

Notes from an Extra-Galactic Alchemist on an Observed Failure of Proto-Intelligence

by strannikov

The simple facts:

On this remote planet the brain trusts of one of those bipedal species every galaxy boasts at least once in its life had decided to embark (without appreciation yet for managing the coagulation of quantum polarities) on a contest with Nature, careful to claim to other species members merely to be guiding Nature or facilitating its processes.

In mere centuries this species found itself well on the way to succeeding with its planet-wide conquest.

Confirmation of the innate wisdom of this unilateral policy came with the species' proliferation. Members installed themselves globally in almost every climate and condition the planet afforded.

Adaptation to challenging terrestrial environments and conditions soon provoked the zeal to explore beyond the planet's gravitational embrace. Its tools, technologies, and technical abilities advanced so far that the species began slinging data collectors into space.

One fine day found zooming into this planet's galactic system, a visitor—a mass of formerly molten metals long ago

congealed solid with stony rubble—was discovered to be on a trajectory of impact with the planet. This was no immense piece of tumbling debris, barely two kilometers across and not one kilometer thick: nevertheless, it was perceived to pose a direct threat to the continued dominance and ascent of this remote planet's self-regarding, self-made species (as the very detection of this hurtling debris showed plainly, Nature could not be trusted).

This species duly launched weaponized missiles aimed at the approaching cosmic debris. The intent to destroy the object outright was not successful: while almost half of the object was vaporized, those pieces remaining somehow achieved a more perilous trajectory and an enhanced velocity that did not deter these remnants from plowing into the planet.

Natural catastrophe, according to prevailing rules, ensued upon the collision of this opportunistic cosmic debris with this planet at this moment in its local evolution.

The self-made, self-regarding species was the first to go, since by this time it had wiped out most of the planet's other native animal species.

This species' earnest or greedy appropriation of proto-intelligence led not only to its own demise but to that of all life forms and processes on the entire planet: the impact with the cosmic debris yielded its own deleterious consequences, but already, biological forces had been so disrupted by the practices of this self-made, self-regarding species that had discounted animal intelligence of all other types, kinds, and varieties, that the biocidal effects of the cosmic collision could not be overcome.

Those effects could have been compensated for (depending on one's willingness to trust natural processes) had this self-made, self-regarding species not attempted to destroy or deflect the

threatening debris in the first place. The parts of this metallic rock that were destroyed in the vain attempt to avert collision had contained preserved inside, even after billions of years of intergalactic travel, multiple sets of amino acids not native to the planet or its galaxy: had the species been a bit more trusting of Nature, yes, it would still have been obliterated and life on the planet would have been disrupted for dozens or scores of millions of years, but the prospects for the emergence of actual intelligence not complicated by the somatic limitations these bipedal creatures faced would likely have triumphed finally.

The emergence of actual intelligence of the quality and on the scale we are accustomed to likely would have entailed another forty or fifty million years, although even then for its home galaxy this planet would have become no more than a provincial outpost of enviable competence: but well we know just how actual intelligence always takes far more time to develop than its apologists ever know to ask for, just as the planet's Doctor John Faustus showed in his day with his immoderately modest request for a career of only four-and-twenty years' duration.

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