



The Evolutionary Future of the Network

Henryk Skolimowski

Henryk Skolimowski responds to recent articles in the Review by arguing that the Network needs to free itself from the shackles of restrictive science and adopt a radically evolutionary perspective – Evolutionary Transcendence.

John Clarke's challenge that we, as the whole Network, must raise the ante (N.R., Winter 2009) was quite timely. And Frank Parkinson's response (N.R., Spring 2010) was incisive, far reaching and truly challenging us all. Which means we must respond to the challenge, individually and in some way as a group.

The Network has existed for nearly 40 years. It has made its history already. Its achievements are unquestioned and lasting. We could dissolve the Network and terminate the *Review* with a huge party of several hundred and — amidst celebration — declare that we have done our best. It is perfectly all right to end a good thing with a bang.

Now, if we want to continue the Network (and the *Review*) we must ascend to a new level of vision and imagination. We must recharge the Network as a new thing, as an entity with an altogether new life. To dissolve the Network, whether with a party or without it, would be no shame. But we should not continue by sliding into oblivion — because of our diminishing capacities to marshal new visions, which, like diamonds, would be able to cut existing gargantuan problems to reveal altogether new solutions.

Dancing to the Rhythm of Traditional Science

Turning to substantial points, for all its novelty, originality and independence, the Network, as a whole, has ceded far too much to the (traditional) scientific worldview — its framework, its language, its forms of thinking. Hence, our alternatives are merely footnotes to what is accepted by the mainstream science. Yes, yes, yes, we cry for new worldviews, new cosmology, new consciousness, and yet our main dance is very much to the tune and rhythm of traditional science. We are so afraid of being called 'anti-scientific quacks' that we bend backward by the mere possibility that *we might be lashed by the whips of science*. At the same time we are not fully aware that scientists are so often anti-scientific themselves, while disregarding the noble quest of science for truth and allying themselves with manipulative technology and parasitic commerce — for the sake of profit.

Let me make one of my main points. In so far as technology and science combined are the main culprits in undermining the foundations of sustainable worldviews and sustainable values (therefore sustainable life styles) our allegiance to this or that version of the scientific worldview is only exacerbating the situation...amidst our gentle pleading that 'we want to help.' The raging elephant has to be contained and not merely slightly restricted.

In a different frame of reference, Parkinson makes similar points in his discussion. He crisply writes that, on the pages of the *Review*, the agenda has been set by Richard Dawkins and the debate on evolutionary biology has been hijacked by Dawkins and the like.

I fully agree. Instead of dancing around Dawkins with fear, we should laugh at him, and his ridiculous unscientific language, and his metaphors such as 'the blind watchmaker' or 'the selfish gene.' This is a laughable stuff. The bulk of his language is based on bullying, dogmas and intimidations. If the money boys, including journalists, like this language, (we must be quite clear *why*), it is their problem, not ours. In substance, Richard Dawkins contributed precious little to the understanding of dynamic evolution of life, and human life especially. His legacy is a bunch of dogmas, not the opus leading to understanding.

I also agree with Parkinson that our search for new worldviews has been too dominated by cosmologists 'who resolutely refuse to go back beyond the first pico-moments of cosmic evolution.' Put it more plainly, the adventures of the New Cosmology and New Physics combined are fascinating intellectual pirouettes but serving mainly the practitioners of the craft. The complete understanding of the universe is as far away from us as it was 50 years ago, perhaps even further because of the tortuous complexity of explanations. The theory of everything sounds good as an idea — although it has always contained an element of a joke in it. The claim that the map of understanding of the universe (through physics) is nearly completed is another joke, while we don't understand 95% of the composition of the universe. To suggest that physicists in 100 years and even in 1,000 years will have nothing to do but to recite our present theories is another absurdity for me. In my intuition, I just know that the whole physics (and its underlying cosmology) will be revamped sooner than we think. How soon? I will not tell you.

