

The moment when
mushroom, teleprompter, umbrella, shell, cup, soybean, cloud,
milk, lens, smoke, resonance, and virus
met

We did set the table but everyone who came had to bring something to put on it. I was the one who had to think who was to sit next to whom and what would be the possible order of appearance of the organisms, objects, creatures, clouds, and many others who were coming and whose names I never knew. They came fast and there were a lot of them; *chiselled mushrooms, punctuation of cherries, motifs of carved lemon, shavings of truffle, silver pastilles, arabesques of glacé fruit.*¹ They immediately started to talk. This is what a host can only hope for. *This is all that we ask for in order to make an opinion for ourselves, like a sort of "umbrella," which protects us from chaos.*² *The nut destroys its shell.*³ *It doesn't have that apple look, that corn cob feel, or that soybean air about it; rather, we sense that familiar sequoia thickness grandeur.*⁴ *AND IT WAS THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER.*⁵ *It is not my own immortality I seek, in this place where I have come to be healed, to drink ambrosia from the cup of immortality, but that of the species, in immediate danger.*⁶ *A drop of honey, a cloud of milk, a pint of blood in the Mediterranean would not be able to disturb this uniformly wine colored sea.*⁷ *The events of those years would be*

told in detail as none had ever been told before, as if a huge lens had come down from the sky to magnify every tiny gesture.⁸ The act of individuation consists not in suppressing the problem, but in integrating the elements of the disparateness into a state of coupling which ensures its internal resonance.⁹ The kitchen table could remain such a symbol, but the habit of individual 'snacking' destroys some of that resonance.¹⁰ This was the teleprompter. It was alone, it could not eat. Still, it was projecting and communicating. It found its way to the table. It is a table. That is why they say: 'Pusan is toothless.'¹¹ His fire is Agni, the logs the logs, the smoke the smoke, the flame the flame, the embers the embers, the sparks the sparks.'¹² A strange bridge thrown from nature to culture, from an unhealthy and harsh temperature, from the appearance of a virus, to practices at the table or altar, to private or public manners.¹³ Not only the nexuses, the correspondences with fire and its constituent parts, but also—no less important—with the ritual order, therefore with the order of the oblations, which are each linked to the other like a sequence of equations.¹⁴ It was an incredible gathering. Almost as if a myth was unfolding. What It required is no longer to turn backward in order to return what was given but to endlessly produce in order to move forward.¹⁵ But then it lasted only for a moment. But then again that moment was full. It was as if nature had spread out all her magnificence in front of our eyes to offer its text for our consideration.¹⁶ It was different. As though the organism was amassing time, stocking it, even creating it, before squandering it in the sun.¹⁷

What is 'nature' to you? How does the world look beyond mind? What kinds of 'orientation' do you have? How do you believe we are now right here, right now?

This volume is a result of an elective course at Masters level at ETH Zurich Department of Architecture. Creation Myths in the Digital World. The aim of the course was not merely to write a creation myth as a genre, but to induce students with philosophical thinking to question our common 'nature' and to speculate upon what the 'whole' could be. This may not be a common question to ask in today's technical infrastructure. Nevertheless, let us be reminded that the history of technology is full of constant enabling of symbolic worlds. The idea of nature has been a training ground for such a symbolic reality, much of which depends on our imagination, intellectual facilities, or 'quest'. Yet nature is often viewed as a fixed object, as something inherent and pure, somewhat linked to fixed reality rather than a reality. We are interested in the whole, not the parts.

Writing a creation myth is a challenging mission. It would

¹ Barthes, *Mythologies*, ² Deleuze Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, ³ Serres, *Hermes Literature Science Philosophy*, ⁴ Harman, *Towards Speculative Realism*, ⁵ Joyce, *Ulysses*, ⁶ Serres, *The Five Senses*, ⁷ Serres, *Troubadour of Knowledge*, ⁸ Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, ⁹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, ¹⁰ Gorrington, *A Theology of the Built Environment*, ¹¹ Calasso, *Ardor*, ¹² Calasso, *Ardor*, ¹³ Serres, *Rome*, ¹⁴ Calasso, *Ardor*, ¹⁵ Henaff, *The Price of Truth*, ¹⁶ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, ¹⁷ Serres, *Statues*

Mihye An

What is 'nature' to you? How does the world look in your mind? What kinds of 'orientation' do you have? How do you believe we are men right here, right now?

This volume is a result of an elective course at Master's level at ETH Zürich's Department of Architecture: *Creation Myths in the Digital World*. The aim of the course was not merely to write a creation myth as a genre, but to imbue students with metaphysical thinking in relation to our current 'nature' and to speculate upon what the 'whole' could be. This may not be a common question to ask at today's technical universities. Nevertheless, let us be reminded that the history of technology is full of constant enabling of symbolic worlds. The idea of nature has been a training ground for such a symbolic totality, much of which depends on our imagination, intellectual faculties, or 'soul'. Yet, nature is often viewed as a fixed object, as something innocent and pure, somewhat limited to 'hard reality' rather than a totality. We are interested in the whole, not the parts.

