
GOOD CITY FORM

We have had a detailed look at the Plato's lower utopia. The purpose of that study has been to show that within Plato's Laws there is a description of the city which manifests fully the metaphysical form of Conceptual Being. In the course of this perusal, we have discovered the autopoietic ring which exists just before full fusion occurs. The lower utopia manifests the form of this autopoietic ring, whereas the higher utopia of the Republic manifests the form of complete fusion. The autopoietic ring is a lost possibility which has been forgotten and ignored within the metaphysical epoch. But by reviving this possibility, we have seen that Plato has projected the full structure of the metaphysical era from the beginning. That full structure is even more complex and sophisticated than all the later attempts to represent the form of the metaphysical within this epoch. Thus, it is not necessary for us to cover in detail the intervening history of metaphysics between Plato's day and our own. It is truly a footnote to Plato's amazing work. His acuteness of vision, seeing all the possibilities

in the unfolding of the possibilities implicit metaphysical is truly astonishing. Not only does he portray in the Republic the analogy of the fusion of Conceptual Being using the city as an example, but he unfolds the lost possibility of the autopoietic ring which haunts the hollowness of the Western will to power with the promise of wholeness. This contrast between the human utopia and the kakatopia has served to channel our development of the possibilities within the metaphysical era. We have realized the kakatopia taking the Republic as the idea, and forgotten the possibility of the autopoietic unity. Plato also plays with the difference between the positive and negative fourfolds. He rejects the negative fourfold, but then allows for its influence. All later Western philosophy not only rejects the negative fourfold, but also forgets its influence, thus risking inundation by the dark feminine side of existence that has been excluded. Plato clearly shows the relation between the Good as the single source and the Nihilistic Enframing. The Good manifests as non-nihilistic distinctions, as for instance in the marriage vow, and in the autopoietic ring within the intersubjective field. The enframing of nihilistic opposites is necessary so that the non-nihilistic distinction may be discerned. The dialectic of nihilistic opposites generates artificial emergence which, in turn, allows genuine emergence to be distinguished. Also, Plato deals with the rough hewn distinction between

partial objects and the body without organs. This is covered in terms of the manifestation from out of the autopoietic ring of its various aspects. The ring appears as either a closed system (windegg, amphora) or as an open rough hewn system of partial objects (birds, bees). We talk of the birds and the bees when we refer to sex for a real reason. Their non-human sex represents partiality for us. This is the inherent partiality of the network of nodes in the autopoietic network. They point back to the autopoietic ring which manifests its five aspects over and against its closure. All these aspects of the structure of manifestation we saw outlined in Aristophanes' theogony and reaffirmed in the Odyssey, are addressed one way or another by Plato. We have explored how he has addressed them and have shown that he still sees the full structure of manifestation regardless of his rejection of some parts and his emphasis on other aspects. All this has been clearly delineated in our commentary on the Laws.

As a transition, I would like to address the formulation of Good City Form using Kevin Lynch's book of that name as a point of departure. In our exploration of the deep structure of manifestation which stretches beneath the positive fourfold and Enframing of Heidegger, we have continuously dealt with cities. Cities are intersubjective stages on which manifestation plays itself out. We saw,

in the ideal form of the Greek sacred city, the four layers of Being, and then saw that this structure was opposite that which appeared in Hoplite warfare. We also saw how these layers of Being might be applied to the deep structure of manifestation, and through that realized that the autopoietic ring stretched outside those layers and thus was essentially empty. By this, we discovered that all non-nihilistic distinctions are ultimately empty. Marriage, for instance, is a vow. The distinction between a married and unmarried man or woman appears in no place within the world. It is an entirely unmanifest unseen reality. It is not hidden like the negative fourfold, and therefore conspicuous by its absence. No, the non-nihilistic distinctions are completely empty. They only exist on the background of manifestation as an empty distinction. This realization of the emptiness of the autopoietic form makes it possible to understand its importance. It is the one aspect of Being that extends beyond Being, and because of that, it can be *holoidal*, represent interpenetration. The autopoietic unity is a form of no-form. It leads us out of the kakatopia into the light of emptiness and interpenetration. It gives us access to the true utopia. Where Being strives to cling to existence and fails continuously, the autopoietic ring continuously preserves its own form and achieves stasis through a dynamic balancing. This can only occur because the autopoietic ring is itself completely empty. It

is an illusion of continuity outside of Being. It is a handle on Being, by which we grasp its innermost structure. The different kinds of Being are affirmed, also, as we follow the entry of Odysseus into Schiera and see the stages of his appearance as an emergent event. So throughout our exploration, we find again and again allusions to the four kinds of Being and their structuring of manifestation. However, it is still unclear what role they play in the underlying foundations of the manifestation of the Western *uni*-verse. The rest of these essays will address this issue. We must realize that the relation between negative and positive fourfold is more complex than the mere standoff between the two that appears in either ontological monism or ontological dualism. The male and female elements have a subtle and profound interaction which we will discover as we go along, attempting to look deeper into the foundations of the Western worldview.

