

## Commentary

# A Compliment and a Supplement to Nixon

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### ABSTRACT

To apprehend the mythic origins we have to try to sink into what it feels like to be such a consciousness. Of course it is impossible, in one sense, as we always keep our present rationality with us. Yet the method remains correct. You cannot remain aloof from the subjective and know what it is. We take our rationality into the mythic mind for dreams should be judged by waking consciousness and not by another dream. What Nixon has opened out for me at this moment remains to great for me too to comprehend and comment further. Doubtless there will be many corrections and enhancements but everything turns upon grasping the principle of original self-creation, self-organisation, self-sustainment, self-unfolding or self-enclosure and it is to the grasping of this *autopoiesis* that I would like to add a few words.

**Key Words:** autopoiesis, mythic origin, self-creation, consciousness.

Reading Nixon's writings over the last decade or more I've often felt we were going to the same sort of place along different routes. There has been a felt kinship but I have never really got a grip on where he was. I kept losing my bearings. These three essays begin to open my eyes to his path (Nixon, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). Unfamiliar with many of his sources, there were times when I literally gasped at what I was reading. Many times could I connect the given insights with other observations or musings of my own. For example, the original manifestation of consciousness, selfhood and the sacred in the act of killing. Human conduct ranges from a loving embrace to killing. If there were no killing then you'd never separate your own being from the loved, blood relations. Your being would always remain an intersubjective group. If you feel this intersubjectivity intensely then to kill is to kill yourself *yet still remain there to see it*. What a shock for Cain when he killed Abel. Nothing is more real than death, the ceasing of a self-sustaining activity. The individual self would have been ripped out of the group by its own slaughter. Various musings then seemed to connect with all this.

a) When the hands were nailed down they could not kill. The outstretched arms on the cross symbolise powerless, open love held up to the world as the means to overcome all karma. Of such is the force of poetic imagination. To a mythic mind this imagination would be reality itself.

b) In the Latin declension *amo, amas, amat* etc. the selves or subjects are not separated from the verb or action. The language of the time did not separate selves from objects in anything like the intensity we do.

c) Legend has it that Ulfilas invented the German word for I (Ich after J. Ch.) 1600 years ago.

d) The ostensible reason for Alexander making war on Persia was still the blood feud – so strong was the group self even at that time.

All of these show how the intersubjective self played a strong role.

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Many different threads lead to the *necessary* assertion of autopoiesis. I'll indicate a few but the greatest of all is evolution itself.

1. Reason demands that all things have a cause. The simplest is when a physical event is caused by the events preceding it in sequential contact. When it comes to the totality of the universe you must either posit a external creator or the universe itself possessing an inner power to self-create or self-sustain. The physical universe only becomes self-enclosed as a totality.
2. Once upon a time an object was called real if it could be located in time and space. It gained the quality of reality by this locating. A real thing could be both seen and touched. Einstein twisted the meaning of reality. A greater theory could be found when time and space became real by their relation to an object. Relativity was the tool to push to the limits of the universe with more accurate understanding. Cosmologists now reason that to have a universe it must be one of a multiverse but there is no way to see or touch any of the others but the one you are in. The one reality we live in arises from an entirely ideal conception, the multiverse. Together the multiverse and the universe form the universal autopoiesis.
3. Gödel and Chaitin's incompleteness theorems both become incomplete when we enter self-reference. All logic fails the autopoietic. Yet, the universal autopoiesis contains that logic and incompleteness, irrationality, confusion and all error.
4. A living thing is a form impressed upon a flow of matter. Every living thing causes its own growth, movement and reproduction. Darwin's theory presumed autopoiesis in his original statement. He had no theory of self-organising variability because there is only one source of variation. It is universal and fluid autopoiesis. Its action is to create then flow into the interstices of its own creations so that its own manifestations self-restrict as natural selection. Natural Selection is limiting not causal. It is a set of determinations created by autopoiesis (the entire environment and all living things). Genetics, the attempt to suppress knowledge of autopoiesis, is the chemical correlate of biology.
5. Living things are all self-enclosed realities. Self-enclosure is conceptual in form. In other words it has the appearance of purpose. Thus the self-creative principle is everywhere but hidden from the physical senses all around us. Reason demands its causal presence because no physical explanation is adequate to life, experience or consciousness. Physicality has a construct of *many* causal laws *standing apart* from the real things but life and subjectivity have but *one* causal law *standing inside* them all. The particular life-forms all proceed from this one *immanent* creative principle.

With this principle clearly grasped Nixon turns out a stunning synthesis attempting to tease out the temporal development of consciousness from experience.

## References

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