Writing a creation myth is a challenging mission. It would require a great deal of time and reflection to invent one like *Vedas* or *Genesis*. Creation myths, indeed, encapsulate the ungraspable and the unknowable—the 'transcendental'—by means of dramatisation and by different models of mind: war, love, adventure, secret affairs, corruption, super-intelligence, family genealogy, natural disaster, murder, brutal punishment,

artistry, divinity, transformation, incarnation, gender fluidity, and many more.

Put gently, telling a creation story is not too different from gardening or horse whispering, where one has to approximate certain degrees of naturalness. Put bluntly, it is close to conspiring or projecting powerful nonsenses, in the interest of understanding, not reasoning. It is a process of casting abstract frames, an act of 'wedding' nature: be introduced to *naturing*.

In order to balance the broadness of the mission with the short time frame of the course, each student began by choosing an object, that is, a speculative currency, an artificially-intelligent force that can circulate the 'natural world' that one is assuming. Particular beings, species, and events were expected to evolve in that natural world. This—the choosing of an object—was very much based on each student's intuition (most of them are digital natives, by the way). Objects like these—

mushroom	teleprompter	umbrella
shell	cup	soybean
cloud	milk	lens
smoking	resonance	virus

—were the examples. We then complemented and imbued the object with 'possibly-conspiring' concepts, by navigating and learning from eighty existing creation myths. How to navigate

eighty myths? No-one has ever read one for real. We collected creation myths from all over the world from the Internet, flattened them in plain text files, and created arbitrary 'maps' of concepts using a machine learning method called SOM (Self-Organising Map). For instance, several myths among the eighty contained the word 'cloud', and we could see some particular words that tend to come up around it in the myths. It did not always make sense. It could be 'egg' or 'Creator', but it could also be 'health' or 'lie'. In such a setup it is impossible to read things in one objective way, although the maps from the machine intelligence are far from being random. Students had to focus on their object, where their initial intuition was headed, and complement it with a certain kind of 'intelligence' that is embodied in the plenty of myths. Reveal any alluded context. Cogitate a new perspective through the object. It was a constant process of fleshing out the object by multiplicity, giving it more soul, speculating how it leads to many a transformation. As a result, ten different creation stories were born.

Many myths in this book speak of 'the first night' of the world, since they are creation stories. In some cases, however, the beginning is just an illusion, like in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. And when you read some of these creation myths for the second time, it may eat the world around you back whilst only you can notice that. It might awake a slight new sense—or sensibility—of our world.

So place this little book under the bed—or any other place independent of judgement—and read it especially on the following occasions:

- * When you are electrified by the thought that there are too many things that we can never know.
- * When you are speculating what the world could be than what is the case.
- * When Charles Bukowski's *The Last Night of the Earth Poems* bores you to death and has no effect in bridging the gaps between your knowledges about the universe.
- * When you are re-stretching a thread of understanding to what a man, a soul, or consciousness could mean today.

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Prelude (time)

Blaise Cendrars

I exist in time.
Time is me in variations of myself.
I create the world.
Being alive and dead, cycling endlessly.

I have many voices.
I am one and also multiple.
I speak languages that only parts of me can understand.
Still I am forming.
Forming noise and music.
Melody, colored in various palettes of colors.

I am radiant, I am vibrant.
I am you, and also we.
Later I will have names. I am animal, I am plant.
I am human.
I am the between and also I am me.
I grow out of myself.

RICERCAR

Prelude (time)

I exist in time,
Time is me in variations of myself.
I create the world,
Being alive and dead, cycling endlessly.

I have many voices,
I am one and also multiple.
I speak languages that only parts of me can
understand.
Still we are the same language,
Forming sounds of different tones, pause, rupture,
noise and music.
Melody, colored in various palettes of colors.

I am radiant, I am vibrant.
I am you, and also we.
Later I will have names. I am animal, I am plant,
I am human.
I am the between and also I am me.
I grow out of myself.

Variation I (particle)

I was one graspable moment in time,
A time that occurred and reoccured in endless circles
I was singular, I had a shape and a determined number
of characteristics
I sensed my own boundaries, I sensed where I was
beginning and where I was ending.

Then I swallowed myself and I doubled
For the first time I could communicate with myself
I was a pair, as I asked, I also responded
I was hungry, my hunger was insatiable,
I consumed to be consumed.
Like this I increased, decreased, increased again.

Variation II (net)

I collapsed and then we emerged.
We were forming lines each one creating one of the
directions.
Our lines started to cross, I could not define my shape
anymore.
First I was invisible, at this cycle I was still in the
darkness.
I was below, I turned into soil,
Dark, warm and fertile.
Eventually I consumed all of the darkness and started
to be light.

Being light, I was a variant.
You and me we were the same, but in a different shape.
I was the connection between you and me,
By conquering space I conquered shape
I was filling the void,
Forming a net, moving between you and me.
Every time we met, I evolved.
I extended.
Soon below and above found their place,
I was in-between.

