



# A History of Our Being

	Section	Subject Matter	People
A History of Our Being	<i>i. The rise of the human race</i>	The logical existence of life on Earth • DNA & the 'cone of evolution' • The growing complexity of life over geological time - from bacteria to primates	
		Anthropoid primates & the evolution of our species • <i>Australopithecus afarensis</i> . <i>Homo habilis</i> & <i>Homo erectus</i> • <i>Homo sapiens neanderthalensis</i> & the global rise of <i>Homo sapiens sapiens</i> • The development of language, art & literature • Bronze Age culture & the first city states • Iron Age ingenuity, Classical civilisation & the birth of empire	
		Ancient adaptations & our ongoing exploitation of nature • A lesson from Rapa Nui • Human destruction - Scientific understanding versus the intransigent attitudes of society	





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(...continued)

## *ii. A return journey (preview)*

The logical progression of humanity & the fragility of civilisation •  
Imagination & the empirical realities of human thought • The logic of  
negative human emotions & state of mind • The effects of our genetic  
heritage • The collective unconscious



Our perceptual connection to historical events (taking World War II &  
the Napoleonic wars as examples) • The power of re-enactments &  
relics • Wealth & the modern world • An imaginary regression  
through the decades of the 20th century • Our ever-changing reality

**Carl Jung**



**Bernard Cornwell**





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(...continued)

## iii. A return journey (via landmarks)

Science & the power of knowledge • Wisdom & war - the divergence  
of human achievement through the ages



21st century challenges (e.g. the climate crisis, deadly pandemics & war) - a strange  
new world compared to 20th century preoccupations • Social & political upheaval in  
the 1990s • The Cold War (including the '*space race*', the '*arms race*' & the '*Cuban  
missile crisis*') • The division of post-war Germany & reliance of political intrigue in  
Europe • Extreme nationalism, the world wars & the *Russian Revolution* • Early  
20th Century discoveries & inventions (including *penicillin*, the *jet engine*, *television*  
& *plastics* • Turn of the century discoveries & inventions (including the *General  
Theory of Relativity*, *manned flight* & *radioactivity*) • 19th century achievements  
(including *germ theory*, the *theory of evolution*, *photography* & *electric motors*) •  
Human advancement & destruction during the 18th & 19th centuries (including  
*vaccines*, modern *communism*, the *Crimean War* & *French Revolution*) • 17th  
century life: '*Principia*', fire & plague • 17th century (scientific & cultural advance)  
• 16th century religious upheaval • 15th century: European learning & expansion •  
*The Renaissance & the Voyages of Discovery*: a time of scientific innovation &  
humanism • 14th century connection - the *Silk Route* & the *Mongol Empire* • 12th  
century feudalism (including the *Crusades*, the appearance of the first *universities*,  
and *Gothic architecture*) • The spread of philosophy & science outside of Europe  
before the 11th century (including the *Islamic empires* & *Chinese innovation*) • The  
European Dark Ages & the Barbarian successors to Rome • The Roman Empire &  
the emergence of Christianity • Ancient empires (before common era); including the  
Han Dynasty & the Persian Empire • Ancient India - the birth of Buddhist & Jainist  
philosophies • The classical culture of ancient Greece (including the beginnings of  
*philosophy*, *poetry* & *sport* in Europe) • At the juncture between recorded history &  
human prehistory (including Judaism & Hebrew culture, ancient Egypt, the  
Babylonian Empire, the Shang Dynasty & Hinduism) • Mesopotamia - the cradle of  
Western civilisation (including the first Sumerian cities & the Akkadian Empire) •  
Neolithic existence on the eve of civilisation



The divergence & expansion prehistoric humans out of Africa • The  
advantage of anatomically modern humans over their archaic cousins  
• Tracing the evolution of our ancestral forebears & the common  
ancestor of all animal life • Our intellectual dependence on our fragile  
civilisation



Yuri Gagarin | Alexander Fleming |  
Frank Whittle | John Logie Baird |  
Wallace Carothers | Albert Einstein |  
Wilbur Wright | Orville Wright | Pierre  
Curie | Marie Curie | Guglielmo  
Marconi | Wilhelm Röntgen | Thomas  
Edison | Louis Pasteur | Charles Darwin  
| Charles Dickens | Leo Tolstoy |  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | Ludwig  
van Beethoven | Edward Jenner | Karl  
Marx | Napoleon Bonaparte | George  
Washington | Isaac Newton | Hans  
Lippershey | Galileo Galilei | William  
Shakespeare | Walter Raleigh | Henry  
VIII | Martin Luther | Christopher  
Columbus | Desiderius Erasmus |  
Michelangelo | Leonardo da Vinci |  
Johannes Gutenberg | Francesco  
Petrarch | Giovanni Boccaccio | Joan of  
Arc | Marco Polo | Kublai Khan |  
Genghis Khan | Romulus Augustulus |  
Alexander the Great | Gautama  
Siddhartha | Mahavira Swami |  
Hipparchus | Eratosthenes | Euclid |  
Aristotle | Plato | Herodotus | Thales of  
Miletus | Pythagoras | Hesiod | Homer |  
Rameses III | Hammurabi

