

DIALOGUE ON IGNORANCE

Chris 1. Well, we are going to try to find out now, what it is that we don't know about this whole business. Let's start by simply ^{asking:} ~~saying~~ What would we know if the whole thing were completely clear.

~~C2x~~ Chris 2. We to begin with, the whole theory and practice would be much simpler than it is. Perhaps, like Newton's laws of motion, a few very simple ideas, related by a few simple laws: and all this would then give us enormous power, in the sense we would ~~know~~ know how to do anything.

C1. What is stopping us now, from that knowledge, or from that kind of power. ~~W~~

C2. Well, for instance, ^{There are} ~~there are~~ several different versions of the properties.....

C1. Stop stop. Let's make a list of all the things that are wrong, so we can follow the rules of this dialogue, by then going back over them, ~~and~~ and giving them all answers.

C2. OK. Well then we start the list as follows:

1. There are several different versions of the properties. Are there 12, 13, 14 or how many.
2. There are several different rules of composition,
 * The Centering process, the structure preserving process, the idea of simplicity seeking. Which one is right.
3. Even the Centering process has been described several times; which version is correct.
4. Is the way color fits in, essential or trivial.
 By that I mean, is it just icing, something nice,

or is there something fundamental one does not understand until one understands color.

C1. I suspect that it is fundamental, not just icing on the cake.

C2. Yes, me too, but I dont know how to describe this, nor how to ~~xxx~~ refer to it.

C1. Well what other defects are there.

C2. You take a turn, I'm tired.

C1. OK. Well I will list them again, going on with your numbering.

* 5. How important is the role of symmetry. I suspect very important, but dont know how to describe it.

(*) 6. What about the relation of one center to infinite repeat patterns, how does that fit in.

(*) 7. And what about the relation between connectedness and distinctness, that is a great mystery. Somehow connectedness depends on various parts being very distinct and separate. Is there a way of seeing this which does not merely seem like a contradiction.

C2. What do you mean, a way of seeing it that doesnt seem like a contradiction.

C1. Well, is there some concept of connectedenssss, or of some other major idea, which shows that, in order to be carried out, it must have disttinction as well as connection. For instance, the close union of men and women requires that they be different. If they were more similar, the closeness of their union would be less. Something like that is going on when we observe that things must be distinct in order to be connected. But what is the nature of it.

C2. OK, youre doing fine, what are some more problems.

C1.

C1. I cant think~~of~~ of any more.

C2. You mean, if you knew the answers to the seven questions we have so far, this whole thing would be completely clear to you.

C1. No, not that. Well, some of the other questions are more general. For instance:

8. I dont know how to make things as beautiful as I would like. If this were completely clear to me, I would not only know, but be able to do that, every time.

C2. Isnt ~~that~~ asking a lot. It seems almost sacriligious.

C1. Well I will phrase it differently to make it more clear. Of course I expect that sometimes the thing just wont work, I will fail. But I should like to have the completely clear feeling of knowing what I am doing, from beginning to end, when I set out to make something.

So: 9. I dont know what ~~to~~ to do when I begin to make something. I have a vague amalgam of all these ideas in my head, but ~~when~~ when I start a new project, it is always some different version of them that is in my head, and I feel I am groping in the dark.

C2. But what kind of knowledge would actually allow you to feel this sense of mastery that you are asking for, this sense of always knowing what to do.

C1. Well specifically; it ~~was~~

10. I would like to know how to begin, always.

C2. And what do you mean by always. ~~How~~ How wide a variety of things would you like to encompass in this formula.

C1. 11. I should like this ~~to~~ "knowing how to begin" to apply to the layout of a building, the design of

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a neighbourhood, the painting of a small tile, the shaping of a ~~shain~~ table leg, the formation of a colum, the knowledge of what surface to put under ~~xx~~ a x tree in a ~~xxx~~ certain garden, the choice of flowers in the garden, the ~~shonsexon~~ location of columns in the structural design of the building.

C2. A mere nothing. What other simple questions do you have of this type.

C1. Well I have some questions about the overall simplicity and organisation of the theory. I am not sure what I mean, but somehow I would like the theory as a whole to be more beautiful and more simple, so that it fits together ~~x~~ more neatly... and doesnt have so many ~~xx~~ complex ideas.

C2. Lets write this down as a numbered item:

12. You would like to have a clear overview of the whole theory, which is more beautiful and more simple. ~~xxxxxx~~

What would it mean for it to be more beautiful and more simple, in concrete operational terms.

C1. 13. I would like it to be relatively short, and for the essential ideasthat it is made of to be clear at the beginning. Then I would like all the complexity to follow fromthese simple ideas at the beginning.

