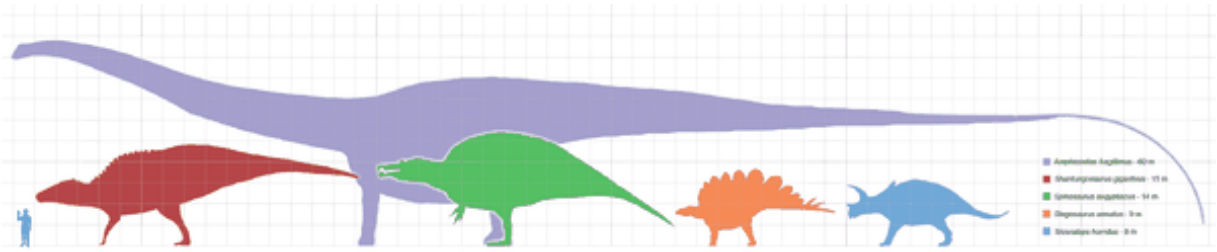
Devas to Dinosaurs



Alan Katz is one of the world's experts on Palaeontology with a broad and deep knowledge.

> *What excited Alan was that Steven's idea of "Devas from Space" is supported by massive amounts of Paleontological evidence.*
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> *Steven's "Devas from Space" concept gave Alan an explanation for the "Darwin Dilemma" … that mutations move in two directions - devolution and evolution. Yet devolution seems to be held in suspense until some undetermined time. Alan's deep studies revealed that it is not catastrophic events brought a species to extinction. Rather at some almost random point a species starts to devolve, gets into trouble and duly disappears.*
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> *To Alan, Steven's explanation, "A species guiding Deva can get bored, quit and leave the planet" fitted with what Alan knew about species devolution, decay and extinction. This issue is considered below.*
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> *Steven and Alan developed the ideas that Alan presents in a series of Email exchanges about ten years ago.*
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> *Alan's complete essay can be downloaded from http://www.kheper.net/ecognosis/evolution/Cosmogenic_evolution.html*

Alan Katz wrote in his essay, "Cosmogenic Evolution"…

Central to Steven's thesis is the observation that the Earth is an open system. To quote from Steven's Essay, "The Deva behind Islam" …

In the 1950's I believed that the earth was watched over by a benevolent father spirit who, on prayerful request, would send down angels to help us cope with the devils that entered our lives from the underworld.

Since then I have come to learn that the earth is a open system attached to a sun that in turn floats in the Orion arm of a galaxy that we call the milky way…all this is set into a firmament of uncountable billions of similar galaxies…

Another open system that I know about is one that I can understand. It is a child's swimming pool. Into this tiny puddle - seemingly from nowhere - arrive green slime, black algae, water beetles and assassin bugs. A whole ecosystem set into motion within a week.

I have come to accept that planet earth and swimming pools are similar open systems. Influences rain in from the stars. Astrology is an attempt to explain some of these influences.

Astronomer Fred Hoyle staked his considerable reputation on the idea that viruses travelled to earth on meteorites...

I agree with this, in fact the Earth - like everything else in the universe - an open system (long acknowledged by science). But, apart from heretics like Hoyle, scientists still see Earth as the centre of evolution. What else did Steven have you to add?

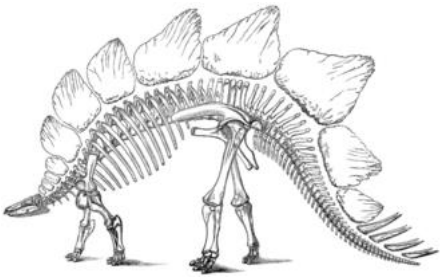
"I've come to believe ideas can come from the stars...I have come to understand that Devas are also intergalactic travellers. (Deva = a conscious being with energy focuses that often attaches itself to a locations.) Devas don't travel in space ships but in thought, in consciousness. Small ones seem to flit around in space like algae spores and alighting on any planet that comes their way. On suitable planets they survive and create around themselves the things that interest them... So new life forms come into existence - consider the impossible worms that live on sulphur sprouting from volcanic fistulas deep under the earth's oceans - a life form once considered impossible and only recently discovered...

