

Excerpt from the introduction of 'Left in the Dark'

Two Perspectives

The mythic traditions of paradise allude to our naked, forest-dwelling, fruit-eating past. Various cataclysmic disasters portrayed in tales of floods, vulcanism and meteor impact brought the days of perfection to an end. These disruptive, earth-shattering events initiated a change in man too – a single divine self was split into two and the more fallen, delusional self assumed overall control. The impetus to treat this condition and the ingenious techniques devised to access the suppressed 'god-side' of man gave rise to religions.

These ancient traditions are mirrored by our scientific view of the past and present. Anthropologists tell us that our direct ancestors lived in the tropical rain forest – and our closest relatives, the fruit-eating apes, still do. Various disciplines, including climatology and palaeontology, have found that the evolution of many forms of life have been profoundly affected by repeated ecological catastrophes. And from the sciences of neurology and psychology we know that we have two distinct selves. The latest research in this field is now revealing that the dominant side is perceptually limited and continually makes up confabulated tales to cover its fractures of reality. The dormant side, in contrast, has exceptional latent abilities – even its capacity for pleasure is more encompassing.

It is a deeply held scientific assumption that humans not only represent the pinnacle of evolution but that advance proceeds apace. This view however is in conflict with observed behaviour – our inability to harmoniously coexist with each other and the increasingly rapid exploitation of the earth suggests we really are suffering from a psychological malady.

The two versions of human history – one poetic, contextual and right brained, the other analytical, rational and left brained – are remarkably similar. The only significant point of disagreement is degeneration verses advancement. Currently the advancement argument holds sway, yet evidence from both versions suggest that this interpretation is flawed. If the side that has reached this conclusion has been negatively modified in some way – can we trust its judgement?