C2. But what if it is true, as we suspect, that an entirely new world view is required to grasp the whole thing properly and simply. Do you want that at the ~~xxx~~ beginning or at the end.

C1. 14. I would like the new world view to be an explicit part of it, but to be less lengthy.

14(cont). What I mean by this is that the assumptions of the new cosmology should be shorter and more elegant than they are now, so that I know which ones are really essential, and that I ~~must grasp~~ "must" grasp, in order to get the whole picture clear.

15. I should prefer, too, that this new cosmology is essential, not just interesting...so that it becomes clear why I really must have it, in order to understand the facts correctly, and not merely a vague, and half voluntary embellishment, which leaves me confused, because I dont know if I really have to swallow it or not.

C2. Have we come to the end of our list.

C1. No, I dont think we are anywhere near it yet. For instance, ~~x~~ we havent talked about the ~~xx~~ questions of feeling, being, mirror, quality etc at all.

C2. But it is not clear that there are any puzzling questions about these topics. Is there anything about these points that you would like to have clarified.

C1. Well, I dont know one thing. I should like to know:

16. What is the ultimate significance of producing the quality. I am not doing it for my own glory. But somehow, it is not yet really clear why one should try to produce this quality. It would be very helpful if this had a definite answer.

C2. What do you mean this isnt clear.

C1. Well, for instance, there is som talk about melting the universe. I dont really believe this. It is just too much to swallow.

C1 (cont). On the other hand, simply saying "well the world works ~~xxxx~~ better when you do all this, is not an adequate answer either. First, it is not even clear that it is true (if this were the claim) Secondly, one has a strong ~~instinct~~ instinct that there is something more here. But what is it. So I can formulate the question another way;

17. What is the basic reason behind the imperative that tells us to make things like this. Who am I trying to please. Is it egocentric (I am doing it because it feels good). That seems banal indeed. ~~But what about the others~~ Am I doing it because it gives pleasure to others. That is not so banal. But it seems like a very complicated way to achieve this: it would be easier to give free back rubs to everyone. So what is the reason.

C2. This one is ~~xx~~ really heavy. Somehow, I feel that if this question were completely clear, then the rest would also be completely clear.

C1. Ok, back to less heavy questions. For instance:

18. How does function enter into this theory.

It is supposed to be compatible with Timeless and Pattern Language. ~~But what does this mean~~ But what does this mean. If I am designing a building, using these ideas, how does the functional nature of the place enter in.

19. Also, a variant. Is it true that the theory of functional objects (like a living room), and the theory of an ornamental object (like a doorway surround) are really the same. How can this be. What kind of view of the world, really allows one to see these two tasks, as part of one larger task. This is also not clear.

C2. I have another question, which has bothered me from time to time. At present ~~xx~~ the theory has a section on color. And we have agreed that we both suspect this is quite important. But if color is important, then why not texture, or materials. Yet these dont enter in ~~x~~ in the same way. Is this a mistake. Or ~~xx~~ is there some way in which choice of materials is different. This is totally unclear. I will put this as a numbered question:

20. How do materials and textures enter in to the theory. Obviously they are important. ~~xx~~ Are they covered by the geometry. Or are they different. Why is color singled out and treated as something special.

C1. Now we are really going wild. There ~~xx~~ must be millions of questions like this. Let us see ^{instead} if we can focus on the issue of essential questions. If the questions we have listed so far were answered, would the ~~whole thing~~ whole thing then be "clear". Or not.

C2. I will read the questions over, and see what I think. After reading them, I think there are still a few areas we havent covered, before we try to do a synthesis. For instance:

21. What about the personal aspect of things.
The things that are made are personal. Is this essential, or non essential. How does it fit in.
22. Also, what about uniqueness. Somehow, there is a hint that each part of the world will be unique if we only understand it properly, and in a non arbitrary way. How does this explicitly enter into the theory, or the process.

23. Another question. Is the theory mystical or not mystical. At present it seems to be hovering between the two. I would like to be clear, what I have to believe in order to be able to do ~~xx~~ this, and in what domain it is taking place when it is done correctly.

24. Of course I also want to understand the connection between properties and process in a completely clear way, that is just common sense and obvious.

25. I would like to have a convincing explanation of the Korean tea bowl. It does not have many properties at an obvious level. What happened here. A convincing explanation, not a play on words.

26. I would also like a more detailed account of the central process of making one step. What is it about this step, which introduces the beautiful quality into things.

27. And also a convincing account of the creation of wholes. How is it possible to create a thing which is whole, by a stepwise process.

C2. Now I think we are ready for a kind of synthesis. If we had the answer to all these questions, would the whole thing be clear.

C1. Yes and no. It might be intellectually clear. But I don't have a good sense of what it would take for it to be clear. What form would it take. Would it be a very long book, with hundreds of pages of explanation and example. Or would it be very short, a few sentences

which summarise the essence. In short, what kind of thing should I carry around with me, when I say that it is all clear.