Interlude (information)

As I moved between you and me,
I multiplied, in the continuation of movement,
I settled conquered above and below
And re-formed myself.
My boundaries dissolved, turned fluid,
Turned solid again.

I was shifting shapes, splitting,
Reuniting, forming.
As I fell through the prism I was broken,
Each part of me
Founding one element of the world.

I was code,
I was system,
I was structure,
I was bones.

Variation III (body)

We were multiple,
Our boundaries in each direction were constant,
But we could not grasp them anymore.

We were inside, solid upright structure,
Carrying hot flesh,
We were outside,
Forming warm pink skin.

I was at each node of the crossing lines,
I was active as I was moving between you and me.
I was in the world,
And constituting the world.

Rupture (disease)

I was my construction and my destruction.

I ate myself and became poisonous.

As I was reaching my limits,

I was founding my extinction.

In order to survive,

I learned how to heal,

I returned to my origin and became medicine.

I was death and I was birth.

The two parts of me formed one.

Variation IV (scale)

I had formed a body,

By emerging in endless variants.

We were a texture,

We were a color,

We were a sound and a smell.

I was the foundation of us,

I was singular and multiple,

I had boundaries and I was endless.

I was air, invisible and traveling with wind,

I was soil, the below,

I was light, visible and radiant.

I was water, constant and powerful.

Epilogue (mushroom)

I was trial and error, I still am.

I am the in-between and I am the body.

I am many, and I am one.

World is made as I multiply,

World is made as I follow my endless cycles.

I am the root and the fruit,

I am the spore.

I am me and you.

I am we.

I am and.

ricercar, Italian.

- to seek. the original name for the musical form now known as 'fugue'.

THE BRIGHTNESS OF A THOUGHT

Cristina Urzola

I was trial and error, I still am.

I am the in-between and I am the body.

I am many, and I am one.

World is made as I multiply.

World is made as I follow my endless cycles.

THE BRIGHTNESS

I am the spore.

I am the seed and you

I am the

I am the

I am the

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As the beings on earth discovered the veil, they looked at it curiously. Observing its smooth fabric. Soon after their world had been covered by the veil, they began to notice a small irregularity in the texture. Just one day

For a long time there was only the earth and without the sky all living beings were without orientation. There was neither day nor night and without the light of the sun and the stars time had no meaning. After an eternity, a deity stumbled upon this dark clump and as it looked at it closer, it discovered the chaos which ruled on its surface and decided to cultivate it.

calling it rise from the northern side, its zenith north, and when it reached the border of the world again they named it dusk.

So it started by building a frame and took another eternity of time to weave a silky veil which it spanned over the frame like an umbrella to become the empty sky.

As the beings on earth discovered the veil, they looked at it curiously. Observing its smooth fabric. Soon after their world had been covered by the veil, they began to notice a small irregularity in the texture, just one tiny stitch that stood out. Word travelled fast and soon everyone was looking up to the veil, their eyes finding the wrong stitch easily. It was in everyone's thoughts and the longer they stared at it, the more it became rooted in their daily life. Through the stitch they noticed that the veil moved over their heads, appearing and disappearing in a regular pattern. They started calling its rise from the horizon dawn, its zenith noon, and when it neared the border of the world again they named it dusk.

The stitch became crucial in every aspect of their life, so much so that they couldn't imagine living without it and with every dawn and dusk they found that it became a little bigger. Glowing brighter and brighter with every passing day like nothing they had ever seen before until the light became so strong that no-one dared to directly look at it any more.

On that day, as the stitch reached its brightest, something stirred within it. A consciousness born from the thoughts, fears and dreams of all living beings concentrated on that one little spot in the sky. It raised its head for the first time and looked down on the world. The beings had started to call it sun and the newborn deity wallowed in all the attention and worship it got. Pride rising and shaping its character.

But to the beings on earth the sun was so glaring that the nights became unbearably dark. They started to wish for light whenever the sun disappeared behind the horizon. Blindly staring up to the black night sky. Many little lights began to glow as their gazes were unfocused. Never bright enough to offer the comfort of the sun.

A lot of time passed again until the beings came to a mutual agreement on which little light to focus on to become their guidance of the night.

A small light grew and the moon was born. Its nature was gentle, its light glowing rather than shining thriving in the centre of its smaller brothers and sisters.

As the sun noticed that it wasn't the only deity any more to compete for attention it became jealous. Anger and resentment raising within it.

It attacked the moon, fighting it with all the energy it had been infused with. The moon, despite being younger, fought back. The battle lasted several cycles until the sun finally landed the deathblow. Ripping the moon from the sky and extinguishing its light. And the night was dark again.

Euphoric from its victory the sun returned to its spot. Ignoring the mourning beings. They would get over it. It thought.

