

Appendix 3: BiPolarities Within and Without Us

BiPolarities of Metaphysics, the Universe, Humans Beings, and Nature

We will now look at some additional bipolarities, many of which were observed by the ancients, but many of which have been forgotten or discarded as frippery - an antiquated, immature perception of reality, one that is unworthy of serious scrutiny or of contemporary relevance.

① Bipolar Nature of Metaphysical Reality

Chinese philosophers divided everything into two categories, components or aspects: the Invisible (also called the Void, or what we might call the Intangible, Hidden, and Spiritual aspect of Life) and the Visible (or what we might call the Tangible, Manifest, and Material aspect of Life). The Visible (the Tangible, Manifest, and Material aspect of Life), moreover, rises from, rests in, and returns to the Invisible (or the Intangible, Hidden, and Spiritual aspect of Life). So Life, the structure of Life, possesses two aspects: an Invisible one and a Visible one.

The Invisible aspect corresponds to the Whole or the Unconscious in Life, or what we might call the Unknown or Indefinable, while the Visible aspect corresponds to the Known and the Definable.

The Invisible, Intangible, Hidden, Spiritual aspect of Life corresponds to Silence; the Visible, Tangible, Manifest, Material aspect of Life corresponds to Language. Silence is the Whole, while Language is the Part. Silence is a necessary prerequisite for understanding Language, for Language rises from, rests in, and returns to Silence, even as the Visible, Tangible, Manifest, Material aspect of Life returns to the Invisible, Intangible, Hidden, Spiritual aspect of Life.

We can list the numerous polarities of the metaphysical dimension as follows:

Polarities of Metaphysical Reality	
Invisible	Visible
Hidden	Manifest
Intangible	Tangible
Spiritual	Material
Whole	Part
Unconscious	Conscious
Unknown	Known
Indefinable	Definable
Death	Life
Absence	Presence
Formless	Form

It is interesting to note that the great mathematician R. Buckminster Fuller has summarized the Spiritual/ Material polarity in a formula:

$$\text{Universe} = \text{Metaphysical} \times \text{Physical} \quad (\text{U}=\text{MP})$$

② Bi-polar Nature of the Universe

Modern physics tells us that the universe consists of many levels or types of constantly interacting particles. If we try to isolate or pinpoint something, we find that it may have a high probability of not being there (Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle). All of these particles – many of which we cannot see but we know they are there - are in constant motion, although outwardly we may not observe them. Some have infinitesimal life spans, others endure for vast periods of time; some are sub-atomic, while others galactic.

We know that our universe is for the most part a *void*, a vacuum of space, and it contains mysterious black holes and *other mysterious invisible dimensions*. Oriental and Hindu philosophy called these invisible dimensions the Void. The counterpart is the visible Universe that is composed of galaxies and stars, planets and moons. So a very fundamental polarity is **Void/Universe**. *So our universe has an Unknown element. Our Universe reflects the metaphysical reality we described above. Perhaps we could call this the **Iceberg Principle**: For any investigated quantum of reality, there exists a far greater number of associated, unexplained, and unperceived quanta which are integrally part of the original quantum, and reflect a fuller, more comprehensive aspect of its original nature, structure, or essence.*

This mysterious uncertainty of the Universe and our inability to know it is a whole, is known in cybernetic theory as the **Theory of Incomplete Knowledge**, which is taken from the **Principia Cybernetica** website, and is given below:

This principle can be deduced from a lot of other, more specific principles: Heisenberg's uncertainty principles, implying that the information a control system can get is necessarily incomplete; the relativistic principle of the finiteness of the speed of light, implying that the moment information arrives, it is already obsolete to some extent; the principle of bounded rationality (Simon, 1957), stating that a decision-maker in a real-world situation will never have all information necessary for making an optimal decision; the principle of the partiality of self-reference (Lofgren, 1990), a generalization of Gödel's incompleteness theorem, implying that a system cannot represent itself completely, and hence cannot have complete knowledge of how its own actions may feed back into the perturbations. As a more general argument, one might note that models must be simpler than the phenomena they are supposed to model. Otherwise, variation and selection processes would take as much time in the model as in the real world, and no anticipation would be possible, precluding any control. (Principia Cybernetica 2001)

One might also add some other suggestive bipolarities:

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Void / Universe Polarities	
space	time
empty	full
repulsion	attraction
expansion	contraction
action	reaction
negative	positive
anti-matter	matter
uncertainty	probability
energy	substance
simultaneous	sequential

More such terms can be found in Appendix 3.

