

Simbi – Ajara Memetic Theory

Evolutionarily speaking about the only thing humans have going for them is a symbiotic relationship with a strange new life-form: the ideology. There are millions of different ideologies exhibiting different traits and causing different behaviors. I am proposing the beginnings of a new taxonomy for them. We divide animals into classes such as herbivore and carnivore because based on their diets they evolve many similar traits. Carnivorous creatures do not need to share a common ancestor in order to share pointed teeth. The boundaries are not crisp; most carnivores will also eat some plants if they are easily available, for example your dog will happily scarf down a completely meatless peanut-butter and jelly sandwich, but the categories remain valuable. Humans have long been infested with two readily distinguishable classes of ideology: the Simbi and the Ajara.

A Simbi is an ideology that prevents its host from being infested, even briefly, by other ideologies. Just a few examples of simbis are most cases of nationalism, most major religions and many cultural traditions. The republican party is made up primarily of simbi infested hosts, and markets itself directly to simbis and their hosts. Because a simbi's primary method of reproduction is to be passed on to a child of their host they tend to be close mutual symbiots, almost always acting for the direct evolutionary benefit of their host. The name itself is derived from “symbiot”. A simbi's survival tactic defines many of its characteristics making it a logical choice to form a class.

Ajara focus on virulence among hosts. They are evolved to thrive in a host full of other competing ideologies and have their host risk infestation with new ideologies in order to counter-infest new hosts. Sample ajaras include democracy, free trade and formal education. The democratic party solicits primarily ajara infested hosts. The

name ajara is taken from the word “ajar” meaning slightly open, and chosen for its foreign sounding tone. Ajara are a natural candidate for a class because of their common characteristics and clear contrast as a group to simbis.

Ideology: a functional, expressed idea that changes the behavior of its host.

Meme: The smallest coherent unit of an ideology. A gene is to organism as a meme is to ideology.

Host: A single person, who carries an ideology actively in their mind.

Virulence: The ease with which a parasite or ideology can move from host to host.

Evolutionarily Beneficial: Something that increases the number of surviving offspring that are produced.

Simbi: A type of meme with a survival strategy that tends towards protection of the host from other ideologies.

Ajara: A contrasting type of ideology which focuses on maximizing virulence.

Simbis and Ajaras tend to exist in a cyclical balance, much in the same way as predator and prey. When the population of humans is low and not densely packed simbi's strategy of causing reproduction of the host is very effective while the ajaran tactic of infection is stymied by a lack of targets. As the population increases due to the simbi's success, density increases as well and the ajaran approach becomes more effective. Population

density raises itself and pandemics of ideology can spread rapidly through the hosts, pressing down the percentage infested with simbis. The ajaran ideologies weakness however, is that they greatly lower their hosts reproductive rate so the next generation of humans is smaller than the previous. Meanwhile the hosts who remained simbi infested breed more successfully and once again manage to raise their numbers above those of the ajara infested. One can see the rise and fall of countries and cultures in this natural cycle.

Simbis commonly evolve some traits because of their lifestyle, much as carnivores often evolve binocular vision to better hunt their prey. They tend to be less virulent, passing up opportunities to infest new hosts in order to better defend their own. Simbis dominate their host completely and because of this they must provide a behavioral model for virtually any situation that might be encountered. Simbi ideologies are larger and more complex, a trait that further reduces virulence as bulkier ideologies have longer transmission times. Successful simbis hold their hosts until death, and primarily reproduce along with them going through generations at roughly the same speed which causes comparatively slow evolution. Simbis huddle their hosts together in

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insular groups having matching ideologies to gain the advantages of group living while minimizing the exposure to competing ideologies. The choice to defend the host favors all of these adaptations as well as allowing for more refined ones.

Simbis greater size, complexity and tendency to create homogenous groups allows them to develop “host-specialization” as biological organisms demonstrate cell-specialization. Three of the most common adaptations we see are spores, digestive systems, and evolution chambers. Missionaries act as spores who sacrifice their biological breeding

potential in order to travel away from the original group and maximize their virulence. Hosts who are robustly resistant to foreign infestation are selected to work as a digestive system. These hosts can review new ideologies and strip out any potentially useful memes from them for assimilation. Finally a host selected to act as an evolution chamber, something that has no parallel

in biology, breaks off from the group in order to allow for the production of more fit ideological offspring. These hosts, often called monks, press many slightly mutated versions of the current ideology into their heads at once allowing them to fight each-other in an exercise to improve virulence, fitness and resistance to hostile ideologies. The newly generated memes are spread back through the multi-host group and assimilated by the already entrenched simbi ideologies. Each of these adaptations benefits the clustered population of simbis more than the individual.

Ajara's display their own set of traits that naturally evolve from their more virulent lifestyle. Ajaran ideologies adapt to share a host with a large number of other ideologies, thriving in people who

