

***Fleeing from Absence: four cross-disciplinary essays on time, its nature and its interpretations***  
by Olga Ast

Advanced copy

**ERRATA**

Please note the following corrections, including the printing errors occurred during digital rasterizing process in some copies of the book:

Page 11.

Second paragraph, 11th line: Replace Hawkins with Hawking, i.e.: "In the contemporary work *A Brief History of Time*, Stephen **Hawking** illustrates space and time as two cones connected by their vertices.

Second paragraph, 16th line: Replace Hawkins with Hawking's, i.e.: "To the viewer, these bear a strong resemblance to a sandglass, filled with an infinite quantity of sand. Even in this last century, **Hawking's** visual imagination leads him to this ancient metaphor."

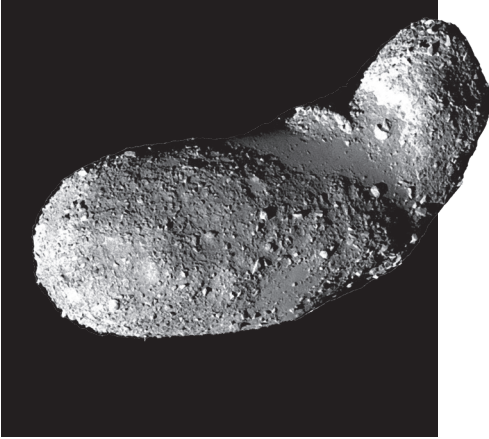
Credits: Second paragraph, 1st line: Replace Hawkins with Hawking, i.e.: "Stephen **Hawking**. XX century. *A Brief History of Time*. 10th Edition. Bantam books. Figure 2.4. Pg. 27."

Page 61

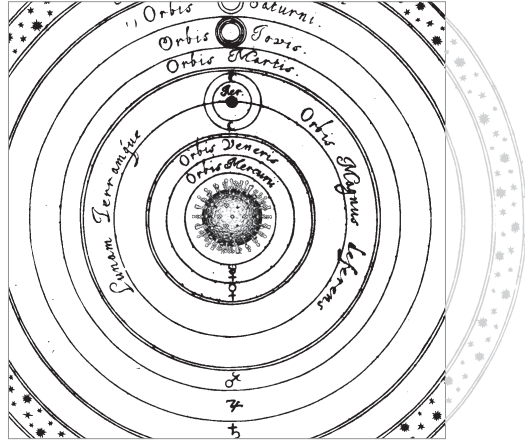
Credits: Third paragraph, 1st line: Replace Avian Flu Virus with Avian Flu Virus (at the center of Copernicus' Cosmos), i.e.: **Avian Flu Virus (at the center of Copernicus' Cosmos)**.

For additional errata subsequent to printing, please visit website at:  
[www.fleeingfromabsence.com](http://www.fleeingfromabsence.com)

Page 32. Replace image on page 32 with one below:



Page 60. Replace image on page 61 with one below:



Pages 80-81. Replace image on pages 80-81 with one below:

### 2. TIME AS A FRAME OF REFERENCE

We know that we do not live in this world forever. During the time we have here, we want to witness change, and to change our environment to impose the priority of our own comfort. To monitor these changes, we have to create a *frame of reference*.

This frame of reference hinges on the amount of information that we as a civilization have collected about our world. To determine our relative position between the future and the past, we look to information. We assign the past to the state of having less information about our surroundings as relative to the present. We assign to the future the state of having more information, and of manipulating it so as to impact our environment. In other words, the past is less artificial in relation to the present, and the future is increasingly complex and constructed.

As we orient ourselves in physical space, so do we orient ourselves relative to the amount of encoded information that we collect. As individuals, we determine the amount of information we have collected in our bodies; as civilizations, we use books, databases, libraries, etc.

Time as a frame of reference gives us an additional spatial orientation to supplement front, back, left, right, top and bottom. The future, past and present are coordinates which do not exist in nature but, like the axes in the Cartesian coordinate system, are useful abstractions. We use Cartesian coordinates to manipulate information which is encoded in the language of mathematics, and therefore superimpose straight lines onto nature.

Similarly, we have drawn a straight line from the past to the future, and placed ourselves somewhere in between. Yet in our attempts to use straight lines outside of our own imaginations, we find that we are rarely able to draw a line from point A to point B. Unconsciously, we choose not the straight line but the path with least resistance to our will.

Illustration by Olga Aul

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