③ Bi-polar nature of the human

The following words are fundamental, and teaching them would instill an understanding of the bipolar nature of the human. Two basic polarities govern the human body: **left side/right side**, and **right hemisphere/left hemisphere**. The duality and integral functioning of all of the components of the body as well as the specialized functions of each half indicate the marvelous design of the human.

Human Polarities	
Left	Right
left hand	right hand
right hemisphere	left hemisphere
right leg, arm, lung, eye, nostril, ear, kidney, foot, ...	left leg, arm, lung, eye, nostril, ear, kidney, foot, ...
feeling	thinking
female	male
heart	head
intuition	senses
passive	active
community	individual
learning	teaching
profound	practical

Other terms related to human society can be found in Appendix 3.

④ **Bi-polar nature of nature**

The fourth great area of bipolarity in Life is **Nature**. All our sustenance, our shelter, our medicines, our jewels, our places of repose and retreat are all found in and/or materially derived from Nature. Nature possesses many polarities of its own, such as those below:

Nature Polarities	
hot	cold
crest	trough
desert	oasis
high tide	low tide
valley	mountain
wild	tame
wet	dry
rooted	branched

More such terms can be found in Appendix 3.

Appendix 3: Five Secondary Polarities

The Five Secondary Polarities

Five Secondary Polarities	
1 Invisible	Visible 10
2 Nature	Humanity 9
3 Female	Male 8
4 Figurative	Literal 7
5 Context	Text 6

The first secondary polarity of **Invisible/Visible**:

The Invisible refers to all the Unconscious and Unknown elements and factors in life, and to all those activities that involve any performance. Language can only identify some of the most important and visible components of any structure, situation, or activity, but it cannot exhaustively identify, define, and describe all that is involved in such performance or skill utilization. So, there remains something always unknown, uncertain, elusive, unnamable, indefinable, and mysterious about all genuinely human acts. As soon as you try to become too conscious of any skill or performance, you violate and damage the spontaneous holistic energy and vitality on which it depends.

We may define Life, but we cannot fully explain it. We can achieve only a glimpse of its inexhaustible richness. Life is not a problem to be solved; it is an intelligible, inexhaustible mystery to be reverently, intelligibly, but only partially, understood.

Life happens on a 3-D space-time grid. It is a finite playing field within the context of an ever-expanding universe. Yet within the molecules and atoms of the visible world there is more space than atomic particles and molecules.

Perhaps this is the underlying major polarity of all reality, but because moderns think of the world as being limited to the tangible world, the case or cause for the existence of the intangible world is one that does not fare well in academic circles. As such, this principle of a polarity between the Invisible and Visible is a central assumption that we make and feel is of supreme importance.

A corollary of this polarity is Whole/Part. Some religions talk about Being emerging from Nothingness, a Universe and Life emerging from a Void, or that Life is the Effect of the original Cause. This world is but a small part of the universe and creation. Astronomy attests to that, as we discussed earlier under the Polarity of Void/Universe.

The second secondary polarity is **Nature/Humanity**.

Nature – latent and unconscious – is a vast spectacle for the human to observe, control, modify, and dwell in. Animals for the most part are peace-loving and live in harmony. Zebras, elephants, giraffes, and gazelles roam the Serengeti. They are what they are, and in many ways they exist in a state of *being* rather than the more human state of *becoming*. All reality of the physical world – including mineral, vegetal, and animal kingdoms – is a diverse and amazing storehouse – at our command, for better or for worse, for life or slaughter or extinction. Certainly, they are the counterparts of us, humanity. Yet we are part of Nature, too. We derive our sustenance from nature, and often measure our pleasure by how close we are to the unspoiled sanctuaries of nature. We occupy a magnificent station and also the dominant one, yet our lives are ephemeral and quickly passing. Mountains and

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oceans last longer. In this temporal, dynamic, ever-changing scheme of things, Nature is for our contemplation, and the properties and polarities we see in it we find in a similar way in ourselves. As Emerson says, *Nothing is secure but life, transition, the energizing spirit.*

Natural processes are usually invisible and unconscious to human awareness. The secrets and laws are hidden and obscure to humanity until conscious human activity wrests them from unconscious to conscious. The patterns or laws are not immediately obvious, until humans think about, discover, and define them.

Nature is symbolized by the left hand.

Humanity – dominant and conscious – **is symbolized by the right hand.** All oriental philosophy and religion attests to a unity of being – of human and nature – that proper consciousness brings, an awareness of this dual yet inseparable phenomenon.