But as we explore manifestation and its structuring by the kinds of Being, we slowly realize that it cannot be divorced from the consideration of intersubjectivity. So we can ask what the nature of the intersubjective unity is, and we get the answer that it is the autopoietic ring which is a non-nihilistic distinction which binds like the marriage vow. Intersubjectivity appears embodied in the form of the city. Plato has described a series of cities:

There is the Republic or Ancient Athens which is the higher utopia in which complete conceptual fusion is achieved. In the higher utopia, the positive fourfold has complete dominance. There is the City of the laws, the lower utopia, that manifests the structure of the autopoietic ring. There is the city of Atlantis which like the household, balances the negative and positive fourfolds and is destined for catastrophic destruction through cancellation. There is the real city the example of which is ancient Sparta that grew up by stages and has all possible regimes simultaneously. There is the non-city of the savages in which the negative fourfold has complete dominance. All these cities are described by Plato as the stages on which intersubjectivity manifests. Intersubjectivity has a different nature in each of these contexts. They are five cities which manifest the different faces of intersubjectivity. The utopian city oscillates between the totalitarian kakatopia and savagery. The mixed city, Atlantis, does not oscillate but appears suddenly from out of the sea and then vanishes catastrophically. Only the real city and the lower utopian city persist. The persistence of the real city is based on the mixed constitution which adheres to all forms of government simultaneously. The persistence of the lower utopia is based on the manifestation of the form of the autopoietic unity. Plato wants to take the real city and transform it into the lower utopia. The real city is

inundated by the *ephemeron*, and Plato wants to make it realize the possibility of *Holoidal* unity. In the lower utopia, all the parts interpenetrate. They are an autopoietic network of households, all partial, which by holding together and practicing self-organization, are able to persist and keep the autopoietic unity in formation. They bring together the two wings of immortality and hold them together in a paradoxical formation which allows them to embody the Good and lead their lives based on the continuous guidance of non-nihilistic distinctions. In Western history, this possibility, which allows us to live at the stage just before fusion into conceptual Being, has all but been forgotten. It haunts us as we walk through our hollow hellish cities. We long for wholeness. We speak the words of neighborhood, community, cult and express our deep desire for the Wholeness that this possibility offers. But like the soliton waves that are not effected by entropy, the autopoietic ring, as an intersubjective structure, can only be realized in closed institutions under special circumstances that are almost impossible to replicate. So except for a few special instances like perhaps the Oneida community, or the brief history of some cults and communes, this possibility does not appear within our society. Where it does appear, it is a revolution because these intersubjective structures have the form of the emergent event. They themselves are stable and non-emergent

only because they embody the structure of the emergent event themselves. All other societies and cultures are subject to emergence in which new things come into existence by passing through the four stages of Being. Other than that, the real cities are filled with artificial emergence which is the preparation for the recognition of the genuine emergent event when it occurs.

The city is the environmental platform for the intersubjective project of a people. Kevin Lynch only mentions Plato in passing, but it was Plato who first considered the problem of what was “good city form.” Plato’s whole point is to define what a city oriented toward the Good might be like. His five cities all stand in different relations to the Good. The higher utopia is suffused with the Good because the individual, household, and city have become identified completely. But that form of city is not robust; it continually turns into its opposite, which is a hell on earth. The lower utopia is the only city that can maintain its pointing toward the Good. The autopoietic unity gives a stable platform from which this pointing may be maintained. This is possible because the autopoietic unity itself is empty, and is, therefore, a form beyond form. For the autopoietically-based city, the Good is like a well or source within its walls, and so it can stand the siege of nihilism within the world. It is not too close to the Good

as the higher utopia may be seen to be. It stands back from the Good and has room to point toward it, constantly tracking it as the source of non-nihilistic distinctions flooding into the world. Because the higher utopia is too close to the Good, it cannot maintain its tracking and constantly falls out of synchronization and resonance with the single source of causation. It is constantly becoming its opposite -- the barbaric city or totalitarian kakatopia. The third city represented by Atlantis is a perfect balancing of all the opposites, and as such, becomes the site for their cancellation. The balanced city is not good because of the necessity of symmetry breaking. There must be dominance of one opposite over the other. Where there is no dominance, there is confusion, and hubris. The male and female, in order to resonate, must be in a dynamic balance that can only be achieved through the slight dominance of one over the other. In the lower utopian city, the positive fourfold has dominance. In the real city, the negative fourfold had dominance. These are the only two city forms that escape the nihilistic enframing. The balanced city obstructs the good because the play of opposites in manifestation drowns out the sighting of the Good. When there is balance, the opposites roil and surge against each other, and there is conflict as the natural outcome. The real city, like the autopoietic city, is long lived. The example was Sparta. It is composed of a

mixture of every type of regime simultaneously. It is a mixture, but there is dominance of the negative fourfold in its nature. Thus, in the real city, there is an element of Covering, Chaos, The Abyss and Darkness. In the real city, there is an active immanent part, a collective unconscious which is constantly interfering with the intersubjective projects and manifesting itself in dislocations, discontinuities, contradictions and every sort of mischief. From the real city, there are glimpses of the Good through the dark and menacing clouds. It is not obscured completely as it is in the higher utopia which cannot see it because it is too close, or in the third best city which is trapped in the surface phenomena of manifestation itself as opposites continually cancel. It is not visible continuously as it is in the lower utopia. Rather, in the real city, there are moments when the sunlight shines through in an environment where mostly there are dark clouds and impending thunderstorms. Of course, the fifth city is no city at all. It is savagery in which the Good is not just hidden, but does not exist for the inhabitants. The savages are barbarous and destructive. They may be those who have sunk back into destructive behavior after having seen the Good. They are not those who are the original men of earth and have just realized their humanity. This is why the oscillation of the higher utopia and savagery is so destructive. Here we are oscillating between civilization and anti-

civilization. The savages are wantonly destructive. Another kind of savage are the ones who, because civilization has been destroyed, revert to a simple life, or those who have not yet gained civilization. These other savages are outside the city all together. They do not know about the gods to deny them. The Cyclops denies the power of Zeus and then, in the end, Curses by Poseidon. He is one who has turned his back on the Gods but still really operates in a world ruled by the gods. The other savages are those who have forgotten completely about the gods or never knew about them in the first place. The savages, or barbarians that set up an anti-civilization have no access to the Good at all. The savages that are mankind in his natural state before all civilization, if that is possible, orient themselves to bodily goods without knowing about the existence of the whole of virtue. Thus, they only know health, strength, beauty, and wealth without having any inkling of *courage, justice, moderation* or *wisdom*, or any of the spiritual goods.