But their longing for light was so strong that instead of getting over it and keeping their attention only on the sun, they made the moon begin to glow. Reborn from their dreams it rose, grew and grew until the sun noticed it, attacking the moon with all its jealousy. Once again the moon was killed but this time the fight had also taken a toll on the sun, its energy slightly dulled. Deedless it had to watch how the moon was reborn until it had recovered far enough to reignite the fight.

An endless battle, an eternal cycle of rebirth and death for as long as there will be a single being on earth looking up to the sky projecting its thoughts onto the veil.

EPIPHANY

But their longing for light was so strong that instead of getting over it and keeping their attention only on the darkness, they began to look at the light. They saw that the light was not as bright as they had thought it would be. It was a pale, yellowish light, like the light of a candle. They saw that the light was not as warm as they had thought it would be. It was a cold, distant light, like the light of a star. They saw that the light was not as simple as they had thought it would be. It was a complex, mysterious light, like the light of a secret. They saw that the light was not as good as they had thought it would be. It was a light that was both beautiful and terrifying, like the light of a dream.

In the beginning there was nothing and not even space itself. Only the engulfing doom of the nothingness. Out of the dark, the eyes opened, the void exploded and at one glance the world was created. There was this bright light it was as bright as nothing that had ever been there before. A bright dot emerging out of the darkness, come to wage an eternal battle against it. The dot was pulsating, like a lung breathing fresh air. With unstoppable energy and an incredible strength of will, it was going bigger and brighter. It was the seed of the world, the seed of the new.

THE EPIPHANY

In the beginning there was nothing. No mighty gods and not even space itself. Only the engulfing doom of the nothingness. Out of the dark, the eyes opened, the void imploded and at one glance the world was created. There was this bright light, it was as bright as nothing that had ever been there before. A bright dot emerging out of the darkness, come to wage an eternal battle against it. The dot was pulsating, like a lung breathing fresh air. With unstoppable energy and an incredible strength of will it was getting bigger and brighter. It was clear, there was no going back. It was the seed of the world.

Being absorbed into the bright light, blurred colors unfold to the eyes. A sea of blue, green and red surfaces. A fizzing and splashing comes to the ears, the sound of flowing water like the blood of the world. The vision becomes clear. A landscape of rocks and hills, a fertile valley where everything springs and sprouts. Dense trees clothe the mountains and the gentle river meanders alongside its manifold curves, reflecting the clouds that the wind carried across the sky. The valley thrumming with activity. Mosquitoes tracing complex patterns in the air, guinea pigs hopping through the high grass, causing it to rustle, and a lot of strange flowers perfuming the air with their sweet, rich fragrance.

While looking at these big, stunning flowers, fractal patterns appear with snakes plunging through the blossom, coming to life, swirling and transforming. Suddenly without a warning, great fear rises from the surface. A horrifying scream blasts through the valley. Overwhelmed by the events, the eyes close and the ears stop listening. Everything is gone. What is left of the world? The pervasive sense of poignancy? It is all blurred now. Close to a dream but it seemed all real before. It's easy to be deceived. This world is a reflection of you. A dot, a world and an observer. This whole world is thus shaped by consciousness. It has no starting point and will have no end. Reality is in the observations of the exact moment everything else is horizons of possibility.

OPTICAL EMOTIONS

Giuseppe Allegri

glowing • solitude

The universe appeared as an infinite expanse of directionless darkness, lapping the oily skin of a black Venus. It was made of hiddenness, invisibility, drift and echos. As the Venus felt lonely in her isolation, her skin got moister with desire.

It became glowy, and where the dark matter overlapped, a sacred landscape could be seen: a diodic surface of reflections called world.

glaring • awareness

The center of the world was a place, from which any other place could be seen. The sun lived there: his dwelling stood at the highest summit.

A house pierced by infinite entrances, bristling with infrared sensors and with no door blocking the access. Open night and day, it was made of polished silver and silicon dioxide. It reflected all, collected sights and repeated what it saw. Inside there was no rest and in no corner was there shadow, nor any dazzling light, only a soft glare.

The hall was always crowded: figures of every sort came and went. Mixed with real images, thousands of illusory impressions roamed through the space.

An excess of light pollution, of which the partitions of the house desperately strained to keep record.

blurring • innocence

Unaware of light, the human beings lived tightly together under the earth, in a cave dwelling. They had been in the dark since childhood and spent their time mastering the reading of the shadows: an esoteric practice which celebrated the absence of clear contours, a language deprived of form and of subject, whose blind grammar was founded on blur and nuances.

They found meaning in the finest vibrations of a shade and recognised each other by the glow of their own bodies.

glittering • exposure

From his palace the Sun could see the human beings living and he was moved. Horrified, he descended to the cave and with the promise of a land of hills and streams led them to the daylight world.

Whenever any of them found himself forced to stand up and to look towards the light, he would be overwhelmed by the pain. Once in the sunlight, the pupils were filled with the glare. Because of the flickering brightness, they weren't able to see anything.

In the struggle of getting used to the intense light, their eyes shed pearly tears: drops of shimmering gloom which encrusted their brows and crystallized in tinted sunglasses, filtering the radiance of daylight.

flashing • shame

Still atrophied behind glasses, human eyes broadcast the first abstract visions of hills and streams.

