



# APPLICATION FOR THE DELEGATION OF FIRST CONTACT

## QUESTIONNAIRE, PART B

by Kathrin Köhler

Answer the following questions in any language(s), formats, or paradigmatic expressions with which you are comfortable. Videographers are available for those most comfortable in physical languages. If you need further support to fully actualize your responses, do not hesitate to ask the Proctor for any materials or mediums you require. When you have finished, virtually or physically attach all answers to this questionnaire.

### 1. Who are you?

### 2. Consider the following two rubā'iyāt from Rūmī from his Divan-i Shamsi Tabriz:

Being is not what it seems,  
nor non-being. The world's  
existence is not  
in the world.

I am so small I can barely be seen.  
How can this great love be inside me?  
*Look at your eyes. They are small,  
but they see enormous things.*

How might these two rubā'iyāt inform one another? You may consider mathematical propositions regarding absolute and non-absolute infinities or Tarski's Theorem on the Undefinability of Truth.

### I.

**In your opinion, is the "self" a construct, and if so, under which circumstances is this true? (You may use yourself as an example.)**

### 3. Define "system." Include a sub-definition of "institution" and list three (3) systems in which you regularly participate.

- a. Identify two (2) non-institutional systems in which you participate or aspire to participate.
- b. Give an example of an invisible system or institution of which you are not aware and in which you (unknowingly) participate.

#### 4. Define "outsider":

- a. When are you an outsider? Give a recent example. What conditions are necessary?
- b. Or, if you live in a society where it is possible for you to never be an outsider, extrapolate how you might feel and be affected by being viewed and treated as an outsider.
- c. Supposing you are a part of a culture consisting of individuals (non-plural entities), define the concepts of "cultural relativism" and "ethnocentrism." If you are part of a pluralistic or successive entity, express in any way you are able what you understand these terms to mean.
- d. In your culture, how is self-worth generally valued in comparison to other worths?

#### 5. In *The Human Condition* Hannah Arendt wrote that "the earth is the very quintessence of the human condition" and that "through life man remains related to all other living organisms."

- a. Define "context" (both macro and micro) and examine its necessity in language, reality, and notions of truth or fact.
- b. What context might you need to create in order to understand and discuss ideas of "existence" with beings possessing physically, temporally, or otherwise differing bodies and consciousness(es) than your own?
- c. What difficulties do you have in understanding the entity/entities from Procyon A's locality-dependent self-identity and language? If your cultural background has a worldview and philosophical basis with similarities to the entity/entities from Procyon A (e.g. if you are an Australian Aborigine) you might discuss which concepts help you to understand the reality and context of the entity/entities of Procyon A. You may wish to argue the primacy of place and geography in identity and culture, or concepts of an "inclusive" self (as opposed to cultures that have created concepts of an "exclusive" self separate from other life and environment).

#### 6. If you were a chair, would you have arms?

7. What does it mean when singular (non-plural) non-telepathic beings say they "belong?" In answering this you may also wish to define "possession." Attempt to give an answer without using the concepts of individuality ("me, not you" or separateness), otherness ("us, not them"), or ownership ("mine" or "yours"). Don't just refrain from using the words "individuality," "otherness," or "ownership"—words are paradigms—attempt to answer without using those concepts.

Now give your answer from the point of view of someone who

- i.) is not of your culture;
- ii.) is not of your species;
- iii.) uses a language format or paradigmatic expression system with which you are not familiar (e.g. verbal or physical language, constructed expressions, artistic performance, etc).

8. Years ago within certain cultures on Earth, the color blue was associated with girl children and the colors red and pink were associated with boy children (known as gender coding). Blue was seen as a calm, gentle color, which was believed to reflect the calm, feminine nature attributed to girls. Pink was seen as an aggressive, almost violent color reflecting the active, masculine nature attributed to boys.

- a. Make a case for changing this gender color-coding scheme. You may choose to invert it if continuing with the assumption of a binary gender-constant, or expand upon it if using non-binary genders or non-constant genders.
- b. Examine your argument in (8.a) from the perspective of each of the following parties. Explain whether or not each entity would agree with your stated reasoning. If you are a member of any of the following parties and have answered (8.a) as such, please reverse the quality (e.g. "someone with gender" in place of "someone with no gender") before answering.

