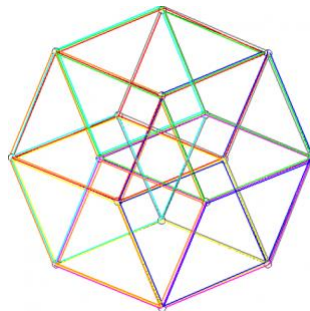


Part 7 – The Shift from an Industrial to a Planetary Civilization— Complex Dynamic Systems and Tricameral Legislatures

by William Irwin Thompson

“We Irish think otherwise” Bishop Berkeley



* I am indebted to Karen at Oddity Journal for this wonderful image of the tesseract.
See <http://odditycollector.livejournal.com/173945.html>

Our best model of a complex dynamical system is close to home and is the Earth itself. Our planet works through a Gaian system in which difference is energized in a linkage of opposites. Like the interpenetrating boxes in the tesseract that is the logo for this column, the Earth is composed of interpenetrating and recursive domains: 1) the radiant energy plasma that surrounds us with the solar wind and the magnetic field, 2) the gaseous atmosphere that both shields and steps down that solar energy to make it available for life, 3) the liquid oceanic system that creates the hydrological cycle of weather which runs on the thermodynamic differences between deep and surface circulations, and 4) the semi-solid state of the floating crust which operates at a different rate of time than the climate and serves to accelerate the rate of the evolution of life on its continental surfaces. The plate tectonics that terrify us with earthquakes also serve to preserve the atmosphere and geomagnetism and these in turn work to protect life and allow cellular cellular membranes to form. The

lithosphere is therefore part of the biosphere, as Hutton and Vernadsky both realized long ago.

Ideological thinking would argue that only one form or state of being can be right, and so it would seek to unite plasma, gas, liquid, and solid in a planetary sludge that would shut the whole system down and spell the death of Gaia. This is how Republicans and Communists think: one ideology to rule them all, or in Tolkien's words: "One ring to rule them all, and in the darkness bind them."

The model for governance in the eighteenth century was the steam engine, with its system of heat chamber and governor, reflected in its bicameral legislature of a lower house of hot opinions and an upper house of cooler and wiser heads. The model for governance in the twenty-first century should be the planet, reflected in an executive council and a tricameral legislature of your normal hot air in the House, fluid stability in the Senate, and solid scientific facts in the Assembly. But just as the boxes jump around in the tesseract above, with the lines changing their membership in different configurations, so a recursive and Gaian system of governance would need to be a lively one in which gas, liquid, and solids interact and do not sit as fixed containers. A scientific fact is a cultural process and not an object, and just as a flame cannot exist without an atmosphere, so a scientific fact cannot exist without a theory. But to produce a theory is a long cultural and historical process.

So what would such a tricameral legislature look like? To take it from the top, let's start with the President. Instead of the single figure of our Imperial President, there should be an Executive Council of four: a popularly elected President to chair the Council of three other members, each elected by their chamber. The President of the Assembly would be elected to the council by the Assembly, with the President of the Senate elected by the Senators, and the President of the House elected by its members. All executive decisions and signings of legislature into law would require the assent of three of the four members of the Executive Council.

Below the Executive Council would be the Senate. The Senators would be expected to review the legislative proposals initiated by the House or the Assembly. To run the business of the Senate, the House, and Assembly, there would need to be a majority leader or Speaker who was not the elected President of the chamber serving in the Executive Council. If an act had a two-thirds majority of the House or the Assembly, it could go directly to the Executive Council and bypass the Senate—this to insure that the Senate does not become an obstructionist body where all good ideas go to die. The terms of office could be six years for the Senate and Assembly and four years for the House

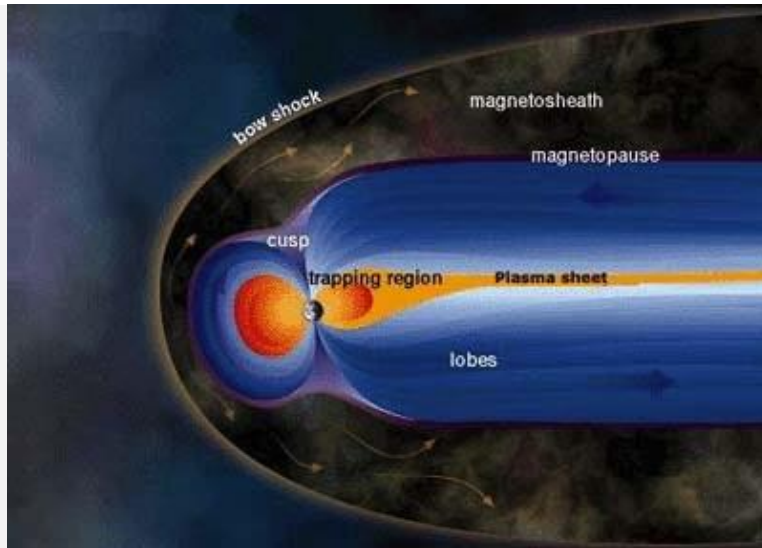
There would be a Supreme Court, but unlike ours which is a political body masquerading as a judicial one, this Supreme Court would truly be above politics and would be composed of judges or professors of constitutional law chosen by the Assembly and ratified by the Executive Council. A justice should serve a term of twenty years and not for life.

To enact the laws of the land there would continue to be Ministers of Departments—Defense or Foreign Affairs—and these would be appointed by a three-fourths majority vote of the Executive Council. They would serve for the term of office of the popularly elected President, or four years.

As you can see, the purpose of such a constitution is to replace ideological opinions with scientific and philosophical thought, and to eliminate our present Imperial Presidency to replace it with a less powerful and monarchical figure. The popularly elected President could still serve as Head of State and Head of the Government, although one could make a case that the President should be Head of State and the President of the Senate should be the head of government. This division between the Head of Government and the Head of State is characteristic of parliamentary democracies like Ireland or Israel, or constitutional monarchies like Britain and Canada. The wisdom of our present American constitution in making the President the Commander-in-chief of the armed forces is that it insures a civilian control of the military in order to avoid military dictatorships. Were the President of the Senate—essentially our present Vice President—to be the Commander-in-Chief or the Head of the government, it would turn the Presidency into a ceremonial office and give the real power to the President of the Senate, who would then become *de facto* the real presiding power of the Executive Council, whereas the popularly elected President would be merely its *de jure* Chair.

There are arguments to be made for both arrangements, and a Constitutional Convention would be likely to debate them at length. Personally, I incline toward the popularly-elected President serving as Commander-in-Chief and both Head of State and Head of Government because it allows a changing Presidency to respond to rapidly changing times. Were the President of the Senate to be the Head of Government, then he and the Senate would become a great conservative force that would block the popular will of the House and the scientific knowledge of the Assembly.

Would such a new tricameral system be perfect? Of course not. Human depravity will find some new clever and amoral David Addington or John Yoo to figure out ways to subvert justice and good government to insinuate an evil cabal into power. What a tricameral legislature does is to institute a better system of checks and balances to make it harder to have what we have now in the USA: a plutocracy run by an invisible corporate directorate of executives from oil companies and defense industries that tell every president what his foreign policy is to be and what wars will be needed to protect their interests, and a visible government that is a TV set of hired political performers owned by their sponsors, the funders and lobbies. This is our present anti-intellectual American State of Entertainment with its celebrity distractions, spectator sports, reality TV, and fake news.



Earth's Magnetic Field

<https://i0.wp.com/www.wildriverreview.co/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/thompson-part-7-earths-magnetic-field.jpg>