

THE ANIMALS

They do not live in the world,
Are not in time and space.
From birth to death hurled
No word do they have, not one
To plant a foot upon,
Were never in any place.

For with names the world was called
Out of the empty air,
With names was built and walled,
Line and circle and square,
Dust and emerald;
Snatched from deceiving death
By the articulate breath.

But these have never trod
Twice the familiar track,
Never never turned back
Into the memoried day.
All is new and near
In the unchanging Here
Of the fifth great day of God,
That shall remain the same,
Never shall pass away.

On the sixth day we came.

Edwin Muir (1887-1959)

Before life and after

A time there was - as one may guess
And as, indeed, earth's testimonies tell -
Before the birth of consciousness,
When all went well.

None suffered sickness, love, or loss,
None knew regret, starved hope, or heart-burnings;
None cared whatever crash or cross
Brought wrack to things.

If something ceased, no tongue bewailed,
If something winced and waned, no heart was wrung;
If brightness dimmed, and dark prevailed,
No sense was stung.

But the disease of feeling germed,
And primal rightness took the tinct of wrong;
Ere nescience shall be reaffirmed
How long, how long?

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)

“... a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in his imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labor process we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the laborer at its commencement.”

--Karl Marx, *Capital*

MIND/BRAIN

People often seem to assume that those who recognize a valid distinction between mind and brain and view psychoanalysis as essentially concerned with the interpretation of meaning necessarily embrace some kind of supernaturalism.

I can operate my car while knowing little or nothing about what goes on under the hood. But my ignorance with respect to the mechanics of internal combustion engines doesn't mean I think the car is guided by supernatural forces! I can psychoanalyze a mind while knowing little or nothing about the brain, while being perfectly aware that the former depends upon the latter. No brain, no mind. That's a no-brainer ... or should I say a no-minder? Never mind.

Admittedly, If I'm unhappy with the way my car is behaving, it is helpful to know enough about the engine to be able to consider the possibility that the problem might be mechanical and not just a result of my deficient driving skills. Conversely, and to vary

the metaphor, if I'm unhappy with what I'm seeing on my TV it is useful to be alert to the possibility that the problem may not be with the set but with the script or the actors.

The *Three Worlds Hypothesis*—World 1, lithosphere, pre-biological, inorganic; World 2, biosphere, biological, organic; World 3, nöosphere, post-biological, superorganic--has its roots in the thought of Hegel, Bergson, Vernadsky, Teilhard de Chardin and others. Not all, but many who embrace this perspective do not in any way view the superorganic as supernatural, but merely as irreducible to its biological foundation.

This is the Emergent Evolutionary hypothesis of biologist Julian Huxley who, like his grandfather, Thomas Henry Huxley, was a Darwinist, but one who, unlike his grandfather, realized that the battle to view humans as animals had been won, so that now one could afford to recognize what strange and unusual animals we are: animals possessing not just brains, but minds that, while depending upon brains, exist (ex-ist, stand out from, or emerge) on a distinctively human level of symbolic consciousness, with all (and it's plenty!) that entails.

Continuous evolutionists who emphasize only quantitative differences of degree among species rather than the qualitative differences of kind that emerge at critical levels seem to assume that those who, like Huxley, focus upon the differences rather than the similarities between man and other species are arguing not just for the uniqueness but for the superiority of man. And they respond with vigorous criticism of the arrogance of such claims and point to the destructiveness of humanity toward other species and the planet as a whole. But in so doing they seem to fail to realize that they themselves are now arguing for the uniqueness of man. Although Freud and others mistakenly projected it upon the "beast" in us, the fact is that only humans are "beastly" while the beasts never are. It seldom occurs to such critics that those of us who focus upon man's uniqueness may do so in an attempt to better understand and limit our destructiveness.