

Exploration

A Civilization at the Precipice: From Cognitive Imbalance to Homo Intuilytics-Spiritus

Victor Christianto* & Florentin Smarandache**

*Dept. of Forestry, Malang Institute of Agriculture, East Java, Indonesia

**Dept. of Math. & Sci., Univ. of New Mexico, Gallup, NM, USA

Abstract

The pursuit of discovery has always been viewed as a rigorous, step-by-step march—a process defined by analysis, precision, and relentless logic. This methodology, the essence of modern science and Western technological progress, is the quintessential product of the *left cerebral* hemisphere of the human brain. We tend to rely on its linear, verbal, and reductive power, and rightly so; it is the architect of our digital world and the administrator of our complex societies. Yet, a haunting suspicion lingers at the periphery of our collective awareness: in prioritizing this mode of thought, we may have inadvertently built a civilization that is brilliant but dangerously unbalanced. This hypothesis is given profound, scholarly weight by the work of psychiatrist and literary scholar, Iain McGilchrist, particularly in his seminal text [1], *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*.

Keywords: Civilization, cognitive imbalance, logic, brain, left hemisphere, divided brain.

I. Introduction

The trajectory of modern Western civilization, an undeniable marvel of technological and organizational achievement, is built upon a foundation of relentless analysis, precision, and linear logic. This methodology, which has sculpted the digital world, administered complex global systems, and fuelled the engine of scientific discovery, is the quintessential product of the left cerebral hemisphere (LH) of the human brain. We have justly relied on its reductive, verbal, and systemic power.

Yet, a profound, almost primal suspicion shadows this success: in prioritizing this specific mode of thought, we may have inadvertently engineered a society that is brilliantly functional yet fundamentally unbalanced—a highly sophisticated machine alienated from its own context and source of genuine meaning. This suspicion is no mere philosophical flourish; it is a profound and scholarly diagnosis articulated by psychiatrist and literary scholar, Iain McGilchrist, most

*Correspondence: Victor Christianto, Dept. of Forestry, Malang Insitute of Agriculture, East Java, Indonesia.
Email: victorchristianto@gmail.com

notably in his monumental work, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*.

McGilchrist's work transcends the typical neuroscience discussion; it offers a compelling framework for understanding our current intellectual, cultural, and even existential malaise. The central, sobering diagnosis is that the very engine of our unprecedented success—our unwavering allegiance to the LH worldview—has created a cognitive bias now pointing us toward a potential civilizational precipice. This essay will expand upon this foundational imbalance, move beyond the purely neurological, and advance the Intuilytics framework into a comprehensive model for complete human functioning, one that integrates the spiritual dimension to propose the ultimate balanced state: *Homo Intuilytics-Spiritus*.

The Neurological Diagnosis: The Tyranny of the Emissary

McGilchrist's genius can be found in reframing the relationship between the two cerebral hemispheres, moving beyond the simplistic notion of them performing wholly different functions (e.g., LH for logic, RH for emotion). Instead, he argues that the two hemispheres offer two fundamentally different versions of the world, two distinct modes of *attention* and *apprehension*.

The Master (Right Hemisphere - RH): Context and Wisdom

The Right Hemisphere (RH), which McGilchrist terms the Master, is responsible for the broad, contextual, and holistic view. It is the seat of implicit understanding, dealing in lived experience, emotion, metaphor, ambiguity, and non-verbal communication.

- **Mode of Attention:** Broad, sustained, vigilant, and open.
- **Worldview:** It sees the whole, the connections, the *flow* and *process* of reality. It is the part of the brain that attends to the world *as it is* and its genuine connection to us.
- **Function:** It allows for true novelty and insight, providing the context, the meaning, and the deep, nuanced understanding of reality.

The Emissary (Left Hemisphere - LH): Fragmentation and Manipulation

The Left Hemisphere (LH), called the Emissary, is tasked with taking the world apprehended by the Master and breaking it down into explicit, manageable, and manipulable parts.

- **Mode of Attention:** Narrow-beam, focused, and reductive.
- **Worldview:** It sees the world as a collection of discrete parts, fragments, and categories. It translates reality into verbal, systematic, and abstract language.