C2. What kind of map is it.

C1. Yes something like that. If I could engrave this truth, on a simple medallion that I could carry around with me, what would be on the medallion.

C2. But even then, what form is this. What form could this piece of truth have, to be convincing, and clear~~xxxx~~.

C1. What is an example of something that is ~~is~~ completely clear like this. Are there any models, which explain the kind of clarity.

C2. Yes, well there is for instance, any important historic discovery... the fact of the ~~shkpsen~~ planets elliptical orbits for instance. The key thing here, is that there is just one fact, ~~xxx~~ which can be remembered. This one fact has entered human ~~xxx~~ consciousness, as a result of Keplers work, and it has not left it. Of course, Kepler did arrive at this fact, through thousands of smaller facts, which are all strung together in the form of arguments. But ~~the~~ what remains, and above all, what is permanent, is that all the knowledge that he acquired, and swallowed, and chewed, can be remmebered, summarised, if you like, in this one law, which says that the ~~phankes~~ planets travel in ellipses, with the sun as one focus. In what we have here, we have a bwelidering array of facts, all very ~~xxxx~~ interesting, but no one very big fact, which is sufficiently remarkable and clear, to summarise all the others. Of course, we have vague instructions like "always make it personal". "Feeling is the most important thing", ~~xxxx~~ "concentrate on the being" ... but this is not at all equally interesting...

C1. What kind of fact might play this role.

C2. It would have to be a fact that is remarkable, that summarises the whole point of the whole thing, it would have to be a "new" fact, that could be attached to the rest of what people know about science and art... and could take its place, as a definite thing, something that people will be able to rely on for centuries... and something that I can rely on, at any moment, ~~xx~~ while I am working.

C1. ~~Wouldn't this x x x x x~~ Keplers fact can be summarised in one sentence, so should ~~x~~ we try to find one sentence which summarises the whole thing.

C2. Yes it would be very good to try.

C1. What about "Not-separateness is a real phenomenon in the world, with a definite structure, that affects both the form of things outside, and also our inner peacefulness". Does that come close.

C2. That is pretty good. ~~It is x x x x x~~ Is it clear how every single fact we have in the theory, is an enlargemnt of this one fact.

C1. I think so, but I would have to check it out.

C2. Well, let us try and see, if this is true, what the answers to our 27 questions might be like. Remember, we promised to give answers to these questions. If this one fact you have mentioned is a good ~~xx~~ summary of the whole thing, then it should illuminate each of these questions... or at least allow us to see the question, and its answer, as aspects of this ~~notseparateness~~ fact. about not separateness.

C1. Actually, before we do that, I want to modify the statement of this fact. ~~It is x x x x x~~ when I start trying to imagine it as a source of answers for all these questions, it looks extremely vague.

C2. Can you define what is vague about it.

C1. Yes the second half of it is vaguely expressed. The first half, "Not separateness is a real phenomenon in the world, with a definite structure" expresses a fact. But"....thataffects the

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form of things outside, and also our inner peacefulness" is pretty vague. What does it mean ~~mmh~~ "...affects.."

Also, if I want to quibble, even the first half ~~x~~ is not completely clear. What ~~mm~~ ^{does it} mean to say "...is a real phenomenon..."

Q C2. Ok Lets try something else. ~~Nxx~~ Not separateness is the most important thing in the world; and, surprisingly, it has a definite structure, which can be put in things in the world, and which also whose presence or absnece also affects profoundly our own feeling of worthwhileness.

C1. This is more vague than before.

C2. How about this. "Not separateness, which is the most important thing in the world, has a definite structure, which ~~mmh~~ governsboth the quality of things in the world, and also our own inner~~xpama~~ peacefulness, both in the presence of these objects, and in the process of making them."

OR "Not separateness, which governs both the quality of things in the world, and also our own inner peacefulness, has a definite structure, and every good process is one which increases ~~the amount of not-separateness structure~~ the amount of not-separateness structure presence of this structure, in the world."

C1. ~~Let us now see in fact~~ None of these is very good, but they are all similar. Let us consider them all equivalent, though rough, and ask ~~now~~ now how this fact, helps us to answer the ~~24~~²⁷ questions we have asked.

C2. OK. We will simply take them one by one, by numbers.

#1. Not separateness is the only property. All the other things ~~we~~ we call "properties" are aspects of this not separateness, and because they are all aspects, ~~xx~~ they have no definite number. ~~xx~~ It is like asking ^{from} how many ^{directions one way} ~~ways~~ are there to see ~~xx ways~~ a sphere. What matters, is that there are enough ways, so you do finally get the whole picture of the sphere. What matters about the properties, is that there are enough of them, so that there arent any essential aspects of not-separateness completely left out.