Visions dripping like a dark fluid between the eyelids and corrupting the clarity perfected by the sun, who resolved to remove them with refractive surgery. An infallible laser tracked the impurities in the corneas and vaporized them.

Made into transparent optical devices, the eyes let the light reach their frailest tissues and wash away the last drops of gloom.

With opened eyes, the human beings realized for the first time that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

radiating • apprehension

Ashamed because of their constant exposure to the sunlight, people hid; they became unpredictable and less obedient. Afraid of the crumbling of his opus, Sun fabricated a surveillance engine.

Argos was remotely controlled with infrared, its adamant organism equipped with fast connections and tireless wings.

Its body was covered with liquid crystal displays, each like a pale feather hiding a watchful eye.

It flew between the sky and the earth screeching, or sat spying on tall towers and dismayed big cities.

permeating • lucidity

Millions of cameras were installed all around Argos' head: a pair for each of his prisoners.

Whichever way it turned, it saw what they saw. Everything they did happened in front of its eyes. Eyes recording and storing in silicon synapses.

As they rested in turn—two at a time—most of the them were awake all the time, mounting guard.

Condemned to constant alert, it could never give itself up to sleep.

fading • desire

Argos browsed incessantly through its thousands of devices, glaring screens broadcasting the reality shows of mankind, but was not allowed to indulge in any of them.

Though one image got stuck in its optical inspection system: an adolescent whose dark complexion was infused with the glow of a fading star. Its eyes began lingering on him very often, bewitched, and neglected the other prisoners. Anytime the youth would set out on a roadside to play his harp, Argos would sit beside him and watch.

As soon as the boy's fingers touched the strings, time ceased to exist among the leafy branches. As if the scene was lit by the light of a farther planet, everything moved at a softer pace. The languor in the boy's iris and flesh gently spread into Argos' optical devices, mesmerizing them and numbing its alert mind.

evanescent • oblivion

The light it possessed in so many pupils was off, its eyes were filled with darkness, a single darkness weighing on a million eyes.

Once every eye was closed, the feathers covering them became green and iridescent, shimmering with golden eyelashes around them. In the center of each feather was a black hole hemmed with a blue halo, a blind eye reflecting a single vision: twisted stars and planets piercing the silky skin of a wide body like birthmarks, nipples glowing like pearls on the breasts, figures resting in the gloom of a doorway, or of a mirror; obscure murals painted with a black hair in the darkness; a liquid of dreams moisturizing the orifices and filling up the navel, lapping the shores of a landscape of scars and wrinkles and blackening the lashes of a fair boy playing the harp.

THE LIFE OF THE SOYBEAN

The soybean is a plant that has been cultivated for thousands of years. It is a member of the legume family, which means it has the ability to fix nitrogen in the soil. This makes it a very important crop for farmers, especially in areas where the soil is poor. The soybean is used in a variety of ways, from food to industrial products. It is a versatile and valuable crop that has played a major role in the development of agriculture.

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The soybean stretched and her pod bursted and she saw the light of day. Some say she originated from a beautiful butterfly flower. Others emphasize that she was given to the first humans as food by the gods when they created the earth with brown fields, green meadows, blue seas, running, crawling, flying animals, plants and fruits in all kinds of colors and tastes, red, sweet berries, juicy oranges or yellowish lemon-sized fruits with an unforgettable smell. The people lived peacefully with each other for a long time until a hunger strike spread among them. The people demanded food and if they did not get it, they attacked each other with violence, so that the birds flew from the trees in fright. Then the gods gave the bean to the humans together with the smallest creatures in the universe, the bacteria, to satisfy their hunger.

Humans planted the bean in the ground with the bacteria and cared for them. And lo and behold, a beautiful perennial plant with large pods grew up. When these burst, beans fell to the earth, which satisfied the hunger of the people or else were put back into the earth so that new perennials with beans could grow — the cycle of life took its course. A quick ripening period and their nutritiousness with carbohydrates and high protein content made them into a superfood. Ships from the West came to report back home about the new bean, which was worshipped by all for her deeds.

So what could have been a glorious story turned out to be a disastrous one for the soybean: In the beginning everything was still exciting and thrilling. The bean travelled the world. She saw the sun rise in the morning and set in the evening. She saw strong men on big ships, moving cars, steaming trains, boxes swinging in the air and disappearing behind the clouds like birds. She was often welcomed and treated with care. She helped to feed the hunger of the people.

But this ability also attracted the others, the greedy and the voracious, the ruthless, who could never get enough. They abused the bean for their own purposes. The never-ending interest in their abilities exhausted the bean. No matter how hard she tried, it was never enough. The bean felt drained.

They began to examine the bean, to see what makes her special. For painfully long hours she lay under a bright light, wired and cabled, surrounded by a big mess of indefinable noises. Everything was spinning. What was up was suddenly down and the other way around. Is it actually day or night? Where am I? In the present, already in the future or am I still stuck in the past? The confusion never stopped. But as if this procedure hadn't been enough, the bean was to become even better. Better than anything she had seen.