These cities of Plato say volumes about the Human Good. And a great deal of attention is paid to the environment and settings of these cities. But the actual good in the form of the city is not stressed. The stress is, instead, on human good, not the good in the setting divorced from the human intersubjective project. Kevin Lynch focuses

his attention on this aspect of the good in the environment that supports the intersubjective cohort. He identifies five dimensions that this platform or substrate should have to make it “good.” These are *vitality*, *sense*, *fitness*, *accessibility* and *control*.

So what is good city form? Now we can say the magic words. It is vital (sustenant, safe, and consonant); it is sensible (identifiable, structured, congruent, transparent, legible, unfolding and significant); it is fitted (a close match of form and behavior which is stable, manipulable, and resilient); it is accessible (diverse, equitable, and locally manageable); and it is controlled (congruent, certain, responsible, and intermittently loose). And all of these are achieved with justice and internal efficiency. Or in more general terms of . . . it is continuous, well-connected, open place, conducive to development.¹

Kevin Lynch is describing what a good place for the intersubjective cohort should be like. He has five attributes associated with some 20 sub-attributes. His five attributes are well chosen, and he describes the process he went through before settling on these. They can be understood as an approximation of the

1. GOOD CITY FORM; Kevin Lynch; page 235

intersubjective autopoietic ring. All such rings are isomorphic to the five hsing of chinese medicine and cosmology.

EARTH --> VITAL -
LONGING (?)

METAL --> WELL CONTROLLED - DESIRE (?)

WATER --> ACCESSIBLE - EROS (?)

WOOD --> WELL FITTED -
PERSUASION (?)

FIRE --> SENSIBLE - ACTION
(?)

We have spoken a lot about the fivefold division of Aphrodite in the Greek world. The point has been made that in the Indo-European world, this basic structure has been taken over and held hostage by ontology which projects Being as clinging on everything. In such a regime, it is only right that the autopoietic unity should be represented as desire, and the realization of desire, i.e. the process of clinging and craving itself. However, the fivefold relation of the autopoietic ring may manifest by a completely different set of qualities, and I think Kevin Lynch has done a good job of identifying at least one view of how they manifest in relation to the environmental platform for the intersubjective cohort.

There are many other ways that the structure of the ring may manifest in other realms of endeavor. In software engineering, we have the phases of software development of which each has their particular quality of transformation: Requirements, Design, Implementation, Integration, and Test. In systems analysis, there is Requirements Analysis, Functional Decomposition, Functional and Performance Allocation, Synthesis and final Systems Analysis. In the scientific method, there is Theorizing, Hypothesis, Experimental Design, Experimental Construction, and Test. Other fields probably manifest similar rings of transformations. It is normally difficult to define these transformations exactly. But what one must look for are a series of related steps which transform products that are all very different from each other but are necessary in order to produce the final product. As Varella points out in his Embodied Mind, there is co-dependent arising between the phases of the autopoietic ring. The ring does not need to be divided into just five phases. Other higher dimensional structures may render rings of 8, 16, 24, and 120 or 600 phases. And these are just the four dimensional forms. There are still many more higher dimensional forms that might be used to produce the basic patterning. In fact, stepping up through the dimension, you may have almost any number greater than five. The fivefold autopoietic ring is merely the simplest. A number of facets less than five is

impossible. Four makes a minimal system, and anything less is not a system. As discussed earlier in regard to artificial intelligence, the eightfold ring seems to be in operation. Thus, the number is not important. What is important is the relation of a series of very different transformations that are all independent but together produce a product of human work. Thus, humans working together construct their world in such a way that autopoietic structures are formed. Autopoietic structures are not rare, but a normal human production. What is rare is for them to be self-conscious and directed toward the Good as they are in Plato's lower utopia.

Normally, we live in the real city where everything is all mixed up. There are many regimes operating simultaneously, many different sociotechnical systems with their own perspectives fragmenting the world. In order to work together, we need more than a sociotechnical system. We need to produce a way of working that supports cooperation and the involvement of multiple people. Whenever this is necessary the normal course of things is to manufacture an autopoietic intersubjective structure. In this way, partial results may be shared, and cooperation follows. This means that the job to be done is broken up into very specific phases where partial products are created that may be shared so multiple people may help in the production of the final

product. This need for partiality is the key to the introduction of the autopoietic. If the thing can be produced at one go without cooperation, then there is no need for autopoietic structures which will organize the work in the midst of doing the work. However, in those situations, it is possible to fall into the enframing. Either one may try to build everything at once so that, like the city of Atlantis, there is no foundation but like a house of cards, everything depends on everything else. In software this is called spaghetti code. Or one may fall into the trap of producing the ideal and constantly failing and falling back into chaos. These two nihilistic opposites themselves contain nihilistic opposites, and this is what qualifies them to be described as an enframing. The choices are nihilistic, and the opposite of the choices are also nihilistic. You cannot win. It is necessary to attempt to discern the essential transformations in the work that allow it to be partial so that different people can cooperate to do the task. Finding those distinctions in the work takes a long time and causes many problems because they are difficult to discern. However, slowly, over time, as many people look at the problem, they begin to emerge. They allow one to extract oneself from the situation where everything depends on everything else or its opposite, where there is an unrealizable ideal that is constantly escaping so that one always ends back up in chaos. The software engineering industry has been

fighting this problem for many years now, and the right partitioning of partial transformation is just now becoming generally accepted. Without partial transformations, everything must be done at once and held in one's head simultaneously, and so group work is impossible. The thing that makes partial transformations important is that the intersubjective cohort must organize the transformations at the same time as producing those transformations. Thus, the work becomes self-organizing. In the case of the allopoietic, the way of doing the work is designed and imposed from the outside. Thus, the savages are made to live in an ideal city not fitted to them, and so the ideal city becomes a hell on earth. The opposite of this is when everything is ad hoc because it all has to be invented from scratch each time. Self-organization is between these extremes in that it follows the line of least resistance. It is oriented toward the fundamental transformations discerned in the work to be done, and does not produce any unnecessary variety. Yet it does not design what it does not need, producing order that is not necessary. It walks the middle way between not invented here and complete following of externally produced desk procedures.

