

Appendix II:

The Meditative Origins of Dimensional Cosmology

This cosmology has its origins in both extensive research and intensive meditation. I began research for this book in earnest in 1973 when I worked with Joseph Campbell and other scholars to describe the deep, archetypal levels of social evolution, both past and future.³⁰⁸ This year-long project was a catalyst for twenty years of personal and professional exploration spanning a wide range of disciplines: anthropology, history, psychology, comparative religions, systems theory, philosophy, physics, economics, futures studies, sociology and more. My consuming interest was to understand the nature and direction of human evolution, both personal and planetary.

Despite years of research, no matter where I turned I found only partial answers. I could find no satisfying vision of human evolution that embraced both the material and spiritual aspects of existence. Although these years of scholarly inquiry provided a great deal of specific information to flesh out the view of evolution described here, the sacred geometry that constitutes the skeleton or organizing framework was a gift from the universe that emerged in May, 1978 as the culmination of six months of self-directed meditation. Because this co-evolutionary view of reality, identity and society was born from an intensive meditative experience, and because I believe we all have access to comparable experiences, I've decided to share the origins of the organizing pattern at the heart of this book.

In late 1977, I had reached a crisis in my life and I decided to take a half-year retreat from the work I had been doing (primarily strategic planning, futures research and policy studies for government agencies) and devote myself wholeheartedly to self-directed study and meditation. My goal was to come to the deepest understanding possible regarding insight into age-old questions: What are we doing here? What are our highest potentials? Where is evolution headed?

Intensive meditation over the previous ten years had given me glimpses of insight into these questions. This meditation practice was based primarily on Buddhist approaches but included study of a number of other spiritual traditions—in particular, contemplative Christianity, Zen, Hinduism and Taoism. In addition, for several years I had been a subject in a range of parapsychology experiments at a major think tank (SRI International) and had the opportunity to learn, first hand about the nature of our energetic connections with the

universe. Finally, I accepted the Pythagorean premise that the aesthetic structure of the universe becomes self-evident when we come into authentic union with it. As I entered this self-directed retreat, I was confident that if I approached the cosmos with purity of intent and a one-pointed desire "to know," the universe would meet me half-way with insights commensurate with my intention—and intensity—to know.

Throughout the winter and spring of 1978, I spent weeks at a time alone in my home. Approximately half of this time was invested in formal meditation and quiet contemplation. The remainder of the time was invested in reading dozens of books on subjects ranging from the world's spiritual traditions, physics, history, anthropology, psychology and systems theory. Over a period of months, I put up notes, charts, lists, diagrams, poetry, and pictures on the walls of my kitchen, living room, and bedroom. Gradually, my entire home was transformed into a single quest and question.

By late spring, the coherent picture of reality, identity and social evolution that I was seeking had not emerged. Instead of clarity, I was more confused than ever. I felt overwhelmed with the mountain of disconnected information and ideas that had accumulated over the years. Missing was the wisdom and insight that could make sense out of all the disorganized knowledge. Day by day and week by week I searched for clarity. Increasingly, I felt that I was wasting precious time in a fruitless, idealistic pursuit.

With my allotted time running out, I finally made a decision based on roughly equal measures of unshakeable confidence and utter desperation. I resolved to go to the end of this path by holding in consciousness the felt experience of all the questions now burning in my mind, body and soul regarding the nature of reality, life and evolution. I decided to hold fast to the experience of these questions until genuine insight and unifying awareness emerged, no matter what.

Physically rested and psychologically settled, on the morning of May first, I proceeded with irrevocable determination and concentration. Moment by moment by moment I nurtured the felt experience of knowing (and intending to know) until it became a continuous thread of resonant experience that filled every aspect of my consciousness. With immense difficulty—second by second, minute by minute, and hour by hour—the pressure and sensation of this conscious intention "to know" was nurtured and focused.