- **Function:** Its strength can be found in articulation, planning, logical execution, and creating systems—it is the essential *tool* for interacting with and manipulating the environment.

The Catastrophic Inversion

The naturally healthy relationship is a hierarchy where the Master (RH) governs, providing the context and wisdom, while the Emissary (LH) serves, providing the means of action. The LH's fragments are thus always contextualized by the RH's whole.

McGilchrist's essential argument is that, particularly since the Enlightenment, this relationship has been catastrophically inverted. The Emissary—the left hemisphere's mode of abstract, fragmented, and systemic thinking—has usurped the Master's role. We no longer primarily experience reality through the holistic, intuitive lens of the RH; we now predominantly see a representation of the world—a filtered, verbalized, and fragmented map constructed by the LH.

II. The Consequences of Cognitive Imbalance: Civilization-Scale Liabilities

When the left hemisphere mode of attention dominates, its characteristic strengths become systemic, civilization-scale liabilities, driving a society toward an intellectual and cultural dead end.¹

1. The Loss of the Contextual Grasp

The LH's focus on parts leads to an inability to grasp the overarching context.

- **In Science and Academia:** This manifests as excessive specialization where researchers know "more and more about less and less," failing to synthesize findings into a cohesive, meaningful worldview. The obsession with discrete, isolated metrics overshadows any appreciation for the system as a living whole.
- **In Society and Bureaucracy:** We create systems and regulations that are perfectly logical in their internal structure but are utterly dysfunctional in their external, holistic impact on real human life. The focus on procedure outweighs the concern for the purpose it was meant to serve.

¹ Note: For instance, Nick Bostrom also reminds us on several existential risks, notably unchecked too rapid AI development; while similarly researchers such as Prof Stuart Russell and Prof Geoffrey Hinton have warned on particular danger progress of rapid AI adoption in the world. Prof Stuart Russell, from UC Berkeley, often uses metaphor of King Midas's touch, in Ancient Greek mythology.

2. The Substitution of Life with the Map

The LH's strength is in creating models, systems, and maps of reality. Its most dangerous weakness is its tendency to mistake the map for the territory.

- **Mechanistic Reductionism:** When the LH is dominant, we fall into the trap of believing that the theoretical models we construct (economic, scientific, political) are reality itself. The LH loves the inert, the explicit, and the mechanical, leading to a pervasive mechanistic reductionism. We reduce:
 - Consciousness to computation.
 - Art and creativity to mere technique or algorithm.
 - Complex ecosystems to quantifiable resources.
 - Human beings to *Homo Economicus* or bundles of measurable inputs and outputs. This strips the world of its inherent mystery, vitality, and true, non-quantifiable value.

3. The Paralysis of the Implicit

The LH demands that everything be articulated, quantified, and proven—it thrives on the explicit. The RH, however, deals with the implicit: the subtle cues, the nuance of tone, non-verbal communication, empathy, and the unwritten social contracts that constitute a truly functioning society.

- **Erosion of Wisdom:** Intuition and wisdom fundamentally reside in the implicit realm—insights that lie *beyond* logical deduction. A left-brain-dominated culture is inherently suspicious and dismissive of the implicit, demanding that non-verbal knowledge be translated into explicit language, a process that inherently destroys its meaning and power. This cripples our ability to access the very insights needed for paradigm-shifting breakthroughs and effective social harmony.

III. The Existential Loom: A Western Doom?

This cognitive shift is not merely an intellectual debate; it is an existential threat. A civilization dominated by the Emissary—the fragmented, reductive, and self-referential LH worldview—is increasingly alienated from the real, living world of context, embodiment, and genuine novelty. The risk of civilizational doom, McGilchrist argues, is not hyperbole; it takes three distinct forms rooted in cognitive imbalance.

