

God 4.0 is Here! In the nick of time, the necessary, required, exquisitely assembled Upgrade – a radical gift of illumination, encouragement, relief and warning from Robert Ornstein, master of mind and brain, brilliant scientist, and humanist who, with lucidity and wit in twenty-one books over fifty years, has explained us to ourselves – and never more comprehensively than in **God 4.0**.

From the numinous painted caverns of our Paleolithic ancestors to today's state-of-the-art university "Baby Labs," with cinematic flair, Ornstein guides us deep into our Anthropocene Epoch's stunning vault of discoveries in paleontology, archeology, religious studies, neuroscience, genetics, and particularly psychology – rendering and elucidating where we came from; how the human brain, mind, and consciousness developed; and how we can and must update our understanding of this extraordinary endowment including our "second system of cognition" – our brain's innate, latent capacity for "transcendence."

I first spoke with Robert Ornstein from a phone box in the desert of Baja California. I had recently been asked to serve on the board of a charitable foundation whose mission statement in part reads: "The Will J. Reid Foundation seeks to ensure a wise and durable world. To this end we support people and programs offering creative solutions to long-term problems..." I was familiar with Ornstein's books and knew the organization he founded in 1969, The Institute for the Study of Human Knowledge (ISHK), was not filling potholes, but pioneering fundamentally creative, research-based educational efforts to help humanity meet our greatest challenges. So, I called to offer a grant to ISHK, no strings attached. A letter had been sent – a common practice in those days – but RO sensibly insisted on a call, as pennies from heaven were out of the ordinary, possibly suspect. He needed to find out what sort of cranks we might be.

Twenty years later, walking after sunset on a clear evening in rural, west central Illinois, I looked up. Mesmerized by the beauty of the night sky, I set to diligently sorting constellations, when out of the great dark of deep space in the northwest near Vega, one after the other emerged what appeared to be a beautiful, graceful, even rhythmically spaced string of stars, traveling east. I'm not sure how many there were but I watched, transfixed for perhaps thirty seconds until the last disappeared as quietly as it had come – mid-handle of the Little Dipper. This was during the first wave of pandemic lockdowns and could easily have been a hallucination, but of course (as I discovered in the seconds it takes to ruin night vision searching on a phone) they were SpaceX Starlink satellites, launched with the goal of bringing all people on Earth access to the internet.

I had just finished reading an early draft of **God 4.0**.

In one of his last emails to ISHK supporters, Bob Ornstein wrote:

ISHK is not political but we do try to influence our society's understanding of *truth*. All of us, in part thanks to modern internet and connective technology have access to a great body of information. While more and more scientific, archeological, historical, and neuroscientific information is being developed, and we can access an inconceivable amount in a few seconds, there is more to distract and misinform. *We have a culture expanded drastically in reach, but often drastically reduced in scope and thought.* [my italics] ...We can now send 30,000 people a photo of our brunch, and now 38% of Americans believe that God created humans just 10,000 years ago (Gallup July 2017) and another 38% that God directed evolution. Creationism is the most prevalent "alternative fact," and according to Gallup there's been a major increase in people who doubt that objective facts exist at all.

With such a crucible of networking power at our fingertips, as one human family, let us take responsibility to reign ourselves in and "increase our necessity" to master not only the outer networks, but also, more urgently, our inner network – our nascent, intuitive, perceptive capacity – the "second system of cognition" which Robert Ornstein and Sally Mallam Ornstein exquisitely illuminate in **God 4.0** and offer *up to us* as an open secret.

The "second system" is an innate capacity that allows humans to transcend "self." It is at the "heart of our humanity," a gift of our species' long evolution, "the basis of our planetary success." If developed with balanced effort and attention – cultivated, studied, taught – this faculty can enable us to "experience the unity of what previously seemed separate...to see things whole, and ourselves as one part of the greater whole." This remarkable adaption provides the ground for our species to connect on a "solid, more united foundation," beyond our dramatic daily concerns, thick and thin barriers of religion, tribe, culture, politics, personality. Ornstein assures us that we now have the technology and advanced scientific methods to understand how this capacity works in the brain and urges us to lift the veils of anachronistic religious terminology, oozy metaphor, literal distortions – to move "*beyond beliefs to perception*" and a new "*spiritual literacy.*"

As one human family, let us heed **God 4.0's** research-based optimism and continue the study, understanding and training of our "second system of cognition" – the inward

networking skill that everybody has! What about “spiritual literacy” as the basis of an updated, world-wide curriculum – all of us equipped to make decisions from a higher, wider, longer, more intuitive perspective, for the good of all rather than the good of those who think and look like us?

Imagine the relief. God can at last come down to earth and quit bellowing. We humans can halt our manic liking and disliking – thumbing up and down, puffing all over the earth in the name of growth, god, greed, destroying like demented adolescent dragons. Instead, we can make a conscious, species-wide, evolutionary leap, connecting beyond and through our differences to protect our planet’s extraordinarily diverse, increasingly fragile web of life and to ensure a just, wise, and durable world.

...a book, an experiential treasure, an ancient, jeweled mosaic. Marvel at the table of contents. Each section’s shards contain a map, an offering. **God 4.0** is a profoundly practical masterwork of love and selfless service, a required gift and warning to our species – delivered in the nick of time.

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