#2. The several different rules of composition. Here we want to know what structural process will produce not -separateness. I think there is one process, but we dont know what it is yet. The centering, structure preserving, etc, are attempts to formulate it. ~~xxxxxx~~ Ultimately, it should be possible to give a definite answer to this question, but we dont know it yet.

#3, None of the versions of the centering process is correct, as it stands, because the correct process is both simpler to do, and deeper. ~~We~~

#4. Color plays an essential role, because somehow, in the realm of color, the inner light, which makes its appearance is one of the purest manifestations of not separateness that can occur. It shows us, in a way that we do not see so clearly in purely geometric cases, how the inner light produced

~~inabmeabihlym#bnb#~~

is really "one"... not merely a ~~bundle~~ bundle of things. There is also the feeling, merely an intuition, that the not separateness lies in a realm "behind" things, which is most strongly felt in the realm of color, because the light seems to shine through. ~~How~~ ~~It~~ The color is therefore enormously important. However, its importance ~~seems~~ seems to lie in a rather mystical domain,... it does not clearly contribute to understanding of structure...

#5. How important is symmetry. It is possible, not certain but possible that the entire concept of not-separateness, can be explained in terms of symmetries, and that every part of the process of creating something can be understood as an extension ~~of~~ ~~some~~, or development, of some local symmetry. If this were true, then it would follow that all "glue" - i.e. all types of connectedness in space - can be represented in terms of local symmetry, at some level. ~~It~~ It is possible, again, that all the properties can be construed in terms of local symmetries (i.e. level of subsymmetries, ^{= levels of scale,} axes of local symmetry, = centers, ~~symmetries~~, zones where symmetry breaks down or changes=boundaries, etc). Don't know yet. But promising, because it is so easy. Also helpful, because I think most people's first efforts actually fail just in terms of this simple concept. It would require, of course, that we extend the notion to ~~cover~~ cover notion of rough ~~symmetry~~ symmetry (fuzzy symmetry)=roughness.

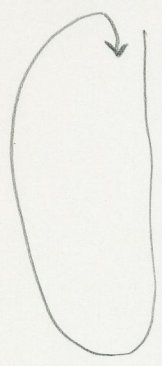
#6. One center v. infinite repeat patterns. How is this embodying not-separateness. This would be via the notion of images of zero. ~~Suppose~~ Suppose we understand the structure

of empty space, can be mirrored, or transformed into an infinite repeat, or into an infinite void with a single center. These are the two simplest transforms of zero. In this sense, if it is true that ~~transform~~ not separateness occurs wherever there is a transform of nothing (zero), then it would be obvious why these two play the fundamental role they do.

#7. Connectedness and distinctness. This is one of the great ~~questions~~ questions. Somehow space has to be distinguished, to create entities which can be related. Not separateness depends on the extent to which this happens. In some cases, the thing which ~~is~~ has not-separateness ~~is~~ has it because it is so distinct (for instance, Japanese tea table). ~~Thus~~ But there are ways of making something which are distinct, that are grotesque (modern graphics), and which cause a great separateness... the opposite of connectedness. So which kind of distinctness cause damage in the fabric, and which kinds are healthy for the fabric. This is an ~~an~~ unanswered question. It is a crucial one, since the distinctness of each person, and the personal (not homogeneous) nature of objects which achieve not-separateness is crucial to the whole theory. The pavilion standing in the beautiful hillside, that becomes connected, because it is distinct (i.e. a square building, simple, is connected... an amorphous, hippified building is less connected, not more so).

C1. We havent answered #7. But let us drop it for the moment, and see how we do with #8.

#8. I dont know how to make things as beautiful as I would like. Here there are the following rules. ~~First, make a new whole with~~
~~inabthbma~~



1. Start with what is there.
2. Create new centers ^{local} (symmetries) which intensify the structure which is ~~xxx~~ there.
3. Do this, so that ~~at each step~~, the being nature increases.
4. Then ~~take the further step~~ *go back to step #1*
5. Keep doing these four steps, *until it is impossible to improve the wholeness of the whole.*

C2. But how do I put in function.

C1. You make sure that each local symmetry introduced under step 2, is always introducing a necessary function, or some function which is missing.

C2. But even if this is clear, where does the breathtaking beauty come from.

C1. Almost always from color - either literally the ~~fashioning of~~ color, or else black and white, or greys ~~x~~ which still have the feeling of color in them, the ~~known~~ sense of color.

C2. Then we must learn how to make black and white space, with the insights gained from color... even if color is not being used... so that somehow these insights fuse the space together more surely, more sweetly, more with this unbearable harmony. This is a new thing. We must have a dialogue about it.