I suspect that conscious ideas and devas are arriving all the time. Some find their way into human minds. Some power the evolutionary processes. Some create machines or bodies for themselves out of the materials of the earth, accumulating earth elements into shapes to fit their needs - like sea animals making their shells....

Well, it took me a bit of time to figure what this was all about, but in a series of email correspondences I finally got it. And my ventures into Anthroposophical thinking came in useful. Here then is a new theory of the history of life on Earth.

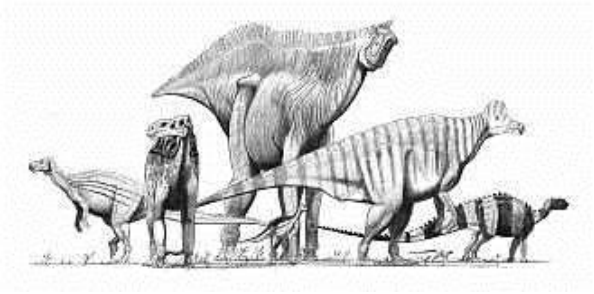
The concept of Devic succession actually fits in well with the otherwise materialistic approach of no qualitative ascent. No space deva is of a higher grade than any other, so the biotic dynasties they manifest are of no higher or lower grade either.

So I don't see the dinosaurs either as evolutionary mistakes or (as dinophiles do) as a glorious epiphany. They were just the embodiment of one more cosmodevic personality that happened to embody on Earth. This persionality *did* certainly hang around a lot longer than most of the others - 180 million years of Mesozoic time is a long time in anyone's book. Considereing higher (metazoan) life has only been around on Earth for about 540 million years, that is fully one third of the Phanerozoic eon! So perhaps that particular cosmodeva liked things here on Earth, and stayed a bit longer than the others. But eventually it decided to leave, although it has left behind an incredible heritage of fascination in the spectacle of dinosaurian forms and their fossil remains.



What I am saying then is that if we look with unbiased eyes at the series of megadynasties, as, say, amphibians, early reptiles, therapsids, archosaurs-dinosaurs, and mammals, we do not see the cliché'd ascent from the primordial swamp imagined by Victorian writers. Rather we see a distinctive personality expressing itself in unique and spectacular forms, each form and biota having its own virtue and magnificence, regardless of whatever preconceptions we may put on it.

The Extinction Question



But how does the idea of Devas evolving species square with the mass extinction thing; the suggestion that, for example, the dinosaurs were wiped out by a big meteorite or asteroid?

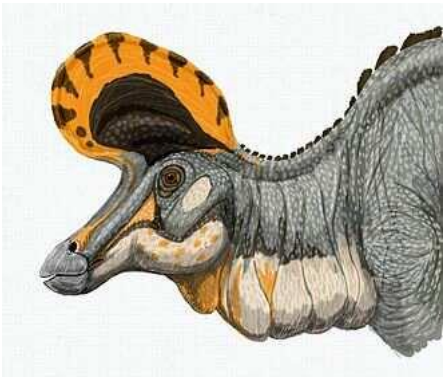
Steven's Email response on 27 November 2001 …

I don't think you need to suppose a meteorite calamity to end a species line. Boredom by the presiding Devic entity could be enough. Like those explorers in space stories; we have done all we can here let's move onto the next planet in the cosmos. Maybe we as a human race as are trying to do that - "we have stuffed up here it's time to find a new spot for the human higher self to incarnate into."