All this is to say that the cities being described by Plato are where we live and work everyday. They are not some abstract unlivable place or some far away utopia. Plato

used cities to describe what our own lifeworld is like. That lifeworld is social, and as such, it is based on emergence. Emergence is either a phenomenon that the intersubjective sociotechnical system is subject to, or which it approximates the form of in order to attempt to suppress emergence. The suppression of emergence is a major concern of the sociotechnical system because of its disastrous effects. Thus, sociotechnical systems naturally gravitate toward life-forms that imitate autopoietic rings. However, this migration is not conscious, as it is in the lower utopia. It is not directed at continuously indicating the Good which is the source of all non-nihilistic distinctions. It is merely the settling into the mode of least resistance and highest efficiency. Kevin Lynch gives us two meta-criteria: efficiency or justice. The sociotechnical system opts for efficiency. Justice is not even in the running. Efficiency is an inward-looking goal which never sees beyond itself. You notice that efficiency is never mentioned by Plato. Even utilitarians like Xenophon do not mention efficiency. This is a modern goal specifically tied to the sociotechnical system alone. That is the blind sociotechnical system that is so prevalent today that it cannot see beyond itself. All the Platonic goals look beyond the sociotechnical system, as does justice and the rest of the partial virtues. Together they look not just beyond the self, but beyond the void. The whole of virtue is oriented toward the single source

of all causation.

But if we are to say that a place has features that support the functioning of the autopoietic cohort such as vitality, fitness, sensibility, access and control, then we might say that a time must have similar features.

EARTH --> EVANESCENT (Vital)

FIRE --> OBSERVANT (Sensible)

WOOD --> APPROPRIATE (Well Fitted)

WATER --> FLOWING (Accessible)

METAL --> MEASURED (Well Controlled)

Time must support life, just as does the place. It is an upwelling which fills the life-form with its openness to the world. But a time should also be observant, giving each thing its due in due time. Here due diligence is expressed where the attention is given to those things that deserve attention, and relevance is assigned. The time must also be appropriate. Neither too much time nor too little time should be spent on each thing. But time flows, and so there is a psychology of optimal experience in which we sense the flow of time which dilates and expands, depending on the situation. Within the flow, there needs to be cadence and measured rhythms. It is through the entraining with these rhythms that different

things may resonate together and form bonds. Now it is clear that the place of dwelling is not just objective space, and the time of one's life is not just all time, but that these are the human dimensions of spacetime and timespace. However, by looking at both sets of attributes of the good place and times, it becomes clearer that these characteristics are about the appropriation of the human being within the positive and negative fourfolds which are at war within his city, and that in this sense the city is the place where you live in your lifeworld -- the form of life to which you are habituated to. There are many aspects of times and places that are hidden and disconcerting as well as many attempts made to bring light and order to ones existence. The characteristics of good places and times serves to heighten our appreciation of the movements of the positive and negative fourfold within our own world.

However, these are both, as it were, the converse of the autopoietic elements of the human being. These elements of the human subject are as follows:

EARTH --> Discrimination

METAL --> Autonomy

WATER --> Bodyimagination

WOOD --> Intentionality

FIRE --> Temporality

These are the aspects of the projected human subject which touch on the situation within his or her world. The ability to discern allows the human subject to distinguish the non-nihilistic from nihilistic distinctions. The human subject is autonomous, and as such, has freedom within the limits of the human condition and subject to the constraints which are socially and culturally imposed. The human being has a relation to spacetime or place mediated by his body imaging, and this is the way that he or she connects to the place where they live. The human subject has intentionality which gives him the focus of attention and the ability to discern significance and relevance. Meaning is a function of discrimination. Finally, the human subject projects the ecstasy of temporalization upon his lifeworld. These characteristics of the human subject are the means by which they project the world and their own lifeworld that has a specific form of life and related language game. They allow him to navigate through primary process as a secondary process and allow him to deal with the tertiary processes that are produced by secondary processes. Without these characters, the human subject would not be able to emerge from immersion in primary process. In fact, it is possible to see the genetic stages of the separation of the world in terms of these stages. The era of Uranus and

Gaia is the complete inundation of the subject into the realm of primary process. It is only with the slaying of Uranus that men enter the realm of secondary processes and discover themselves to be one among others. This is the golden age with Kronos when the lives of men were easy. Finally, in the reign, men begin producing tertiary processes themselves. We call these tertiary artifacts culture. In the metaphysical era, we enter into the realm of what may be called fourth level artifacts wherein we assume that the tertiary processes form an ideal and imaginary continuum we call ideas. These fourth level processes are all ideational and do not strictly exist. The tertiary processes are interpreted as physical things, and the metaphysical, symbolic, glosses are seen as hovering in a headland above the world, as Nietzsche calls it. So we can see that all we have said about the mythical eras of the genesis of the world applies right here and now as we can become immersed in any of these levels of process. Emergent Systems Process philosophy attempts to show how the phenomenon of emergence manifests in relation to systems within these various levels of process. Processes are never physical things except as ideational projections. The primary process is manifestation. The secondary process is autopoietic social intelligent life. The tertiary process is everything discovered in the lifeworld of autopoietic systems. In the social construction of the world, the fourth order level of