- i.) Someone without a binary gender distinction, or who is not gender-constant.
- ii.) Someone with no gender.
- iii.) A member of a society in which males are birth-givers and nurture their young and each other.
- iv.) A member of a society in which females are feared for their predatory natures.
- v.) Someone who cannot perceive color.

9. Define "definition" (you may use the concept of measurement):

- a. What assumptions do you have to make in order to make a measurement? In your response you may wish to explain levels of analysis and the use of exclusion to create definition.

## II.

In relation to what, and in what context, do you define yourself? Your answer may include, but need not be limited to, the following:

temporal (*cumulative, sequential, linear, holistic, other*);

spatial (*geographical, physical, dimensional, proportionate, anatomic*);

experiential;

heuristic (*instructional, trial-and-error, computational, other*);

cultural (*social, artistic, philosophical, intrinsic, inherent, applied*);

cognitive;

by type of consciousness (*fixed, interdependent, autonomous, collective, consecutive*);

or other relationships and anchors.

10. Consider the sayings: "There can be no observerless observation" and "Do not belittle the pain you have not yet felt." Or consider Milorad Pavić: "But take heed: the Constantinople of our thoughts is always one hundred pepper fields west of the real Constantinople." Relate any two of these sayings to a concrete example in your personal or professional experience.
11. What do you know about perceptual or inattentional "blindness"? In your response consider how it is possible to see
  - i.) what you do not expect to see;
  - ii.) what you do not believe;
  - iii.) what is completely outside your knowledge base (that which you could never know enough to even begin to imagine it).
  - a. If you are from a collective consciousness (consecutive, pluralistic, or otherwise non-singular), how do you perceive what is temporally, or physically, or cognitively previously unexperienced?
  - b. How might different forms of conceptual "blindness" manifest in your culture (consider such things as popular narratives cultures teach and perpetuate, representation, language, repetitive visual or auditory stimuli, etc) and how can it affect such things as scientific study, health care, or art?
12. In human physiology, what are mirror neurons and how do they affect compassion? Consider how they affect creativity, understanding, sense of self, sense of belonging. You may wish to discuss how levels of analysis, concepts of self and other, and mirror neurons intersect.

13. Define "aggregate" and "outlier" as they pertain to gathering data to support or refute scientific and/or mathematical theorems. Cite at least two (2) examples of specific theorems or axioms in your response, emphasizing why the effect of such data gathering may be significant for interaction with cultures and species other than your own.
14. How does narrative strengthen or create "fact"? (Or, how do scientists use narratives to create meaning, fact, or answer questions?) You may wish to describe a true story and explain why you believe it to be true, then explain why someone else might have experienced the same circumstances but have constructed a different truth. (You can simply tell a different true story using the same circumstances as in your first story.)
- Describe at least two (2) narratives you have constructed about yourself. Also describe at least two (2) narratives the society you belong to tells. One (1) narrative must be relevant to both answers.
  - How difficult is it to change narratives in your society?
  - Describe the psychology and sociology behind internalization.

### III.

#### How might your definition of yourself change over time and/or contradict itself?

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For those answers not contained within the two-dimensional confines of the questionnaire, please ensure that all ancillary materials and/or cataloging slips are virtually or physically attached. The Proctor will provide you with all necessary materials, attaching apparatus, and delivery mechanisms for any such responses. Let the Proctor know when you have finished with this questionnaire. They will direct you to the next part of the screening process.

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Screening of applicants includes an assessment of several key cognitive, philosophical, pedagogical, and existential aptitudes and understandings (these include, but are not limited to, metrics of reality and its construction; flexibility, inclusiveness, and limitations in world view) as well as narrative analysis, construction, and deconstruction. Questionnaire Part B fulfills only one part of the assessment. Questionnaire Parts A, C, and D focus on artistic expression and understanding, mathematics and symbolic logic, and sciences portions of the screening process.

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In holding with the nascent and tenuous nature of First Contact and cultural exchange, this questionnaire has been designed and approved by the Foundation of Existential Culture and Philosophy, the International Society of Neuroscience, Creativity, and Dreaming (ISNCD), the Foundation for the Study of Social Linguistics and Change (SSLC), the Network of Integrated Artistic Scientists (NIAS), in conjunction with Physics, Dance, Shamanic Studies, and Foreign Language Acquisition specialists from accredited institutions and professional associations across Earth.