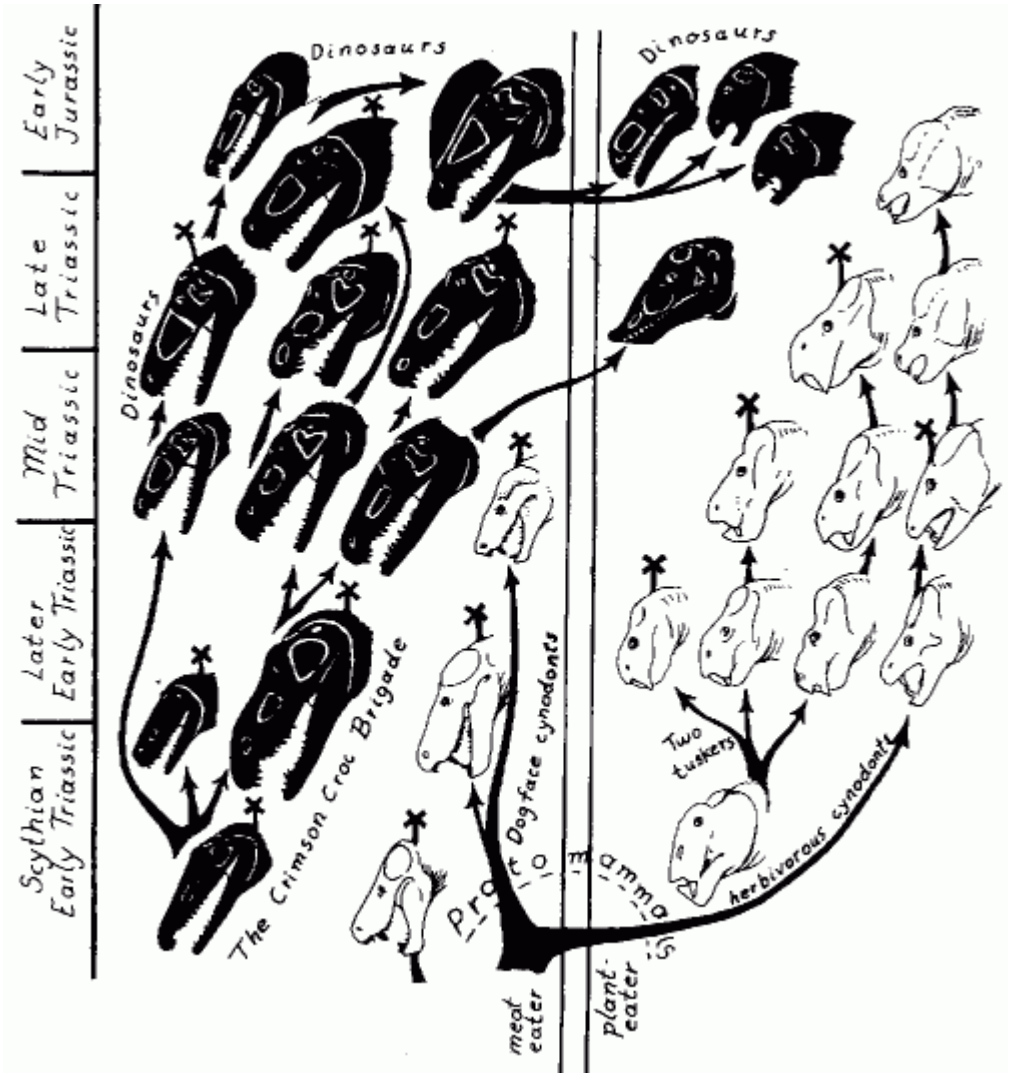
So when the Devic creator gets bored it leaves, and the biota - without a higher principle to sustain and nurture it - dies out.

Amazingly, this explanation fits in perfectly.