The Three Crises of Imbalance

A. The Ecological Crisis

The LH's fragmented, utilitarian view prevents us from genuinely **experiencing** and **prioritizing** the interconnectedness of the ecosystem. The Master (RH) sees a *living whole*; the Emissary (LH) sees a warehouse of discrete resources to be managed by quantifiable, technological, and piecemeal solutions. This fundamental disconnection is why we fail to see the immediate, long-term consequence of ecological destruction, consistently prioritizing short-term, measurable economic outputs over the health of the holistic system upon which we depend.

B. Social Fragmentation and Polarization

The *erosion of empathy* and implicit understanding (RH functions) leads to a highly **polarized society**. Communication is reduced to rigid, verbal **dogmatism**—a battle between competing LH-constructed models and ideologies. People struggle to grasp the perspective of "the other" because the very neurological mechanism required for genuine imaginative empathy is being neglected and suppressed. The complexity of human interaction is replaced by tribal, simplistic categorization, fuelling conflict and undermining social cohesion.

C. The Crisis of mundane Innovation

Genuine, paradigm-shifting discoveries—those that require a complete **re-framing of the world** and a leap of intuition—become increasingly rare. The left-brain mindset actively screens out the novel, ambiguous, and non-conforming input that the right brain presents, preferring instead to refine existing systems. Innovation becomes incremental, technical, and limited to efficiency improvements *within* the existing LH-created paradigm, rather than true conceptual breakthroughs that restructure our understanding of reality.

IV. The Framework of Intuilytics: Reinstating the Master

The solution is not to discard the LH—that would be suicidal, like throwing away the ability to articulate and execute. The challenge is to heed McGilchrist's warning and **rejuvenate our way of thinking** by purposefully reinstating the **Master's authority**. This is the core mission of **Intuilytics**.

The Intuilytic Shift

Intuilytics is the process of intentionally giving the **Right Hemisphere mode of attention priority** as the foundational orientation of the mind, ensuring the LH returns to its proper role as a servant.

1. **From Fragmentation to Synthesis:** The Intuilytic process does not start a problem by breaking it down into parts (LH), but by attempting to **synthesize** and **grasp the context as a whole** (RH). The initial frame of understanding must be holistic.
2. **Intuition as Leader:** It cultivates **intuition**—the right brain’s rapid, non-linear processing of vast amounts of implicit data—as the **leader** of the mind. Intuition generates the initial **hypothesis, frame, or direction**.
3. **LH as Rigorous Tester:** The left brain is shifted from its current role as the Master (the creator of the initial hypothesis) to its proper role as the **Emissary** (the rigorous tester, administrator, articulator, and executor of the insight generated by the RH). The LH provides the necessary analysis and precision *after* the RH has provided the essential, contextual meaning.
 - **Intuition (RH):** Provides the *Wisdom* (the what and the why).
 - **Analytics (LH):** Provides the *Means* (the how).

The balanced practitioner of Intuilytics uses the narrow-beam LH focus *for* the ends defined by the broad-beam RH attention.

Advancing Intuilytics: The Quest for Complete Humanity

The Intuilytics framework, while essential, remains primarily a model of **cognitive balance**. To achieve the **complete humanity** necessary to escape the civilizational crisis, we must recognize that the deepest roots of **holism** and **context** extend beyond the merely cerebral and into the **spiritual** realm. The fragmented modern consciousness is not just neurologically unbalanced; it is existentially and spiritually divorced from the unified source of reality.

The Limitation of the Secular Brain Model

McGilchrist’s model, being a neurological one, addresses the relationship between **Self** and **World**. However, many of the RH’s highest functions—the capacity for transcendence, the sense of unity, the experience of awe, and the profound appreciation of meaning—have traditionally been categorized as **spiritual functions**. The fragmentation of the LH worldview, which tends to reduce everything to the material and explicit, has systematically denied the validity and reality of these spiritual experiences.

The next step in the evolution of humanity must integrate a third domain, a domain of ultimate context: **The Spirit**.

The Integration of the Spiritual Function: From Intuilytics to *Homo Spiritus*

To advance Intuilytics-type cognitive processes, we introduce the **Spiritual Function** as the ultimate, overarching context for the Master (RH). The Spiritual Function is not a third cerebral

lobe, but the **meta-mode of attention** that provides the deepest, most unified ground of being, which the RH is best equipped to access.