process is built which features things which are condescendences of processes and physical processes as well as concepts. All of these are based on ideation, and from an emergent systems process point of view, do not exist. They are projected socially constructed “designated as real” phantoms. Emergent Systems Process philosophy starts at the other end of things from traditional process philosophy such as that of Whitehead, and realizes that manifestation is primary process. Within manifestation, we experience kinds within the upwelling and project wholeness on those kinds in order to see secondary processes. These secondary processes have spin-offs that are not organic, which are set in motion, and these are called tertiary processes. In the projection of the world, all of these three levels of process are projected upon to produce socio-technical systems and their ideational functions that shape things in the world as physical processes or things and metaphysical ideas that weave these together into a whole. Dualism exists as relations of dominance between secondary and tertiary processes. Secondary processes set in motion and guide tertiary processes. They may set up similar relations of dominance between two different tertiary phenomena. For instance, in Greek society, the male-as-master, female-as-menace roles are both fourth level phenomena. But they are anchored back on the Greek males and females that are acting out those taught roles

that are tertiary phenomena. But each of those people are independent intelligent living organisms which are secondary processes in their own right. These people, in their experienced lifeworlds, are part of manifestation, totally embedded in it. So when Loy asks us to move back from dualistic thinking, perception and action to non-dualistic thinking, perception and action (TPA) we must realize that the actual progression is from dualistic TPA were secondary processes control and dominate tertiary processes to complementary processes as exist between human beings such as males and females which are kinds of a kind. Kinds always express their kindness toward each other. Then back to non-dualistic and non-complementary TPA in which thinking/perception/action are not distinguished. Language, in every case, is a tertiary phenomenon. It can describe secondary phenomena and indicate our tacit knowledge, but it cannot describe primary processes. We are at a loss for words when it comes to describing primary processes. For instance, the Buddhists call it Suchness, or Thusness. We only reach this and that at the level of secondary processes where the referential aspects of language are of some help. Actual naming and all semiotics only begin at the tertiary level. Language as narration or logical progression needs fourth level ideational processes to begin to create the imaginary continuity of discourse. Thus, experience has depth to it, which is always

available to those who wish to swim in that depth. Swimming in the depth means realizing that beneath the projection of the living subject within the world is the ecstasy of the world itself. This is what Heidegger calls Dasein, Being There. In his construction, the human being has Talk, Understanding and Discoversness as its differentiation of the ecstasy of projecting the world. The root of all of these is Sorge or Care. Here Heidegger is talking about the human being as primary process -- in the heart of manifestation. He interprets manifestation as Process Being. He clearly differentiates it from Pure Presence or the static Being of Kant and others. He is talking about the relation between Being and Time within the world. Our difference with him is that even deeper than *care* is a *carelessness* or Don't Care. Each type of Being has its human response which is a form the human takes in projecting the world. Thus, the human being as subject is trapped in Pure Presence. Heidegger discovered that there was the temporal gestalt and proposed the modality of the ready-to-hand to oppose the present-at-hand. This kind of Being he discovered was Process Being, in which Being is mixed with time; it is temporalized. However, Hyper Being and Wild Being both have their relations to the world. The human being can be seen as different in each of these. The human being has care when he is engaged in a process. But when discontinuities appear in that process, he becomes

questioning. His relation to the world is one of querying. The discontinuities in the process arouse his curiosity. He attempts to expand his world in order to get things in-hand. However, when the human being is deluged by discontinuous changes, as he is when antinomial opposites begin to cancel, then his attitude becomes one of not caring. Things have gotten out of hand. Thus, as we go to higher meta-levels of Being, the *care* of the human being becomes its opposite. Being, which is the subtle clinging and craving to existence, holds within it self indifference, boredom, uncaring. Thus, the care for processes which exhibits dynamic clinging and the static possession by the subject of property that has been called static clinging, both exist on the basis of other modalities which are hidden if we merely talk about *possession* and *care*. We must also consider the questioning mode that has nothing in its hands but is looking for something. It takes a certain bearing in relation to the world and pursues that bearing. Questioning is just one possible bearing: There is command, questioning, negation, statement, and promise. These are the different possible MOODS that appear in linguistics. Mood used to be a deep word in Old English for the sameness of Heart and Mind. At the level of bearing, heart and mind become merged. The understanding is not different from talk or discoveredness. There, three are one in care, but in mood, they each belong together to a type of statement

that can be addressed by one person to another. Thus, command is a kind of talk that presumes understanding and portrays a kind of discovery. Each of the other moods are the same. They reveal the bearing of the person, and that bearing reveals their capacity to bear up and hold things. The grasping of the ready-to-hand is different from holding. Holding involves both arms, not just the hands. But beyond the expression of bearing, which might be seen as a certain style of Being, there is also a *not caring* that comes when things get out of hand. This release occurs when one is enveloped. It is a letting go of the holding, a letting go. It is when one gives up on attempting to understand, and accepts some degree of ignorance. Ignorance implies that whatever it is comprehends you exactly to the extent you relinquish the attempt to understand it. Its comprehension of you is their realization of your limits. So we see that static clinging and dynamic clinging are only part of the picture of the human *beings* constitution. There is also his bearing or style of Being and there is his limits expressed in his not caring. Because of this it is important to understand all of *Being* before we attempt to say that *care* is a good thing. Care in the dynamics of clinging and craving entails not caring.

But all of this formation of different modalities of human existence is contrast to the antidote of Emptiness. In

Emergent Systems Process philosophy, we do not interpret manifestation as *Being*. Rather manifestation is interpreted as *Emptiness* or *Void*. This is the antidote to *Being* in all its meta-levels. In this modality, there is neither caring nor not caring. There is neither static nor dynamic clinging. There is no bearing toward nor being encompassed by. Instead, in this interpretation of primary process, there is interpenetration of all things. It is exactly the state that the Bodhisatva ideal looks toward.