The Need for an Evolutionary Dimension

Well, as a philosopher and epistemologist I wish to touch upon one basic flaw of present physical theories with their proliferation of dimensions and particles. This whole knowledge is flat, atomistic and dead. There is no evolution in it. We only have photographic pictures of the frozen world. The genius of the world and the genius of life lies precisely in the fact that it has evolved and is evolving. The dimension of evolution is missing in all of physics. Genuine knowledge is one which gives us the key to evolution of all there is. To

know is to understand how things evolved. The peculiar genius of understanding is to know where we are and who we are against all the panorama of evolution. Heaps of facts and theories of these facts — isolated from the flow of evolution — do not give us understanding, in spite of the fact that these theories may be dressed in mathematical equations.

Living knowledge is our quest, our aspiration and our fulfilment. Physical knowledge is dead and for this reason it leaves us cold. We need knowledge that sings, that inspires us to poetry, to art, joy and love. We need knowledge for human beings and not for abstract mathematical gods. Some of the greatest scientists of our times understood that. Among them there were Ilya Prigogine, John Archibald Wheeler and Roger Penrose. They promised us a New Science which would contain and explain history, poetry and love. Yet their promises came to naught. When they finally expressed their major opuses, it was through more equations and more dimensions, as if deriding us — human beings — in our quest of understanding.

Let me emphasise that New Knowledge, by which I mean living knowledge, will have to be the one which will combine New Cosmology with the understanding of the human condition, as lived by authentic human beings. It will also have to be the knowledge which will enable us to resolve our gargantuan problems. Our best (physical) knowledge is mute about our most important problems and our aspirations. For this reason it is defective for our ends and purposes.

Freeing Ourselves from Scientific Shackles

The following suggestions seem to follow from my discourse. Scientific models and modes of thinking have a great gravitational pull. Once we are in their orbit, they suck us in and make us appendages of their imperatives. We have to free ourselves from the tyranny of scientific thinking and its ominous shadow, which always nags us to check whether what we think agrees with the scientific ethos. We need to develop alternative world views *outside* the scientific territory. Knowledge is more ancient and more important than science.

Thus we have to create a new fertile cosmology (or cosmologies), evolutionary in character, which would be capable of generating not only galaxies and the star dust, but also biological life, and yes — human art, human values,

love, spirituality and gods... all *in the same structure of comprehension*. This overall structure of comprehension will be the one which will enable us to solve our gargantuan problems, which are the result of our incomprehension — yes, partly caused by our scientific dystopias.

A New Direction for the Network

In brief, this is the direction in which I would like the Network to follow: to invent, build and implement truly alternative models of reality, starting with cosmology because without it, we are stuck in the old grooves. For this reason I would rename the *Review* to read: *Review of Evolutionary Transcendence*. The title itself suggests the direction and breadth; and releases us from the shackles of science and medicine. As I have maintained, in its present format, the Network has fulfilled its intended purpose and even achieved some fame. But we are now in a *new evolutionary space*.

The question is: where do we find these new models of reality which would enable us to achieve metanoia — of turning things inside out. Aye, here is the rub. But not insurmountable. These models are around us. Yet we need to look harder to find them.

I will bring to your attention one of them — in the most concise manner possible. Henryk Skolimowski has proposed such a model in his book: *Let There be Light, The Mysterious Journey of Cosmic Creativity*. (Wisdom Tree Books, Delhi, 2010). David Lorimer has written an illuminating review of it in the *Spring Review*.

The book spells out a new cosmology, based on the primacy of Light — as the source of it all, as the creator of it all and the maintainer of it all. This cosmology explains the world in which everything is as natural as Light itself. But also as miraculous as Light itself, according to Einstein's dictum: for a man who believes in miracles everything is miraculous. The whole discourse is coherent and rational. It assumes that Transcendence and Evolution are attributes built into the structure of Light evolving. Through them Light has been able to create life and thought, art and gods. All is simply and believably explained. If you think that it is not possible to contain the whole cosmos in one book, read the book. If you are dissatisfied with the book, write your own. Such is the imperative of creative Light. Be that Light — create!