They started to change the bean. They took her apart and put her back together again. Apparently this led to the desired result, because smiling faces bent over the bean. In her aching misery, she tried to return the smile. Even though she no longer understood all this, the bean could still try to do what she was born to do: satisfy people's hunger. But she had to realize that she had long since been used for other purposes. From now on she was thrown to the animals to eat. The changes to the bean meant that she grew faster and became bigger.

But gradually the other plants and animals that had lived in the field with the bean died. At some point, she stood alone on dried-out fields, ruthlessly exposed to the burning sun. Lonely, the bean looked into the distance and grieved for the past times.

Whatever they had done to her when she had lain under the bright light, it seemed to have been no good. A last ray of sunlight shone in her face, then the bean closed her eyes and sank into the earth. Now freed from the misery that had befallen her on earth, a smile came across her lips.

End.

Prior to the Universe, there was only a void of infinite light. Everything was calm and silent. No borders were visible. Was it a finite or an infinite space?

At the center the Cosmic Egg had quiescent. From the silence a power of darkness began to rise. They soon began to rotate in circles around the Cosmic Egg. They became faster and faster. At one point the pressure was so high they fell into the center, freely into the Cosmic Chaos.

THE TREE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

CHAOS - cycle I

Prior to the Universe, there was only a void of Infinite Light. Everything was calm and silent. No borders were visible. Was it a finite or an infinite space?

At the center the Cosmic Egg lied quiescent. From the silence a roar spread creating Darkness. The power of Darkness was opposing its force to the Infinite Light. They soon began to rotate in circles around the Cosmic Egg. They became fast. Faster. Extremely fast. At one point the pressure was so high they fell into the center. The Cosmic Egg exploded into tiny pieces. The Universe came to life. Nothing was ordered, everything floated freely into the Cosmic Chaos.

OUTSIDE - cycle II

A man woke up. Regaining consciousness. Everything was confused. Sounds were still distinguishable. Was it a dream or memories from a forgotten past?

He could picture every detail but it was so absurd. He now felt safe to be back on his planet. The sun came every day and the moon every night. However no other creature was to be seen. Silence echoed. The other planets were so distant that he could hardly see them. He was alone. Watery tears started covering his face shining under the moonlight. Sadness conquered the space in and outside his body. Some tears fell on the ground. He was fascinated, he had never had his cheeks wet. From his tears a Tree was born. Suddenly, the planets once floating at a distance became visible and other inhabitants were distinguishable. He was not alone.

For days and weeks he tried to communicate: with some it was easier than with others. Each time they got closer. Planets formed groups, constellations and galaxies. Their Trees were growing too: each man had

one on his planet. The more people spoke, stronger and taller they grew, with big green leaves, making juicy fruits. Collecting memories. Animals and other plants populated the tiny planets. Humanity was thriving. Sometimes planets came so near that their inhabitants could touch each other and look each other in the eyes. Humanity experienced love and life. Hours became days; days, weeks and then years.

If people weren't willing to communicate, their Trees were immediately affected. They started losing their precious layers, stratified in years. Each layer would fall apart into barely distinguishable particles that would fill up the air they breathe. They were the most ambiguous beings, neither were they living nor were they dead. It was impossible to define whether they belonged to life or not. Nothing similar had been seen before. Suddenly the landscape changed. The planets altered to inhospitable places. Communicating was difficult, breathing too. Everything that was possible before became impossible. Communities, friendships, politics. They only survived as memory. Since there was less contact, the planets slowly moved apart from each other. Those communities were so bound that the absence of one member affected all the others. The only solution was hiding under the big roots of the

Tree. However that couldn't offer full protection.
Therefore people tried to dig inside as far as they could.
Falling.
Darkness.

INSIDE - cycle III

Breathing. Regaining consciousness. The air wasn't as heavy as the man remembered. Was he in a new place? What happened?

The Tree was there, recovered from the destruction. How was that possible? These questions were left unanswered. Wherever he was, the space felt uncomfortable. He could see neither the moon, nor the sky nor the stars. More than anything he was missing the human presence. He started constructing tools and objects from the Tree's wood. It was so superb, he could transform it into anything. It felt like it knew everything. As days and weeks passed by, the man gave life to several objects which started to surround him. Some moments were more difficult than others. On these days he would sit on his bed and be lost in his thoughts. Everything surrounding him, everything he gave life to, sustained him through. Things became almost animated. The space he was into was defined by the objects he built. Objects that he utilized every day and to which, through their constant use, he gave life to. There is no difference between an empty room and a void of infinite light itself. The sound of his heartbeat

echoed. Loneliness took over. He knew other human beings were on the other side; outside, he felt it, he had been there before. He tried figuring out how to communicate to them: this time from there, inside. Thoughts became confused. Suddenly there was only light.