The human being experiencing interpenetration is enlightened, and the difference between enlightenment and non-enlightenment is empty as well. So everything is interpenetrating with everything else. For Indo-Europeans, this is the reality we must cling to in order to escape the pall of Being that we have from our heritage. If we claim that everything is empty, then we escape clinging and craving even in its most subtle form, which the Concept of Being is. Our antidote is the Heart Sutra:

HEART SUTRA:

Thus I have heard. At one time the Lord was on Vulture's Peak near the city of Rajgir. He was accompanied by a large community of monks as well as a large community of bodhisatvas. On that occasion the Lord was absorbed in a particular concentration called the profound appearance.

Meanwhile the bodhisattva, the great being, the noble Avalokiteshvara was contemplating the profound discipline of perfection of wisdom. He came to see that the five aggregates were void of any inherent nature of their own.

Through the power of the Buddha, the venerable Sharputra approached the noble Avalokiteshvara and asked him, “How should a son of noble lineage proceed when he wants to train in the profound discipline of perfection of wisdom?”

The noble Avalokiteshvara replied the venerable Shariputra, “Whatever son or daughter of the noble lineage wants to train in the profound discipline of the perfection of wisdom should consider things in the following way. First, he or she should clearly and thoroughly comprehend that the five aggregates are void of any inherent nature of their own. Form is void, but voidness is form. Voidness is not other than forms and forms are not other than voidness. Similarly, feelings, discernments, formative elements, and consciousness are also void. Likewise, Shariputra, are all phenomena void. They have no defining characteristics; they are unproduced; they do not cease; they are undefined, yet they are not separate from defilement; they do not decrease, yet do not increase. This being the case,

Shariputra, in terms of voidness there exist no forms, no feelings, no discernments, no formative elements, no consciousness; no eyes, no ears, no noses, no tongues, no bodies, no minds; no visual-forms, no sounds, no smells, no tastes, no tactile sensations, no mental objects. There exist no visual elements, no mental elements, and no elements of mental consciousness. There exist no ignorance and no exhaustion of ignorance, no ageing and no death and no exhaustion of ageing and death. In the same way there exist no suffering, no origin of suffering, no cessation, no path, no wisdom, and no lack of attainment.

Therefore, Shariutra, since bodhisattvas have no attainment, they depend upon and dwell in the perfection of wisdom; their minds are unobstructed and unafraid. They transcend all error and finally reach the endpoint: nirvana.

All the buddhas of the past, present, and future have depended, and do and will depend upon the perfection of wisdom. Thereby they became, are becoming, and will become unsurpassably, perfectly and completely awakened buddhas.

Therefore, the mantra of perfection of wisdom is the mantra of great knowledge; it is an unsurpassable mantra; it is a mantra that is comparable to the incomparable; it is a mantra

that totally pacifies all suffering. It will not deceive you, therefore know it to be true! I proclaim the mantra of the perfection of the perfection of wisdom: tayatha gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi svaha². Shariputra, in this is the way and the great bodhisattvas train themselves in the profound perfection of wisdom.

At that moment the Lord arose from his concentration and said to the noble Avalokiteshvara, “Well said, well said. That is just how it is, my son, just how it is. The profound perfection of wisdom should be practiced exactly as you have explained it. Then the tathagatas will be truly delighted.”

When the Lord had spoken these words, the venerable Shariputra and the bodhisattva, the great being, the noble Avalokiteshvara, and the entire gatherings of gods, humans, asuras and gandharvas were overjoyed, and praise what the Lord had said.³

This interpretation of primary process allows us to escape from the Western worldview and view it from the

2. “Tayatha means “it is like this,” in other words “one should develop the perfection of wisdom in the following way.” The first gate [mode of existence] is interpreted here as meaning that one would firmly apply oneself to the practice of the path of accumulation. The next three words -- gate, paragate and parasamgate -- have the same meaning with respect to the paths of preparation, seeing and meditation respectively. Finally the bodhi svaha means that one should strive to realize the fifth path, the path of no-more-learning: the state of buddhahood itself. Therefore the perfection of wisdom is developed by means of progressively cultivating the five paths that culminate in buddhahood.” [ECHOS OF VOIDNESS Geshe Rabten (Wisdom Pub 1983) page 44]

3. ECHOS OF VOIDNESS Geshe Rabten (Wisdom Pub 1983)

outside. It allows us to go beyond the Western worldview. But at this point, we must turn back and view the Western worldview again, looking into its depth so we can truly be finished with it and experience completely what is revealed when we take the path beyond the void. There is no illusion that emptiness is anything other than the nihilistic opposite of Being in all its meta-levels. Buddhism comes out of the Indo-European tradition as a reaction to the excesses of Hinduism, and finally is reincorporated or cooped back into that tradition in India. It is only in China in which the Indo-European tradition was weak and where the language did not support the concept of Being but supported the concept of emptiness already that the Buddhist tradition flowered. It is as if Buddhism had to migrate out of the Indo-European sphere to be appreciated. So if we use Buddhism, it is because it is the best antidote to BEING in all its senses. And once we have used the antidote and the two final nihilistic opposites cancel, then we can look around to see the world as it is without either Being or its nihilistic opposite. This is a world clearly described in Taoist texts and in many texts from the Sufi's in Islam. It is a world untainted by Being. It is a world where we do not need emptiness because Being has not arisen to be antidoted. But it is a worldview that understands Emptiness before it understands Being because Emptiness is close to its

spirit. It is a world in which the Void is a fullness which is not merely psychological, but is truly intersubjective in nature and spreads out to include all nature. It is the world outlined in the Neo-Confucian classic Knowledge Painfully Acquired which corrects the defects in the traditional conceptions of Confucianism and shows how the traditional Chinese worldview is superior to the Buddhist worldview. The same superiority may be claimed for Islam, even more so.

Returning to the work of Kevin Lynch and the concept of good city form, let us consider his underlying model of a good city.

