

Politics



Figure 1: (Michael Kamber)

There exist several major political conflict surfaces:

Dragonists vs humanists: Some people regard the Dragons as admirable more advanced than humanity. They might not be true gods, but their alien perspective and ancient knowledge should be respected and used to benefit both species. Humanists suspect the Dragons might be too alien, mad or plain dangerous: trying to become like them would mean losing the important parts of humanity.

Most religions have found ways of accommodating the dragons. Among some evangelical Christians they are regarded as fallen angels, originally set by God to seed life but then distracted or degenerated from their purpose.

Different ecological ideologies: The dragons destroyed the naive idea of a “natural world” (to the extent it had survived biotechnology and the glaciation). Now the structure of the ecosystem is up for grabs. Purists who want traditional ecosystems either have to move them off-planet or encapsulate them. Protecting them with immunities is already a profound change, and might have long-term effects that are little understood. Many are open to deliberate intervention, but what values should guide it remains unsettled.

Spacers vs. Earthlings: The modes of living in space and on Earth are very different. Spacers live in entirely artificial environments, where recycling and safety are paramount. Earthlings live in a “wild” environment where the risks are completely different and much more unpredictable. Many people on Earth think that the spacers are a remnant of a cowardly elite who fled rather than take up the biological struggle against the encroachment of the dragons. Spacers find Earthlings archaic and often a bit too cozy with undefined neogenetic influences.

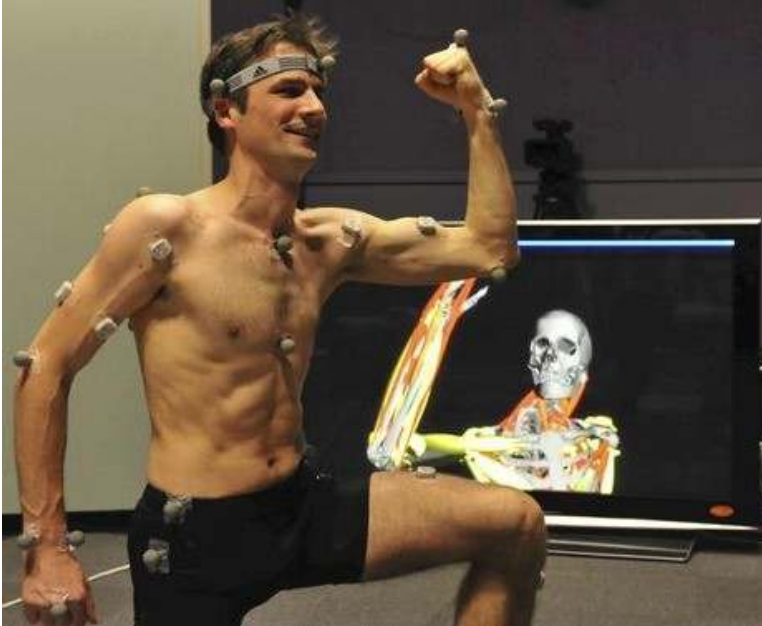


Figure 2: (Magic Mirror, Tokyo University)

Enhancers vs naturals: Many people make use of biotechnological enhancements (genetic, neogenetic, implants, nanotech etc) to improve health and wellbeing, extend their mental capabilities or transform their bodies. Many others view this with repugnance. While the old conflicts over enhancement are mostly gone (nobody but a luddite would not fix serious genetic flaws, take a cognition enhancer pill to stay sharp or slow ageing) the real issue is enhancements that seriously alter identity and human nature. The neogenetic habitats in LEO are among the most radical, taking the risk of allowing full neogenetic reshaping in order to have a nearly completely malleable biology. Their diametral opposite are the lunar orbit Indigos, who often have strong restrictions on even medical enhancement.