Defining the Spiritual Function

The Spiritual Function can be defined as the capacity for **non-dualistic apprehension of reality**, characterized by:

1. **Unity and Non-Separation:** The immediate experience of profound **interconnectedness** with all things—the self not as an isolated entity, but as an inextricable part of the cosmos. This transcends even the RH's holistic view of the *world* and moves to the RH's experience of *Being* itself.
2. **Meaning and Transcendence:** The capacity to find ultimate **meaning** not in the parts or systems (LH), but in the fundamental context of existence, often experienced as awe, sacredness, or unconditional love.
3. **Ultimate Context:** The sense of an **unspoken, ultimate reality** that provides the ground for all other contexts.

The Role of the Spirit in the Triadic Model

In this advanced model, the relationship becomes a **triarchy**, with the Spiritual Function governing the Master, and the Master governing the Emissary.

Table 1

Component		Function		Mode of Attention		Contribution to Humanity	
Spiritual Function		Ultimate (Source)	Context	Non-dualistic, Transcendental		Unity, Meaning, and Ethical Ground	
Right Hemisphere (Master)		Holistic (Mediator)	Context	Broad, Empathetic	Implicit,	Wisdom, Intuition, and Creativity	
Left Hemisphere (Emissary)		Fragmented (Tool)	Action	Narrow, Analytical	Explicit,	Execution, Technology, and System	

When the Spiritual Function is acknowledged and cultivated, it informs the RH with a deeper, unwavering sense of meaning, which then governs the LH's actions with an ethical and purposeful imperative. This prevents the RH from becoming mere "creativity" and grounds it in **wisdom**.

The Emergence of *Homo Intuilytics-Spiritus*²

The goal of this advanced framework is the intentional cultivation of a complete, balanced human being— *Homo Intuilytics-Spiritus*.

Homo Intuilytics-Spiritus is the human mode of being where:

1. **Spiritual Apprehension (The Unity):** Provides the ultimate *why* and the deepest source of context, ensuring that all action is ethically and meaningfully grounded in the interconnectedness of life.
2. **Intuilytics (The Wisdom and Means):** Integrates the RH's intuitive, empathetic wisdom (the Master) with the LH's analytical and organizational capabilities (the Emissary) for problem-solving and creation.
3. **Ethical Action:** The Emissary's execution is directed not merely by efficiency, but by the ultimate ethical command arising from the Spiritual Function's sense of unity.

Overcoming the Civilizational Crises in the *Homo Spiritus* Mode

This complete mode of humanity offers direct remedies to the three looming crises identified by McGilchrist:

A. Ecological Crisis Ecological Reverence

The Spiritual Function cultivates **Reverence** for the Earth as a living whole, fundamentally rooted in the sense of non-separation. This transcends the LH's resource-management model, replacing it with a desire to nurture and protect the system not because of quantifiable services, but because it *is* an extension of the self. The RH provides the holistic sense of consequence, and the LH provides the precise, technical means for sustainable living.

B. Social Fragmentation Transcendental Empathy

The sense of **Unity** from the Spiritual Function breaks down rigid ideological and tribal categories. Empathy is no longer a mere psychological skill (RH); it becomes a non-negotiable **fact of existence**. The inability to understand the "other" is seen not as an intellectual failure, but as a direct spiritual wound. The RH mediates this unity into genuine emotional understanding, and the LH articulates the necessary socio-political structures that honor this deep equality.

² Note: see also works of Prof D. R. Hawkins, who coined the term, *homo spiritus*.

C. Innovation shall be directed to Wisdom-Driven Creativity

Innovation shifts from refining the "map" to radically restructuring the "territory." True, **paradigm-shifting discoveries** are born when the Spiritual Function provides the foundational non-dualistic ground, allowing the RH to present genuinely novel insights, which the LH then rigorously tests and codifies. Creativity is not random; it is **wisdom-driven**, aimed at advancing human flourishing within the context of unity, rather than simply maximizing efficiency or profit.