But some view of the nature of human settlements, however unclear or general, is necessarily assumed in making any list. Unfortunately, it is much easier to say what a city is not: not a crystal, not an organism, not a complex machine, not even an intricate network of communications -- like a computer or a nervous system -- which can learn by reorganizing its own patterns of response, but whose primitive elements are forever the same. True, somewhat like the latter, the city is interconnected to an important degree by signals, rather than by place-order or mechanical linkages or organic cohesion. It is indeed something changing and

developing, rather than an eternal form, or a mechanical repetition which in time wears out, or even a permanent recurrent cycling which feeds on the degradation of energy, which is the concept of ecology.

Yet the idea of ecology seems close to an explanation, since an ecosystem is a set of organisms in a habitat, where each organism is in some relation to others of its own kind, as well as to other species and the inorganic setting. This system of relations can be considered as a whole, and has certain characteristic features of fluctuation and development, of species diversity, of intercommunication, of the cycling of nutrients, and the pass-through of energy. The concept deals with very complex systems, with change, with organic and inorganic elements together, and with a profusion of actors and of forms.

Moreover, an ecosystem seems to be close to what a settlement is. Complicated things must in the end be understood in their own terms. An image will fail to stick if it is only a borrowing from some other area, although metaphorical borrowings are essential first steps in understanding.

Apt as it is, the concept of ecology has its drawbacks, for our purpose. Ecological systems

are made up of “unthinking” organisms, not conscious of their fatal involvement in the system and its consequences, unable to modify it in any fundamental way. The ecosystem, if undisturbed, moves to its stable climax of maturity, where the diversity of species and the efficiency of the use of energy passing through are both at the maximum, given the fixed limits of the inorganic setting. Nutrients recycled may gradually be lost to sinks, while energy inevitably escapes the system or becomes unavailable. Nothing is learned; no progressive developments ensue. The inner experiences of the organisms -- their purposes and images -- are irrelevant; only their outward behavior matters.

An evolving “learning ecology” might be a more appropriate concept for the human settlement, some of whose actors, at least, are conscious, and capable of modifying themselves and thus of changing the rules of the game. The dominant animal consciously restructures materials and switches the paths of energy flow. To the familiar ecosystem characteristics of diversity, interdependence, context, history, feedback, dynamic stability, and cyclic processing, we must add such features as values, culture, consciousness, progressive (or regressive) change, invention, the ability to learn, and the connection

of inner experience and outer action. Images, values, and the creation and flow of information play an important role. Leaps, revolutions, and catastrophes can happen, new paths can be taken. Human learning and culture have destabilized the system, and perhaps, some day other species will join the uncertainty game. The system does not inevitably move toward some fixed climax state, nor toward maximum entropy. A settlement is a valued arrangement, consciously changed and stabilized. Its elements are connected through an immense and intricate network, which can be understood only as a series of overlapping local systems, never rigidly or instantaneously linked, and yet part of a fabric without edges. Each part has a history and a context, and that history and context shift as we move from part to part. In a peculiar way, each part contains information about its local context, and by extension about the whole.

Values are implicit in that viewpoint, of course. The good city is one in which the continuity of this complex ecology is maintained while progressive change is permitted. The fundamental good is the continuous development of the individual or the small group and their culture, more richly connected, more competent, acquiring and realizing new powers -- intellectual,

emotional, social and physical. If human life is a continued state of becoming, then its continuity is founded on the growth and development (and its development on continuity: the statement is circular). IF development is a process of becoming more competent and more richly connected, then an increasing sense of connection to one's environment in space and in time is one aspect of growth. So that settlement is good which enhances continuity of a culture and the survival of its people, increases a sense of connection in time and space, and permits or spurs individual growth: development, within continuity, via openness and connection.

These values could, of course, be applied to judging a culture as well as a place. In either case, there is an inherent tension as well as a circularity between continuity and development -- between the stabilities and connections needed for coherence and the ability to change and grow. Those cultures whose organizing ideas and institutions deal successfully with that tension and circularity are presumably more desirable, in this view. Similarly, a good settlement is also an open one: accessible, decentralized, diverse, adaptable, and tolerant to experiment. This emphasis on dynamic openness is distinct from the insistence of environmentalists (and most utopians) on

recurrence and stability. The blue ribbon goes to development, as long as it keeps within the constraints of continuity in time and space. Since an unstable ecology risks disaster as well as enrichment, flexibility is important, and also the ability to learn and adapt rapidly. Conflict, stress, and uncertainty are not excluded, nor are those very human emotions of hate and fear, which accompany stress. But love and caring would certainly be there.

Any new model of the city must integrate statements of value with statements of objective relationships. The model I have sketched is neither a developed nor an explicit one, and I retreat to my more narrow concern with normative theory. But the surviving reader will see that these general preferences -- for continuity, connection, and openness -- underlay all the succeeding pages, even while the theory makes an effort to see that it is applicable in any context.⁴

This vision of what a good city is should be compared to Plato's lower utopia. When that comparison is made, it is clear that Plato has in mind something much more narrow and closer to the model of autopoietics which defines life and cognition. What Plato does is combine the cognitive aspect of the autopoietic model directly with the living