The dinosaurs were in trouble for a few million years before the asteroid hit. They had been declining all through the Maastrichtian epoch (maximum diversity was actually about 10 million years before the extinction). It is not generally known that the dinosaurs had survived at least four other big mass-extinctions - the end Carnian (early late Triassic - a big one that killed many other types of large terrestrial animals - like the very succesful ox-sized Kanneymeriid and large sheep-sized Traversodontid herbivores, as well as several marine reptile families and invertebrate species), the Rhaetan (latest Triassic, that wiped out the thecodonts and more marine reptiles and invertebrates), the Toarcian (latest early Jurassic, several types of dinosaurs and other terrestrial animals, more marine reptiles and invertebrates), the Kimmeridgean or Tithonian (end Jurassic), and the Cenomonian-Turonian (mid Cretaceous). Each time the dinosaurs had a few losses, but they continued on quite happily, and new dinosaurs evolved to replace the ones that had died out. Why did such succesful animals, that had dominated the Earth for 150 million years, and survived the small Cretaceous ice age and were able to flourish in polar conditions (like mid Cretaceous Australia), had coped with the evolution of new flowering plants, had taken everything in their stride, stop adapting to new environments?



The end of the dinosaurs was also the end of the Dinosaurian megadynasty. If we go back further, to the replacement of the Therapsid Megadynasty by the Dinosaurian one, we find that this lasted not ten million, but some 25 million years. Whilst the huge end Permian mass extinction did indeed kill off many life forms, it did not actually eliminate the therapsids (the mammal-like reptiles or proto-mammals as they are also called). But gradually, through the early and middle Triassic, until the end of the Carnian age, the various therapsid lineages duissaoeared one by one - first the large carnivores (Cynognathidae), then the medium carnivores and large herbivores. Finally only the small rodent-like tritylodonts and the shrew like ictodosaurian mammal-ancestors remained, and these small creatures were no rival to the dinosaurs. All this is shown in dramatic form by the following illustration by Dr Bob Bakker



Here we see carnivores on the left, herbivores on the right. Archosaurs (including dinosaurs) in black, therapsids in white. As with the megadynasty diagram, time is shown moving from the bottom to the top, representing both the geological column (oldest strata laid down first) and the tree of life.

In the paleontological world there are two explanations offered to explain this gradual succession of one major biotic type by another. Dr Bakker suggests that the early archosaurs and their dinosaur descendents simply were superior life-forms, they merely pushed their therapsid predecessors aside. This is very much a minority view, supporting his "hot blooded dinosaur" theory. Dr Mike Benton gives the commonly preferred explanation that the climate during much of the Triassic was very hot and arid across much of the then supercontinent of Pangea, and these desert-like conditions simply favoured animals with a reptilian metabolism (which do not require as much water or food) over the mammal-like therapsids.

Actually I find problems with both explanations. As far as Dr Bakker's thesis goes, the fact is that the early archosaurs were very different from their therapsid contemporaries; they had very different life-styles and certainly were not ecological competitors. e.g. the large crocodile-like *Erythrosuchus* (reptile - archosaur) certainly did not compete with the large squat wolverine-like *Cynognathus* (therapsid), although they undoubtedly on occaison went after the same prey, just as lions and crocodiles do in the African Serengati today.

Conversely, to say that mammals can not hold their own against reptiles in desert conditions is just nonsense - in almost all the desert conditions of the Earth today and throughout the Cenozoic the dominant animals - including the dominant carnivors - are always mammals. The only exception being Pleistocene Australia, where marsupial carnivores did not evolve to very large size, and the top carnivore was a giant goanna (*Megalania*). Curiously, the same thing happened in marsupial-dominated South America during the Tertiary period, where the largest preditor was a type of giant flesh-eating bird (Phorusrhacid). Morphologically similar but unrelated giant carnivorous birds (*Dromornis*, *Bullockornis*, etc) also lived in Australia throughout the Tertiary and Pleistocene.

In all probability the long decline of the Therapsids was due to a combination of several physical factors. But from an cosmogenic perspective - and jumping here from science to esotericism - we could say that the larger god that expressed itself as the Permian therapsid flowering withdrew to elsewhere in the universe, and while these evolutionary lineages still were established as local terrestrial devic impulses they were able to continue, although with lesser efficency, and eventually they just disappeared.