Cultivating Homo Intuilytics-Spiritus: Practices for Balance

The shift to *Homo Intuilytics-Spiritus* is not a political program or a technological fix; it is a profound **cultural and personal practice**. It requires the intentional cultivation of attention.

1. Training the Master (RH)

Practices focus on shifting the mode of attention from narrow-beam to broad-beam:

- **Immersion in the Implicit:** Engaging with **art, music, and nature** without immediate attempts to label, categorize, or analyze. Allowing the experience to be what it is, non-verbally.
- **Embodied Cognition:** Practices like **mindfulness, and movement (e.g., prayers etc)** that anchor attention in the present, embodied moment, bypassing the LH's obsession with planning and memory.
- **Metaphorical Thinking:** Prioritizing and valuing **metaphor, analogy, and narrative** as true carriers of complex meaning, rather than dismissing them as mere rhetorical devices.

2. Accessing the Spiritual Function

These practices cultivate the sense of non-dualistic unity:

- **Non-Dual Meditation:** Techniques aimed at direct apprehension of the ground of being, transcending the subject-object split that the LH creates (cf. one practice that may be recommended, for instance: Lord's Prayer in Aramaic, and also a prayer for forgiveness³).
- **Service and Generosity:** Engaging in action that consciously dissolves the boundary between self and other, cultivating the direct experience of shared humanity and interconnected fate.
- **Cultivation of Awe:** Intentional exposure to experiences that evoke **awe** (e.g., stargazing, confronting natural majesty), which is a deep RH and Spiritual function that collapses the narrow-focus, ego-driven LH perspective.

³ [Ho'Oponopono Hawaiian Prayer For Forgiveness | Daphne Flores | OmFrequency](#)

3. Integrating the Emissary (LH)

The key is using the LH for its intended purpose: **articulation and execution in service to wisdom**.

- **"Intuition First" Protocol:** When facing a complex decision, one should dedicate time to quiet, non-analytical contemplation to allow the RH to form an initial, holistic judgment (the **Intuitive Hypothesis**). Only *then* should the LH be deployed to rigorously analyze, articulate, and test this insight.
- **The Language of Context:** Using language not merely to categorize and fragment, but to **connect, explain nuance, and build bridges** between concepts, ensuring that the explicit (LH) is always pointing toward the implicit (RH/Spirit).

V. Conclusion: The Path toward Civilizational Health

The Western world stands at a critical juncture, facing crises rooted not in external forces, but in an internal, self-inflicted cognitive imbalance. McGilchrist's work provides the neurological map of this peril. The framework of Intuilytics offers the cognitive path to balance. And the advanced model of *Homo Intuilytics-Spiritus* provides the necessary ultimate context—the spiritual grounding—to ensure that our recovered balance is used for true human and planetary flourishing.

The challenge is a call to maturity: to move beyond the childish, reductive certainty of the Emissary and return the governance of our minds and our civilization toward the balanced authority of the Master, guided by the ultimate, unifying context of the Spirit. This is the only path to a civilization that is not just brilliant, but wise, humane, and sustainable. The fate of our species may well depend on our ability to evolve our mode of attention—to finally become the complete human being, *Homo Intuilytics-Spiritus* (if you wish, we can call this new term: *spirintuilytics*⁴).

References

- [1] Mc Gilchrist, I., *The Master and his emissary: The divided brain and the making of the Western World*. Yale University Press (2009).
- [2] Beauregard, M., and Denyse O'Leary. *The spiritual brain*. Jakarta: Penerbit Obor (2009).
- [3] Christianto, Victor, *et al.* "How to balance the intuitive and analytical function of the human brain". *EC Neurology* 11.7 (2019): 495-499.

⁴ See our companion article (in this journal, SGJ).

- [4] Christianto, Victor and Florentin Smarandache. “Exploring the Historical Debates on Irrational Numbers Using Neutrosophic Logic as a Balance between Intuition and Rational”. *EC Neurology* 13.6 (2021).
- [5] Dennis P Allen Jr. “The reality-oriented mathematician: A memoir”. (A short book) - Available at ResearchGate (2019).