RESONANCE

Jan Schweizer
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been there before. He tried figuring out how to
communicate to them. This time from there, inside.
Thoughts became confused. Suddenly there was only
light.

FRAPENCY
In the beginning, there was everything but there was
nothing.

SIGNAL

Suddenly a breath, a rhythm emerged, calm but consistent. Threads, equal of thickness, began to weave, a fabric growing evenly and plane into space.

FREQUENCY

Then the breathing alternated, becoming stronger and faster. And the winds of the breath, now directed at the fabric, started to shake it.

ACTUALISATION

The interplay continued, an undulating motion giving birth to ever new topographies. A fold, previously a basin, became a peak and the neighbouring terrain changed in correlation.

INCARNATION

Some pieces of fabric which were swirled up could enclose the breath like a pocket. Animated by their internal stimulus, they moved, determined to spread across the surface.

PERCEPTION

Travelling, the interior of them was reshaped consistently as a miniature of the exterior. When the exterior alternated, some parts of their interior corresponded in accordance.

INTELLIGENCE

They then folded the fabric themselves as a reciprocal performance. So they learned to dance together, modulate their vicinity.

HARMONY

The most beautiful, unforeseeable, patterns became selected. Grand pirouettes and summersaults took place within their gardens organised in rich order.

CONTAINED INFINITY

Time was passing, and he knew that the end of his time would come.

He started telling everything he knew to his offspring, but the time was scarce and the knowledge abundant. He couldn't explain it all.

What was in scarcity, was in scarcity for all. With every revolution, less and less was passed on.

There was the first thought.

There was a thinker.

Thinker became physical. Dimensions came, time started.

He saw the first time. He perceived the first time. He understood the first time.

All the knowledge of the physicality was given to him from the first moment. He knew all.

He lived in physical delights.

Time was passing, and he knew that the end of his time would come.

He started telling everything he knew to his offspring, but the time was scarce and the knowledge abundant. He couldn't explain it all.

What was in scarcity, was in scarcity for all. With every revolution, less and less was passed on.

Eventually questions asked couldn't be answered directly. Less knowledge was passed on and they could not reason everything. Answers became implicit.

Implicit, like fantastic stories elders tell to the younglings. Youngling wanted to know how it all started.

But he knew less about everything. The stories told to him were adjusted to his knowledge. To clarify that which was beyond his knowledge, metaphors and fantasies were told.

First he knew why those stories were told. Then he started believing in the metaphors more than why they were told. He held them for true, although they were the products of thoughts of those who first told them.

He started living in the reality where lies were mixed with truth. He didn't mind this coexistence. He even went on further to add more. What he saw new of this world became new elements in his fantasies.

Over time he grew, and while he was growing he heard other stories, what others were told. The origin was the

same but the narration was different.

Fantasies became abundant, true knowledge became scarce.

Realizing this, he pursued the true knowledge. He wanted to know why. In an attempt at purification he started contesting everything told. He searched for proofs in a radical manner. He observed, he experimented, he validated. He did all this with what he could see of his physical world.

In the end he knew everything of this physical world. There was nothing left to perceive about reality.

With all this knowledge he was asked by his youngling what was there first. He could recite it all. He was able to pass all knowledge on to his offspring, starting from the first time to the point of their conversation.

The youngling—knowing now everything—has asked what was before the first time. In the end it was just a dimension of physicality. He wanted to know about the first thought.

In his knowledge about reality, there was nothing that could answer it. Everything he knew was interconnected with one another, everything was coherent and one, but all were inherently locked into physical reality. Regardless of its multitude of dimensions, there was nothing that could get away from this circle of physicality and point out to an answer of another nature.

He couldn't know. But he could believe.

When time ends, when the dimensions of this world perish, then maybe he will be able see what was not before perceivable.

TELE TRILOGY

It all started with a huge scandal.

During the halftime show of the Super Bowl XXXIII, the famous pop star Janet Jackson performed a medley of hits, beginning with *All for You*. Mythen Narton and a hotel excerpt of *The Knowledge*.

The show was, according to those timer custom, broadcast live to a wide and dispersed audience in a confidential manner.

Later on, surprise guest Justin Timberlake appeared onstage. He sang his song *Rock Your Body*.

While Timberlake was singing:

Are you feeling me
Let's do something
Let's make a bet
Cause I bet I'll have you naked by the end of this song

A suppressed sexual fantasy of Steve Chen, a frustrated PayPal employee, hijacked the stream of vision for approximately half a second. At this very moment the worldwide audience witnessed the

Julian Wäckerlin

It all started with a huge scandal.

During the halftime show of the *Super Bowl XXXVIII*, the famous pop star **Janet Jackson** performed a medley of hits, beginning with *All for You*, *Rhythm Nation* and a brief excerpt of *The Knowledge*.

The show was, according to those times' custom, broadcast live to a wide and dispersed audience as a unidirectional stream of visions.

Later on, surprise guest **Justin Timberlake** appeared onstage performing a flirting-style duet of his song *Rock Your Body*.