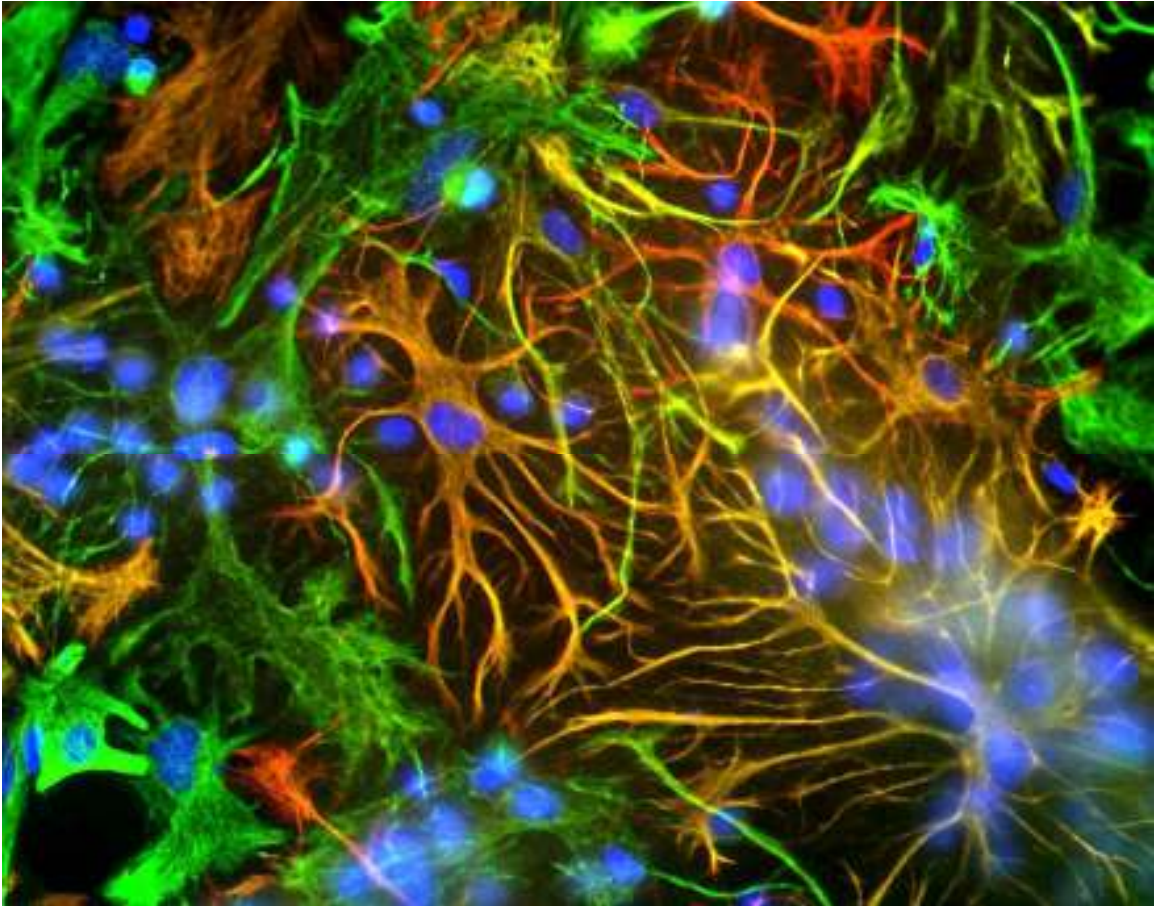


Figure 3: (EnCor Biotechnology)

Immunities: There is no reason for people of different immunities not to get along, but the Immunities are having subtle ecological and economical effects favouring cooperation inside the immunity over dealing with the incompatible outside. Some get along pretty well, like the European ones and the Caliphate. But the competition between the African immunities, the evangelism of the New Church and the poaching of citizens from the Caliphate is causing friction. Add to this the downright sinister possibilities with Maponyo and other immunities for thought control, and immunity can become an explosive issue.

Catholicism vs. the New Church: the Three Saviours are the most successful heresiarchs since Martin Luther. The Catholic Church is fighting them tooth and nail ideologically, politically and biologically – it is no coincidence the Vatican has aided the spread of alternative immunities worldwide to curtail the neogenetic sacraments of the New Church. The New Church is equally happy to upstage the Old Church; while it does not officially aim at supplanting it, few have any doubts that this is the eventual aim of the Saviours.

“Greater Luna” vs. “Greater Earth”: when the spamocalypse occurred, many spacers moved from the apparently vulnerable habitats close to Earth to the safer Lunar system. This has coincided with a technocultural separation between the Earthside acceptance of biotechnology, dragon technology and other “soft tech” and the Lunaside acceptance of hard nanotechnology, strong networking and other “hard tech”.

Neogenetics vs “paleogenetics”: By now practically no spot on Earth is unaffected by dragon plasmids, immunities or other neogenetic effects. Many habitats also employ neogenetics for easy biotechnology, enhancement and defense. However, many fear that neogenetics allow far too easy hacking of genomes, pointing at the horrors committed by Black Lotus and the lotus eaters, the Dragons and unscrupulous Hosts. These “paleogenetics” refuse to use or even have contact with neogenetic biospheres, trying to retain genomes as they were (or just change them using controllable biotechnology methods).

Isolationists vs. everybody else: Indigos, unmodified, unenhanced and traditional humans regard the rest of mankind as corrupt, decadent, playing gods or just plain immoral. They seek to minimize corrupting biological and memetic contact with the outside world. There are many kinds of isolationists (not all of them Indigos) but they share the fear or disgust with the new world.



Figure 4: (Manned Cloud by Jean-Marie Massaud)

Nomads and stationaries: A sizeable fraction of people have no fixed abode. This includes both internationalists who move from habitat to habitat, carrying their possessions with them as software to be reinstated when needed, and the blimp gypsies roaming Eurasia, scavenging the ruins of the past. The stay-at-homes tend to regard the mobile people as untrustworthy: they have little incentive to follow local rules if they can easily leave, they may bring infections and dangerous ideas.

Internationalists vs. Interplanetarists: The interplanetarists desire stronger inter-polity governance, at least in regards to security, human rights and certain dangerous technologies. The internationalists prefer a minimal, if any centralized oversight and think voluntary associations like OTA are preferable. They get their name from the old internationalist movement, and many of their leading exponents belong to the old guard from the rebellion against nationalism in the early part of the century. Ironically, the many national states on Earth are among their supporters against the interplanetarists since they fear that any strong interplanetary system would be dominated by post-national interests. The interplanetarists similarly tend to be younger and

dominated by the generation coming into maturity during the mid-century Dragon crisis. They are willing to accept both the risks and duties involved in large-scale governance since they regard humanity as being fundamentally threatened by internal and external risks.



Figure 5: (Powerizer)

As always different generations have different worldviews. The old internationalists remain in positions of power in space – and many advanced terrestrial nations are dominated by people who are culturally close to them or were internationalists in their youth. The mid-century generation, now in their 50's, is waiting in the wings and becoming increasingly impatient with the rejuvenated elders who have no intention to give up. This drives much of the internationalist-interplanetary schism in space, and internal political struggles on Earth. The “natives”, the generation that grew up after the drama of space and immunity take such things for granted. Their allegiances are very different, often more linked to local communities and interests than big struggles for governance. The spamocalypse somewhat shocked them out of complacency but only renewed their interest in defending their “homes” – whether that is L4, Lunar Japan or the Matonge Immunity.