Today, with the Overdeveloped world destroying, ravaging, and exploiting the resources of this fragile planet, we see a total lack of regard for the needs, requirements, and well-being of the Underdeveloped world. What regard are we showing to enable the poorer non-English speaking world grasp the essentials of English quickly, so that communication, cross-cultural sharing, resource sharing, and education may expeditiously proceed? If we all can speak a common language around the world, we will all walk a common street. Are any language theorists interested in this problem? Is there a way to present English so that it becomes a delight rather than a dreaded discipline, a pleasure rather than a chore?

We often call nature Mother Earth, which leads us to the next section.

The third secondary polarity is **Female/Male** or **Woman/Man**.

This division is observable in the plant, animal, and human worlds. It is the mechanism of the propagation of species. It insures abundance, food, family, companionship. But in today's human world, we have a great imbalance between who controls and who doesn't control such socially cherished arenas as political power, money, management, and military might. Part of the reason that we – after even 6,000 years of ceaseless strife and war – have not eliminated war from the planet and from our behavior patterns is that we have not valued feminine qualities and have not given women enough education so that they can contribute side-by-side with men in the governance and development of human society.

One could say that the account of the human epic story is nothing but history, with all its heroes, and that it has completely ignored *herstory*, with all her heroines (*sheroes*).

The Male side is on the dominant right side, while the less dominant Female side is on the left.

Deborah Tannen in *You Just Don't Understand Women and Men in Conversation* and in John Grey's *Women are from Venus and Men are from Mars*, it is pointed out that women pay much more attention to the unspoken context of conversation than men who pay more attention to the words that are spoken. Women are sometimes, therefore, accused of being emotional or illogical (right-brained) while men are often praised for being logical and reasonable in their thinking (left-brained).

The fourth secondary polarity is **Figurative/Literal**.

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This perhaps is a corollary of the fourth primary polarity, Image/Word. In language, we speak and use metaphors and images to help us understand ideas and concepts. Figurative language is the language of poetry and good literature; it awakens images in our mind. It is imaginative. Street slang is also quite imaginative and figurative, and human deaf language with its expressive gestures or holistic finger/hand/arm figure representations is the counterpart of the speaking world.

Literal language is the language of science, the legal profession, and business reports. There is little to stir our deeper natures. Sure, there are good descriptions, and we can visualize or conceptualize what is being described, but usually literal language does not awaken or inspire. It describes things as they are, not as they can be.

Related to this is the corollary polarity, **Romantic/Classic**, which in some modern parlance is called **Surreal/Real**. In the art world, we have two opposing artistic styles. Both are valid and non-contradictory. Both have their space, time, and typical design features. Related to this is **Abstract/Concrete**.

Conversation is the sum of signals, meanings, words, support messages, text messages, and gestures. Both participants actively decode, deconstruct, de-implicate, contextualize, and derive meaning and understanding during the encounter. But certainly, a conversation is as much figurative as it is literal, as much contextual as it is textual (which leads us to the next polarity).

Contexts, like romantic paintings, have few boundaries, and few clear connections or structures, but are rich in imaginative color and content and are almost boundless. Conversations likewise can be infinitely suggestive before they are captured and arrested in writing in fixed forms.

The fifth secondary polarities are **Context/Text, Implicit/Explicit, Meaning/Message**.

These of course pertain to language learning theory. Traditional systems stress the text analysis approach. Newer approaches stress the importance of context and the almost innumerable list of factors that prevail in any human verbal exchange.

Explicit is what is stated, the matter-of-fact list of the words that comprise the utterance. **Implicit** is the intended meaning, which is much often much more than the sum of the individual meanings of the words. Languages are full of metaphorical reference words, catchwords, idioms, etc – all of which convey a larger meaning than what the text states.


The Context involves the ongoing situation and circumstances out of which the Text arose and in which it is embedded.

This would also include such polarities as **Freedom/Necessity, Movement/Rest, Infinite/Finite, Suggestive/Didactic, Detail/Structure**.

Life itself is polar; humans are polar; language is polar. Does it not seem logical that we incorporate this knowledge into an approach that fully recognizes and accommodates these basic truths of the universe and ourselves? Do the two hands not lend themselves to be mnemonic tools that will help use understand and recall the basic structural aspects of English?

Appendix 3: Is Everything Two?

Is Everything Two?