While Timberlake was singing:

Are you feelin' me

Let's do somethin'

Let's make a bet

'Cause I-I bet I'll have you naked by the end of this song

A suppressed sexual fantasy of **Steve Chen**, a frustrated PayPal employee, hijacked the stream of visions for approximately half a second. At this very moment the worldwide audience witnessed the

uncovering of Janet Jackson's breast, adorned with a nipple piercing, by Justin Timberlake's movement.

It was a shock for everyone and a huge scandal: for the first time the one-directional stream of visions provoked a resonance and a surprising visual feedback deriving from a single consumer. Of course Chen's vision was an instinctual and affective reaction to the exciting Timberlake-song but it proved that everyone is potentially capable to stream home-made visions to a wider audience.

Just shortly after the scandal—now known as *Nippelgate*—**Jawed Karim** from San Diego was able to broadcast the revolutionary *Me at the Zoo*. Contentwise it was nothing special. It was quite the opposite: A very shy nonsense vision with huge lack of storytelling. Nevertheless it was a key event. The astonishing fact Jaws Karim was being able to produce and broadcast all by himself nineteen seconds of him standing in the *San Diego Zoo* and saying:

*All right, so here we are in front of the elephants,
The cool thing about these guys is that they have really,
really long trunks, and that's, that's cool.
And that's pretty much all there is to say.*

Little by little the people refined this technique and started to produce much more creative content as well as sophisticated ways of broadcasting. Instead of just standing in front of elephants and talking nonsense, they started to sing, play, explain how things work or entertain and amuse an audience.

Unlike the former one-dimensional stream, people started to be exposed to a huge amount of information and many different visions at the same time. An astonishing heterotopic milieu arose with an increasing amount of striving for attention and of influencing the life of people. Furthermore the milieu provided a breeding ground for a lively cult for creative self-advertisement.

Above all there was **Jenna Marbles**. She was famous for her sarcastic and humoristic daily life content.

Her *How to Trick People Into Thinking You're Good Looking* where she explained how you can go from being gross-looking to a 'Gucci-whore' was a huge success:

Hello Dear Friends! If you were born really ugly like me, have no fear. There's steps you can take to be good-looking. Kind of.

She continued taking a shower, applying an insane huge amount of make-up, followed by dark eye make-up, shiny pink lipstick and straightening her hydrogen blonde hair. At the end she recommended to get a super degrading job; for herself she chose dancing in her underwear.

There's no cure for ugly, but you can make yourself into a human optical illusion.

With such statements she had a huge impact and received cult status.

After Jenna Marble's second big success *How to Avoid Talking to People You Don't Want to Talk to* a wax statue was erected in Madame Tussaud's New York in her honor — where she still can be seen today.

*In the beginning everything was already planned and
A subjectless instantaneously, endlessly renewed,
momentarily consumed, over and again.
As much as it is today for that matter.*

*Nothing had to be changed, in order for everything to be
different.*

It shimmered at first, a bubble.

A few moments later, however,

it began to glow.

*Nothing made it different than the sound which
sprung as an answer.*

Something, however, appeared between them.

And because it had come to be, it could not be undone.

It looked like nothing.

A foolish game, but it was playing for keeps.

The grunts disappeared but the in-between did not.

As a matter of fact, it had expanded.

The sounds, seemingly of their own will, started

Yann Salzmann

In the beginning everything was already there.
A subjectless instantaneity, endlessly renewed,
momentarily consumed, over and again.
As much as it is today for that matter.

Nothing had to be changed, in order for everything to be different.

It stammered at first, a babble.
A few attempts were necessary.
It began with a grunt; nothing made this sound
different than those that preceded or would follow.
Nothing made it different than the sound which
sprung as an answer.
Something, however, appeared *between* them.

And because it had come to be, it could not be undone.

It looked like nothing.
A foolish game, but it was playing for keeps.
The grunts disappeared but the *in-between* did not.
As a matter of fact, it had expanded.
The sounds, seemingly of their own will, started

associating and relating. They acquired measure.

Another world rises, in which things are more than themselves.

Out of the cradle of groans came the names.
They stepped out of pure auditive expression and
into the realm of abstraction.
Momentarily invoked, Things started to rise from
the shapeless heap.
They started to organize.

From now on, nothingness could be called into being.

Swimming into the fluid of speech, stories came
about.
With them, the agency of change; sounds, grunts and
names disappeared into the abyss of the narrative.
The origin had been locked away and the keys
thrown to the wind. One could not escape it
anymore.

Only that which can erase is able to write.

Voices consumed through sheer existence.
Flowing together, the stories formed the ocean of
Memory.

Unlike sound, which disappears through being,
it restores time and again.

*Now, in all memories, a fictitious past occupies the place
of any other.*

Mighty, Memory carries ghosts and makes gods.
But no less delicate than the voices it celebrates, so it
is fragile.
When the riverbed dries the ocean shallows.

*This is the way the world ends; not with a bang but a
whimper.*