4. GOOD CITY FORM; Kevin Lynch; pages 114-117

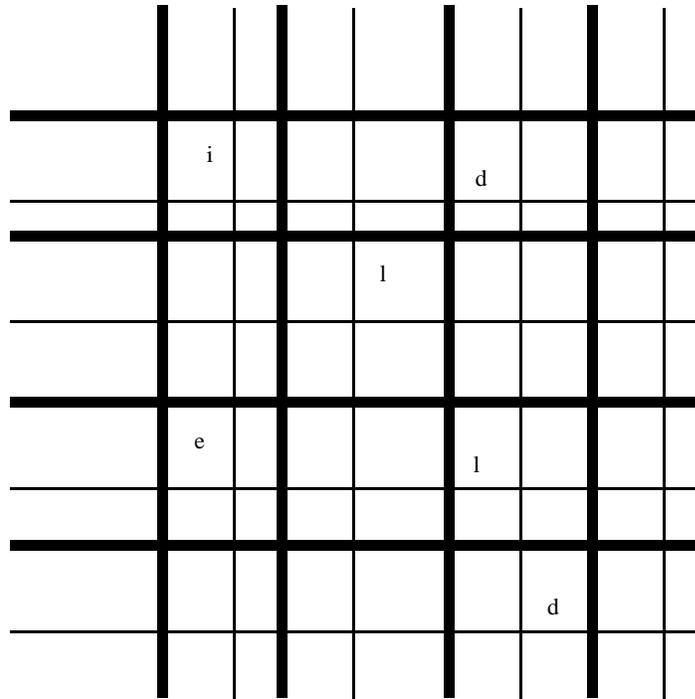
aspect to give us conscious organisms that men indeed are and places this in a social context. The fact that the social is emergent, as we learn from G.H. Mead, and its foundations are schizoid, as we learn from Deleuze and Guattari, lays the foundation for our understanding of humans as variety producers for whom the social comes before the individual and who are oriented toward emergent phenomena. The autopoietic unity is recognized to be on the form of the emergent phenomena so that by assuming that form one suppresses emergence. This, for Plato, provides a stable platform for continuous orientation toward the Good. Thus, if the first stage is the autopoietic which defines life, then the second phase is the social/emergent cognitive autopoietic model which has the form of transcendence grounding itself. Both of these models are temporal gestalts. Now when Kevin Lynch introduces the model of the ecosystem and suggests that the city is an ecosystem of intelligent autopoietic unities, he is moving toward a completely different model, but one we can endorse because it is much like the proto-gestalt which was introduced earlier in the discussion of temporal systems. The proto-gestalt is a tree of gestalts. It is like Yddrasil, the world tree, in which many different creatures lived. This goes far beyond Plato's vision. But it gets closer in many ways to the vision of the primal scene. Lynch wants go beyond this and describe the proto-gestalt as not just a static

structure but one in which learning occurs. This even goes beyond the description of Yddrasil as this tree was a source of stability. It wasn't always changing its form as it supported the many different species that it held in its branches. Thus, in order to put Plato's city in context, we must consider how his vision, which is autopoietic in nature, is related to this more sophisticated picture.

But when we see how Lynch would model his ideal city, we learn that his model is alternating nets. One net is high traffic roads which is crossed with lower access roads, and these two nets have points of interest and monuments on neither roadway system.

FIGURE 74

Alternating Grid Cityscape.



This city scape reminds us of the balancing of Atlantis. In fact, the separate kingdoms were independent tyrannies so that it had the flavor of the ecosystem where different niches are interact but are seen as separate from each other. This separation of tyrannies is different from both the Republic's higher utopia where everything is merged, and the real city's simultaneous regimes. The real city exhibits learning because it piles new institutions on old in order to perfect their balance. So we can see that as we direct Kevin Lynch's concepts, we come back

to Plato's five cities again. The autopoietic lower utopia is nothing like an ecosystem. It strives for interdependence of manifestation within the positive fourfold. It exhibits life plus cognition as a social reality. When we move on to Atlantis, the third best city, we see something more like an ecosystem. Whether the separate tyrannies are balanced together dynamically, each has its own space and function and all are closed to the others. They interact but do not interact. As we move on around to the real city, it is clear that it has multiple simultaneous regimes that are not separated in space, and it exhibits learning to a higher degree than either Atlantis or the lower utopia. Finally, we see the anti-city which destroys all the rules of civilization.

Lynch's ideas of the real city would make the real city the best, and Atlantis the second, while the lower utopia would be fourth. He says that ultimately we must study things in their own terms. He wishes to approach the real city in terms of its own objects rather than using the crutch of metaphors that do not work. However, his vision, as he tends toward the real city through an image of the city in balance, harkens to the picture of interpenetration which is *holoidal* when he mentions that each part is an image of the whole, and the boundaries are indistinct. This uses the metaphor of the hologram to describe the city. And ultimately we must realize that this

hidden metaphor works because ultimately the city is empty because the social nexus is itself empty. We are caught in a landscape already laid out and explored by Plato, called Western metaphysics. Even if we attempt to go beyond it, we discover we have not left it, but only circled around once again. We are like people lost in the forest who circle around without ever getting near the edge. Occasionally we pick up our own track and, thinking it is someone else's who knew where they were going, we confidently follow our own circular tracks.

Publisher:

Apeiron Press

PO Box 4402,
Garden Grove, California
92842-4402

714-638-1210
palmer@exo.com
palmer@think.net
palmer@netcom.com
Thinknet BBS 714-638-0876

Copyright 1996 Kent Duane Palmer

Draft #3 940629

Special Editorial Copy. Rough Draft Manuscript

All rights reserved. Not for distribution.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

This book was typeset using Framemaker document publishing software by the author.

Publication Data:

Library of Congress
Cataloging in Publication Data

Palmer, Kent Duane
(aka Abd al-Alim al-Ashari)

THE FRAGMENTATION OF BEING AND
THE PATH BEYOND THE VOID:
Speculations in an Emergent Onto-
mythology

Bibliography (tbd)
Includes Index (tbd)

1. Philosophy-- Ontology
2. Sociology -- Theory
3. Mythology -- Indo-european

I. Title

[XXX000.X00 199x]
9x-xxxxx
ISBN 0-xxx-xxxxx-x

Keywords:

Being, Ontology, Sociological Theory, Indo-
european Mythology, Plato's Laws,
Emergence, Technology, Worldview, City
Form

Electronic Edition:

Adobe Acrobat PDF

Available from [http://server.snni.com:80/
~palmer/dialognet.html](http://server.snni.com:80/~palmer/dialognet.html)