A Sampling of Opposite Words in Different Areas of Knowledge		
		Kind of Word
universe		
accelerate	decelerate	v
charge	discharge	v
expand	contract	v
float	sink	v
freeze	thaw	v
proceed	recede	v
in	out	prep
on	off	prep
over	under	prep
towards	away from	prep
up	down	prep
action	reaction	n
apogee	perigee	n
beginning	end	n
bounty	shortage	n
cause	effect	n
center	edge	n
crest	trough	n
day	night	n
desert	oasis	n
evolution	convolution	n
flood tide	falling tide	n
life	death	n
matter	antimatter	n
morning	evening	n
noon	midnight	n
north	south	n
positron	electron	n
presence	absence	n
spring	fall	n
summer	winter	n
sun/star	moon	n
top	bottom	n
forward	backward, reverse	adv
passive	active	adj
artificial	natural	adj
big	small	adj
black	white	adj
cosmic	mundane	adj
curved	straight	adj
deep	shallow	adj
east	west	adj
fertile	barren	adj
front	back	adj
full	empty	adj
high	low	adj
hot	cold	adj

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hot	cold	adj
light	dark	adj
long	short	adj
mega	nano	adj
mild	severe	adj
positive	negative	adj
same	different	adj
sharp	dull	adj
single	double	adj
steady	fluctuating	adj
sunny	cloudy	adj
tense	supple, relaxed	adj
thin	thick	adj
typical	atypical	adj
warm	cool	adj
wet	dry	adj
wild	tame	adj
language		
speak	listen	v
write	read	v
synonym	antonym	n
whole	part	n
casual	formal	adj
inductive	deductive	adj
spontaneous	planned	adj
process-oriented	product-oriented	adj
right-brain	left-brain	adj
human		
accept	reject	v
accept	reject	v
apply	remove	v
arrive	depart	v
be calm, mellow	be angry	v
borrow	lend	v
bring	take	v
build	demolish	v
comply, obey	disobey	v
cool off	get worked up	v
eat	feed	v
elucidate	confound, confuse	v
gather	scatter	v
give	receive	v
go	come	v
include	exclude	v
increase	decrease	v
inhale	exhale	v
initiate	terminate	v
integrate	segregate	v
join	split	v
laugh	cry	v
leave	return	v
loosen	tighten	v
pacify	antagonize	v
put on	take off	v
replenish	deplete	v
sell	buy	v
shout	whisper	v
show	look at	v
start, begin	finish, complete	v

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take off	land, touch down	v
take out	eat-in	v
teach	learn	v
unite	divide	v
argument	counter-argument	n
child	adult	n
expert	novice	n
introvert	extrovert	n
group	individual	n
input	output	n
macrocosm	microcosm	n
mind	heart	n
peace	war	n
progress	regress, decline	n
thesis	antithesis	n
beautiful	ugly	adj
calm	upset	adj
cheap	expensive	adj
concrete	abstract	adj
drunk	sober	adj
early	late	adj
easy	difficult	adj
fit	inappropriate	adj
free	controlled	adj
good	bad	adj
happy	sad	adj
honest	dishonest	adj
ill	healthy	adj
lazy	energetic	adj
left	right	adj
light	heavy	adj
loud	quiet	adj
masculine	feminine	adj
mean	kind	adj
normal	abnormal	adj
overt	hidden	adj
patient	impatient	adj
physical	mental/spiritual	adj
posterior	anterior	adj
rich	poor	adj
right	wrong	adj
left	right	adj
simple	complex	adj
single	married	adj
stingy	generous	adj
strong	weak	adj
wise	foolish	adj
young	old	adj
social		
farm	factory	n
rural	urban	adj
farmer	worker	n
small town	city	n
grade school	high school, college	n
extended family	nuclear family	n
higher birth rate	lower birth rate	n
newspaper	radio	n
train	automobile	n

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sea power	air power	n
fantasy	reality	n
imagination	theater (movie)	n
neighborhood games	professional sports	n
amateur	professional	adj
generalist	specialist	n
religion	science	n
preacher	educator/expert	n
small business	giant corporation	n
individual	corporate	adj
political union	labor union	n
personal world	impersonal world	n
simple	complex	adj
traditional	modern	adj
absolute, dogmatic morals	relative or doubtful morals	n
individual ethos	socially oriented ethos	n
local allegiance	national allegiance	n
laissez faire	federal, national involvement	n
conservative	liberal	adj
closed society	open society	n
static	dynamic	adj
stationary	mobile	adj
family	peer group	n
roll, name, reputation	function	n
producer	consumer	n
leisure	work	n
self-sufficient	inter-dependent	adj