

# 1 My Quest for the Holy Grail of the Super-Brain

*Philip Smeagoli*



## My Quest for an Internet That Computes – Part 22

In this, the 22nd installment of our weekly series at [emeagwali.com](http://emeagwali.com), we present Part 4/6 of Philip Emeagwali's lecture on his contribution to the body of knowledge that defines an internet.

The lecture [video](#) is posted at [emeagwali.com](http://emeagwali.com) and <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-1219655872942772550#>

### Quest *n*.

1. (Information & Communication Technology) The act or an instance of seeking against all odds the Holy Grail of computation and communication, namely, a supercomputer that is an internet and vice-versa.
2. (Internet) A thorough expedition undertaken to hypothesize the internet of Year Million.

### Holy Grail *n*

1. (Myth & Legend) The bowl used by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper. It became the quest of many knights.
2. (Science & Technology) A desired discovery or invention.

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“Humanity is merely part of this living web encompassing the Earth, a tiny portion of living things reciprocally affecting the whole while simultaneously co-evolving with it.”

[Philip Emeagwali](#) speaking at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.



Part 4/6

## My Quest for the Holy Grail of the Super-Brain

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The quest for life on other planets or from other solar systems has gained a tremendous following in recent years. Yet the frontier is not outer space: it is the inner, Earthly space. In reviewing the three and half billion years since life first appeared on Earth, we see a self-directed evolution in the direction of greater complexity and higher collective intelligence.

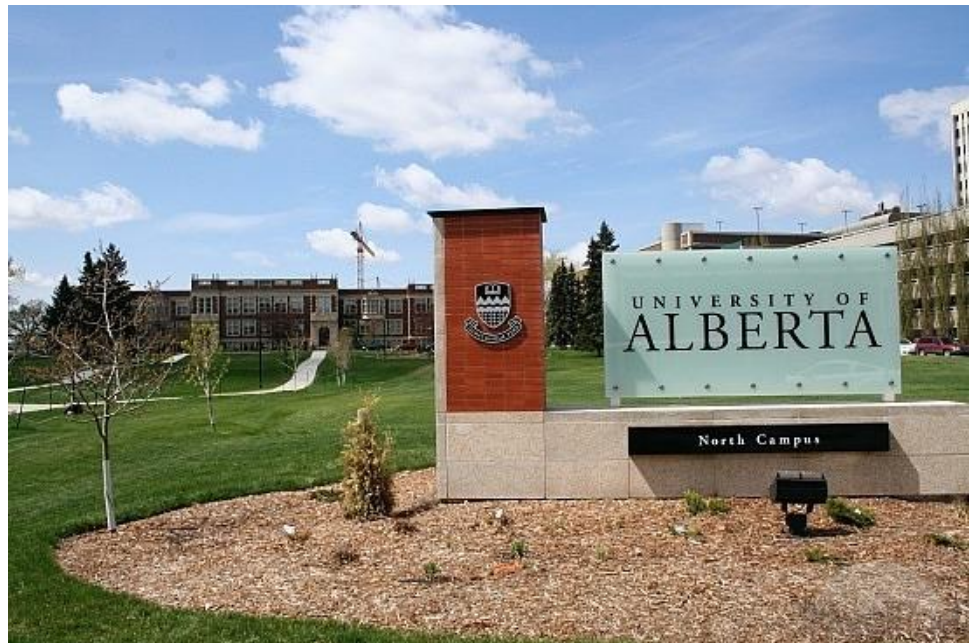
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In a four-dimensional time and space continuum, we are one Earth-sized entity whose cells comprise all entities that ever lived, interconnected by the umbilical cord of our genetic history. Animals and plants are not unrelated beings; species co-exist with, interact with, and learn from each other, creating a 10,000-mile wide hyperball web of life that encompasses the Earth.

Fast-forward a few centuries when the moon becomes colonized. Looking down at Earth, lunar colonists will see a trillion interconnected computing and communicating devices enshrouding our planet. The Earth will be an electronic hyperball, a digital Super-brain 10,000 miles in diameter.

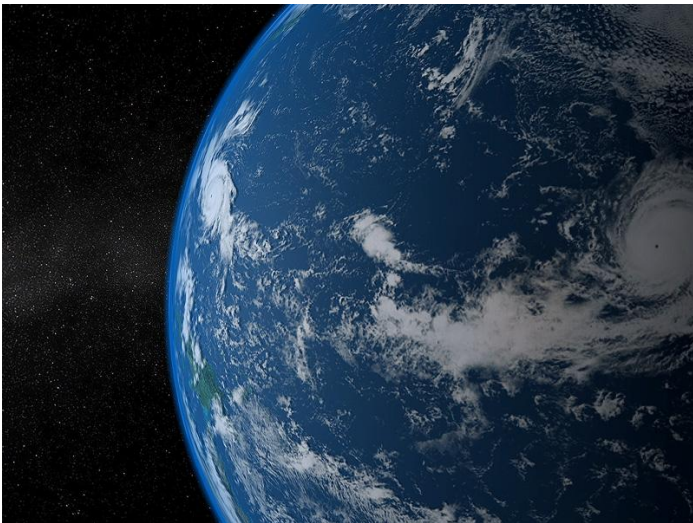


Five hundred years ago, we thought in straight lines. We were convinced that the world was flat. In a sense, we still think in straight lines. We are convinced that humanity is separate from the Super Being comprising all living entities, a zillion separate beings interacting through sexual reproduction and the food chain. Yet, to an alien who has been living for a billion years, the Super Being looks and behaves like a single being.

The Earth is a living and breathing entity, 10,000 miles in diameter, constantly and continuously evolving in the direction of greater complexity and converting inanimate matter into organic matter.

The brain of this organic matter is distributed throughout the Earth's atmosphere, in its oceans and groundwater. Like the Internet, an alien viewing Earth from outer space would behold a huge glob of organic matter with a zillion interacting brains, eyes and ears enshrouding it.

The organic matter—in the shape of a hyperball—enshrouding the Earth is a living and breathing entity, 10,000 miles in diameter, constantly and continuously evolving in the direction of greater complexity and converting inanimate matter into organic matter. The Earth's oceans and atmosphere define the body of this living organism, which I hypothesize has its own aggregate intelligence.



Humanity is merely part of this living web encompassing the Earth, a tiny portion of living things reciprocally affecting the whole while simultaneously co-evolving with it. We are continually recreating, redesigning, and reprogramming the human species—the result of a compelling and deep-seated urge within us. We will do so forever.

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People understand connections. They see connections in their family. They know they are connected to their mothers and fathers, their daughters and sons, but they don't see themselves as part of one living entity inhabiting this planet. The whole, we believe, is equal to the sum of the parts. A reductionist says one plus one equals two. Our interactions and interconnections are the parts that make the sum greater than the parts. To a holistic, one plus one is equal to three.

The African parable of the lion and gazelle perfectly illustrates the interactions and interconnectedness among the parts. Every morning, a gazelle wakes up knowing it must outrun the fastest lion or it will be killed. Every morning, a lion wakes up knowing it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve. It does not matter whether you are a lion or gazelle. When the sun comes up, you'd better be running.

Yet, humans are neither the lion nor the gazelle. When the sun comes up, humans don't have to run from the lion or to the gazelle. We don't have to be physically strong or capable of running to survive. With no natural predators—and thanks to cars—future generations of humanity will



run slower, while those of the gazelles and lions will run faster. The evolution of the human species is no longer based on the survival of the fittest in a physical sense.

[Philip Emeagwali](#) [Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, September 23, 2006]