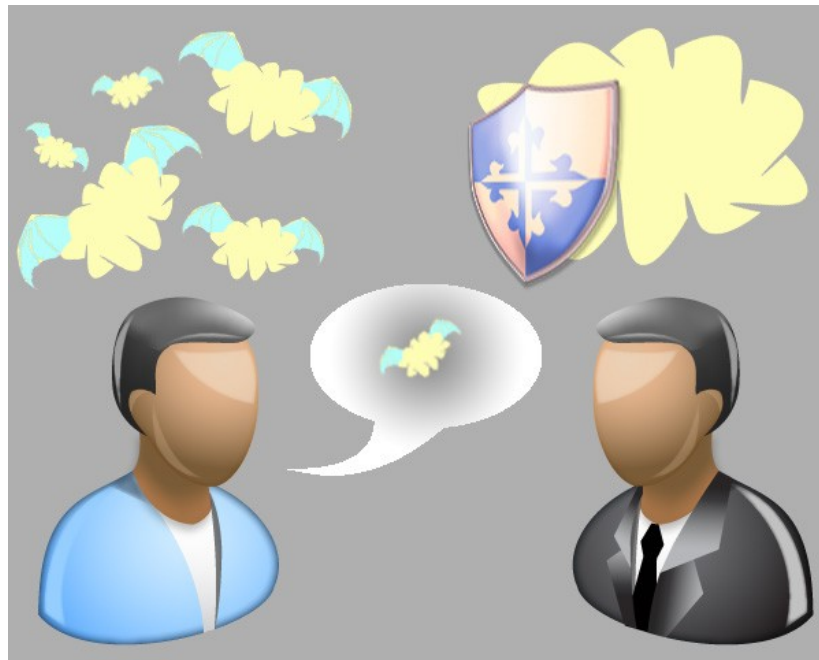
contain entire ecosystems of ideas. If one imagines each mind to be an island, then a mind infested with a simbi ideology has a single massive tree on it that chokes out anything else landing on its shores. Conversely the mind infested with ajara has hundreds of strange and diverse small plants on it preying on each-other, imitating each-other, and often supporting each-other. Ajaras tolerate other ideologies sharing their host so they do not need to provide behavior for every situation. Instead ajara allow other ideologies occupying their host to provide solutions to some problems. In order to be as readily transferable as possible ajara tend to have

small, compressed sets of memes. They often depend on the environment both within and external to the host to develop into their mature forms. Because they depend on virulence to reproduce ajara tend to have a much shorter life-cycle and evolve more quickly. The greater level of virulence also means that an ajara's well being is not closely tied to it's host's.

This makes ajara

tend to act to the evolutionary detriment of their host, reducing the number of offspring that the host produces.

Many Ajara use a powerful technique; they open their host to infestation by a simbi, inject their own memes into the simbi, and then attempt to pass the simbi back to other hosts already infested with it. Because ajara dwell in close proximity to other ideologies and have a rapid evolutionary speed they can assimilate individual memes from other ideologies that exist in their host. Due to their small memetic profile ajara can often inject their entire memetic code into another ideology. The resulting hybrid ideology can sneak past an established simbi's defenses in other hosts, a wolf in sheep's clothing. Meanwhile a simbi finds tough competition in the



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Ajara's host as it fights against a robust and established ecosystem. This trick, and variations on the memetic injection attacks are what allow Ajara to invade entrenched groups of simbis.

Over the last few hundred years the environment has become steadily more favorable to ajaran ideologies. Ajaras thrive in cities dense populations where pandemics are common. Coastal cities are the most rife with ajaras because of their greater exposure to foreign and distant ideas. The cost of travel in both time and money is dropping dramatically and even the most remote locations are effectively more connected than the busiest seaports were a hundred years ago. Advances in communication have brought distant populations so close together that ajaras can leap between them easily, ideologies moving effortlessly over the phone lines and through television sets. The world is both smaller and fuller than it ever has been before making it an ideal breeding ground for ajara.

The frequent technological changes sweeping the world also favor ajara. Each technology is a new set of memes contained in a new ideology that provides powerful abilities to its host. Often these abilities are so potent that failure to adopt them would be a major disadvantage. Ajara infested hosts are open to new ideologies and regularly exposed to these new ideas first. This provides the host with the advantage of the technology, but also the ajara they contain with the opportunity to insert their memetic code into the new ideology. Later simbi's hosts are forced to adopt the new technology to stay competitive and the ajaran memes use it as a trojan horse to slip past strong border defenses. Eventually the simbi will assimilate the useful technological memes while pushing out those of the ajara, but each new technology brings a major temporary shift in the simbi-ajara balance. The rate new technologies are introduced at is becoming a relentless stream that the simbis are unable to recover from.

Catholicism serves as an instructive example of a simbi. Like most simbis modern Catholicism's eldest ancestor, early christianity, was actually an ajara that gradually became larger and more stable. Modern Catholicism's virulence level is quite low; virtually all catholics have either inherited their faith

from parents or come to the church under duress. The body of idea's provided by the church is large, complicated and provides practical advice on every situation. Host-specialization has occurred in catholicism with priests acting as a community wide immune system, monks acting as evolution chambers and missionaries acting as spores. The catholic ideology acts to the evolutionary benefit of its host and strongly encourages them to have a maximum number of offspring while discouraging all preventative measures. Catholicism's idea of ungodly thought or heresy and the premium it puts on faith while discouraging doubt are typical methods used by simbis to prevent external infestation.

Democracy typifies most of the traits of an ajara in an enlightening way. It is easily conveyed with core concepts that can be passed on in only a few words. Democracy thrives in an environment where ideas are shared readily cooperating with other ideologies in its hosts head and allowing them to take responsibility for most choices. Democracy frequently infects simbis causing such oddities as elected church officials. New technologies often begin in democratic nations where the memes of democracy are injected into them. There is nothing inherently democratic about television or even the internet, but both were hybridized with it at an early stage. Finally, Democratic nations have a much lower birthrate than others, national birthrates predictably declining shortly after a nation becomes a democracy.

Many of the patterns shaping our world come into focus through the lens of the Simbi-Ajara based memetic theory. One can readily detect the reasons for the recent spike in urbanization, patterns in US foreign policy and the changes in Europe's birthrate by applying this theory. At the same time it is important to remember that it describes only one force among many that shape the world and does not account for geography, natural resources, the acts of individual leaders and a host of other factors. Despite this my hope is that it proves a helpful tool in the mental kit of someone trying understand the world around them.