honeycomb patterns.



A Chinese plant manager using hexagons in the 'Beehive Process'

This was a special moment - to see whether this technology would take in a different culture. Today's managers in China have to deal not only with the Maoist legacy but also with the ingrained Confucianism that tends to separate superiors and subordinates and make freedom of expression difficult. We were delighted to observe how animated everyone became and the energetic flow of communication that was enabled. We hope that this work will continue.

Anthony was also able to introduce the Gurdjieff movements and other features of Gurdjieff's methodology to a circle of Nicolas' friends. Nicolas had just come back from a gathering at Salt Lake City,



where he met with many people experimenting with a more open and democratic approach to implementing Gurdjieff's ideas. The Chinese proved remarkably fast at learning the Movements. Amongst those present were two remarkable young Chinese women, Miss HU Yimeng pianist and Miss CAI Yang player of the Chinese violin the *Erhu* (shown below) who collaborated with Nicolas in performing Gurdjieff's music for a charity that supports Tibetan orphans.* Classes in the Movements are continuing and Anthony has been invited back next year to run a full Summer School.



* A CD of this excellent performance is available through abintra@molalla.net for \$10, all proceeds going to the Tibetan orphanage (further donations welcomed).

FORTHCOMING

WORKING GROUP

December 6-10

Claymont Court, West Virginia

The Working Group is a design of learning experience developed over many years through the annual DuVersity week long seminars held at Sweet Briar in Virginia. This year, the experience proved so meaningful to the participants that we decided to run another similar event after six months. If it proves feasible, we aim to run 'Working Group' at least twice yearly from now on. The next event at Sweet Briar will be held June 17-24, 2001.

CONTINUING THE QUEST

With Dr Edith Wallace in Santa Fe

December 14-17

Based on tissue paper collage and story telling, this offers a creative way of discovering what is emerging in oneself.

MAGICAL EGYPT

With John Anthony West

October 22 to November 7

More than 25 people will embark on this tour, many of whom have worked together in the past to research personal and cultural meaning and nearly all of whom have grounding in the ideas and methods of Gurdjieff and Bennett.

SACRED SITES OF NEW MEXICO

With Joseph Rael

August 2-12 2001

Our next tour will take us to significant places and ceremonies in New Mexico, guided by Beautiful Painted Arrow (Joseph Rael).

METHODS OF THE SOUL

March 22 to 25

Claymont Court, West Virginia

This will be our fifth seminar-dialogue embracing a wide diversity of teachings and methods, but the first at another locale from the Baltimore Center for Holistic Health. We are adopting a rather different approach to the seminar design than before. Emphasis will be placed on practising methods together as a whole group and we will be reducing the

number of presenters to make this possible. The spirit of the event is expressed by Joseph Rael in the following words: "Universal intelligence is light and we need light in order to quench our thirst for knowledge and wisdom. Soul needs to be nurtured with light and the light that it drinks is the work that we apply ourselves to in the physical world and that activity may be considered worship and it is that worship that quenches the soul."

Particular teachings and belief systems will be minimised in relation to the spirit of practice. We aim to integrate the Movements (derived from Gurdjieff) with Dialogue (as shown by the work of Patrick de Mare) and Logovisual Technology (derived from the structural communication of John Bennett).

SYSTEMATICS

Date and venue yet to be arranged

James Patton and others are designing a course in systematics. The emphasis will be on the practical *creation of meaning in life*. It is hoped that this will include use of LVT.

MOVEMENTS AND MEANING

Some time in January

Sebastopol, California

We will be continuing our work in California with Russell and Elisabeth Schrieber using Gurdjieff's Movements in a context of enquiry.

WORKS OF GURDJIEFF

The Obligatories and the 39

Wim van Dullemen has just completed recording the Obligatories and the 39, which will be available soon on CD. The Gurdjieff family, represented by Serge Troude, has now established full rights to the literature, music and movements of Gurdjieff and aim to encourage centres to spread his ideas without partisanship.

METHODOLOGY

www.duversity.org

Our web site will be carrying a series of essays on the research and methodology fostered by the DuVersity. These include: systematics, structural communication, ILM, N-logue and Event Design. Anthony Blake is also writing a handbook on LVT that explains its relevance for thinking, creativity, design and communication.