

# The Wisdom Principle

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## **Commentary on;**

Famed astrophysicist Dr. Stephen Hawking has voiced concern about the dangers, he believes, are posed by alien predators who may arrive in giant space ships, to conquer, enslave, destroy, colonize, and voraciously exploit the resources of Earth. According to Hawking:

"To my mathematical brain, the numbers alone make thinking about aliens perfectly rational. The real challenge is to work out what aliens might actually be like..." According to Hawking aliens "would be only limited by how much power they could harness and control, and that could be far more than we might first imagine...Such advanced aliens would perhaps become nomads, looking to conquer and colonize whatever planets they can reach...I imagine they might exist in massive ships, having used up all the resources from their home planet...If aliens ever visit us, I think the outcome would be much as when Christopher Columbus first landed in America, which didn't turn out very well for the Native Americans."

## **Keywords**

Aliens, Civilization, Natural selection, Wisdom Principle

## **The Wisdom Principle**

Subjugation by aliens is a clear danger. It can be military subjugation, cultural subjugation or even misguided attempts to uplift Human civilization and in the process destroying the very nature of the Human civilization (Dick and Harrison 2000).

Dr. Hawking's assertion is analogous to what is known as the "The Wisdom Principle". It states that "Any advanced civilization in the universe does not want to be visited 'first' by any other more advanced civilization" (Vaidya 2002). In short, it would be 'wise' of a civilization to ensure that it does not play host to any advanced alien race.

Interestingly though, even if we are not too keen to announce our presence, aliens can still find us. We are already detectable within 50 light-years, courtesy our transmissions and everyday a new stellar system is exposed to signals from Earth (Shostak 2003).

## **Aliens and Natural Selection**

It has been speculated that life anywhere in the universe will be underpinned by Natural Selection.

Richard Dawkins writes in *The Blind Watchmaker* "One way to dramatize this point is to make a prediction. I predict that, if a form of life is ever discovered in another part of the universe, however outlandish and weirdly alien that form of life may be in detail, it will be found to resemble life on earth in one key respect: it will have evolved by some kind of Darwinian natural selection" (Dawkins 1996).

A similar speculation is made by John Maynard Smith in his *The Theory of Evolution* “Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection is the only workable explanation that has ever been proposed for the remarkable fact of our own existence, indeed the existence of all life wherever it may turn up in the universe. It is the only known explanation for the rich diversity of animals, plants, fungi and bacteria” (Maynard Smith 2000).

Just as the laws of physics have been found to hold universally; it has been speculated that the Darwinian natural selection will hold universally and so would the famous “survival of the fittest” concept. Thus, we have good reason to believe that aggressive instincts will be present in aliens as well.

To what extent aliens can curb their aggressive instincts (or else they will possibly self-destruct) is anybody's guess. Will aliens be proactively aggressive, reactively aggressive or practitioners of Gandhian non-violence?

### **Aliens: A Word of Caution**

The premise of Dr. Stephen Hawking's recent warning and that of the Wisdom Principle is that of caution. Do we really want technologically advanced aliens to visit us first? What would become of the human race if alien visitations became a reality?

We are doing well on Earth today because we are the most intelligent and technologically advanced of all the Earthly creatures. For us to do well in the universe and be safe, we will have to be the most technologically advanced creatures in the universe or be wise enough to not get subjugated by a more technologically advanced alien civilization.

If we thought the struggle for existence was over then we must think again.

## **Note**

The write-up of the 'Commentary on' is a verbatim reproduction of the 'abstract' published in Journal of Cosmology, 2010, Vol 7, May, 2010, common to all published commentaries. This is done so as to give a background to this commentary.

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