Toward the end of the first day, my experience was analogous to being inside a lighted hollow ball with fragments of mirrors covering the entire inner surface. Everywhere I looked there was a mirror of consciousness to reflect back every aspect of my life and existence. Mundane and profane, loving and indifferent, caring and cruel, intellectual and emotional—everything was equally suitable for reflection in the mirror of consciousness. Only with utmost determination and unconditional self-acceptance could "I" stay with my self-experience and avoid endless distractions of judgment and imagination. Gradually, the pressure of conscious intention began to penetrate through layer after layer of my mentally constructed being. That night I slept lightly and arose early to continue with meditation.

With single-minded concentration, I moved ever deeper into this raw process of self-inquiry. Stripping away uncountable layers of self-pretense and returning, again and again, to the core intention, a humbled being gradually emerged. By the evening of the second day, all was constantly dissolving—even the mirror of consciousness that reflected my experience was dissolving and reconstructing second by second. All that existed was an ocean of living process in constant change. Nowhere was there anything that I could hold onto, or rely upon, or build upon. There was no fixed meaning, no fixed self and no fixed reality to be found anywhere. Again and again and again I was forced to abandon everything I had formerly known and simply trust the purity of my intention to carry "me" through the constantly disassembling reality. The unbroken silence of these seconds, minutes, hours and days now penetrated ever deeper, asking me to yield ever more until it felt as if nothing more could be surrendered. The second night seemed as if it could be the last of my life.

By the third day, the thread of intention had grown into a living field of awareness with a distinct and palpable presence and texture. With growing ease, I moved within a flow of self-referencing knowing that had acquired a life and momentum of its own. Eternities of time passed as morning moved into early afternoon. Then, in a sudden and unexpected rush, the seeking of the past six months and the concentration of the past three days finally burned a hole through the "ego-I." In an instant of grace, the years of accumulated questions and yearnings opened into a joyful, sacred and crystalline space of Knowing. Within a single, exhilarating moment, everything became transparently self-evident—throughout the entire range of my experience, all was in its proper place and "made sense." This knowing was direct, non-conceptual, self-evident and unmistakably clear. Accompanying this inner

experience was a subtle radiance that bathed all that I could see with a soft light—the furniture, plants, and walls were all infused with a golden lustre and glow.

For the next several hours I stood virtually rooted in one place, physically stunned and mentally shocked to the deepest core of my being. Everywhere I looked, I saw an infusing radiance of immense intelligence, creativity and love. I saw, and directly experienced, that everything, including "empty space," is visibly alive. Space was not simply the absence of form, but the formless expression of infinite possibility. I also saw that the entire fabric of material reality is arising in a flow of continuous creation, that a reflective capacity is present throughout the universe, that an organizing geometry of elegant symmetry and simplicity infuses the universe, and that our cosmos exists within an ocean of boundless compassion. From mid-afternoon until early evening, with utter simplicity and breathtaking directness, every question about human evolution that I had ever imagined was effortlessly answered. Again and again, I was overwhelmed by the miracle of "ordinary reality"—by the immensity and depth of Life in which we are immersed, by the aesthetic and functional structure of existence, by the infinitely deep and compassionate Knowing that permeates the cosmos, and by the visible presence of Life-energy in the flow of continuous creation. This experience left me feeling unshakably confident in the deep integrity of creation, profoundly grateful, inexhaustibly happy—and finally home.

In the days following this experience, transparent insights coalesced into symbolic patterns representing the major stages of human evolution, both personal and civilizational. These symbolic patterns became living seeds of insight with a life of their own that coalesced into specific concepts and ideas. Although I realized these concepts would never convey more than a faint echo of the original experience, during the next few weeks I wrote several hundred pages describing the theory of "dimensional evolution" that lies at the heart of this book.

In the years following this experience, I have done extensive research to find the flesh of meaningful language to place on these transparent dimensional bones. Although this book is a blend of intuitive insights and many years of wide-ranging research, my primary objective has been to communicate the essence of the originating experience as faithfully as possible.

Because knowing is uniquely personal, this book is no more than an aligning system or guiding pattern for inquiry that may point others toward the truth of their own experience. In

that spirit, I share this book—and the description of its origins—in the hope that it will serve the path of discovery for others.