

If we do not wish to be coerced by fatal disasters into changing our way of living and our political goals, we urgently need to analyse the global developments concerning life on this planet.

By so doing we will arrive at a theory which is in harmony with nature and which people can relate to - which due to its inherent plausibility will be attractive enough to form the starting point for purposive action.

THE VISION OF WHOLENESS

A vision of Life's continuity

by Wolfgang Fischer

In outlining this vision [I] and showing up its roots and inherent connections [II] I hope to make it easy to relate to and thus bring it closer to concrete realisation. The assertions here presented are open to being either refuted or confirmed. Both Religion and the Natural Sciences, each claiming to pronounce truth in their respective domains, are called upon to advance constructive contributions, as is each individual seeking to comprehend the meaning of Humanity or Being Human.

(I)

It is a vision of man and woman cooperating as equals, a vision of an end to the lack of feeling that marks the patriarchal system all over the world. It is a vision of the emergence of empathy concerning the value of living together, a vision of the beginning of global cooperation.

It is a vision of the end of a deadly power struggle which is still being excused with the argument that fighting for reproductive advantage were a natural animal instinct (whilst on the other hand man imagines himself as being far superior to the animals and no longer determined by Nature!).

In this vision humans rediscover their predestined human identity. After millennia of seemingly being cut off, they at last find peace not only amongst each other but as well with Nature as such. Furthermore, through realising the deadly threat to all higher life forms in consequence of an inhumane system of values and aspirations, they are forced to expand their mental horizon.

The morbid conception of 'being-separate-from-each-other', of 'being-different-from' or 'superior-to' others, with all its deadly consequences, is the result of a bipolar friend/foe, black/white, good/evil mentality - an initial stage of the human maturing process which needs to be left behind. From the starting point of human diversity each individual is able to make their own and special contribution to "the Whole".

The recognition of the common origin of all planetary life forms and the knowledge that identical physical laws apply to the entire universe will lead us to an acceptance of our own specifically human responsibility.

The act of humans ceasing to hand over their own responsibility to "Fate" or "Divine Will" spells the end also for the impotence of

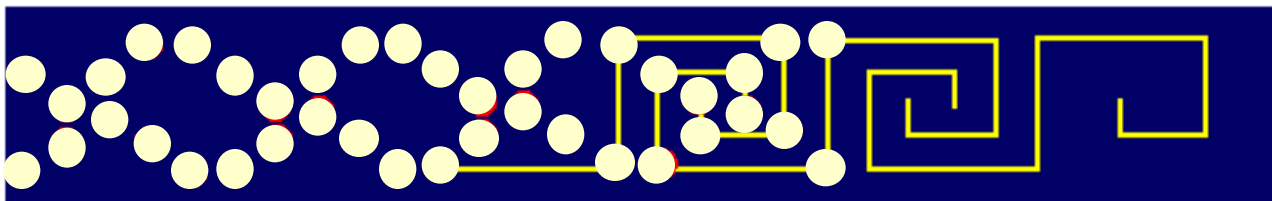
the oppressed. The conscious rejection of the principle of domination and power in favour of universal cooperation in the interest of all will release a much-needed potential which is so far only being misused for propping up the entrenched unfairness system called "world economic order".

This is a system which, in the name of humanity or supposed progress - if not a misunderstood 'divinely willed natural order' -, materially benefits and enriches a minority at the expense of a global increase in poverty and homelessness, and in which an increasing variety of life forms is falling prey to rampant greed for profit and power.

In its morbid delusion this unfairness system goes so far as to imagine itself being without an alternative! In this way it is trying to raise itself to the level of the Divine: as being unique in its goodness and demanding unconditional faith. By its High Priests in the International Monetary Fund, in the W.T.O., the World Bank, the World Economic Forum, the E.U. and other organisations, Capital is being chosen as the one and only Saviour, and by its vassals, the politicians of the various nations, empowered to displace the growing disposition towards social responsibility.

Social responsibility is the result of a historical development from the beginnings of rational thought via the catchphrase "liberté - égalité - fraternité!" up to efficient social systems caring for the sick, the elderly and the needy. The fact that this responsibility, long since achieved in the wealthy nations through persistent struggle, has of late been totally subjected to Capital's striving for profit maximizing, must be regarded as a huge step backwards. In the guise of neo-liberalism and globalisation, the elitist beneficiaries of Capital are gambling away humanity's achievements of the last centuries. Nor is anyone safe any longer from the machinations of these international profiteers: the social situation of those living on the fringe - the majority of the world's population - is becoming increasingly desperate.

Amid the general impoverishment, ideas like subsidiarism and solidarity are gaining a foothold. They relate to wholistic, pre-patriarchal traditions where, as is the case today, women were bearing the main burden of social survival - with the decisive difference that in those times, unlike today, their achievement was universally recognised.



(II)

The meander has been known for ages in many cultures as a symbol for the sequence of generations. Its corner points give an inkling of the genetic substance DNA. Apart from the well-known analogy of meander and DNA in regard to content, the drawing gives an indication of their hidden structural analogy. Only through science a few decades ago uncovering the molecular structure of the DNA has the information hidden within the meander become

understandable.

Mysterious and confusing as Nature and our existence may appear, their complexity should not deter us from looking out for clear and simple connections. In the following I shall try to draw attention to some of these basic inherent connections so we can perceive their meaning and deduce from it some kind of orientation for the future.

Building upon elementary physical forces, basic laws and constants we can observe a development from the simple to the mani-

fold and complex: from the basic components of matter and energy, the quarks, leptons, bosons via the protons, neutrons, electrons right up to the atomic structure of the elements, - from the individual atoms up to the crystal or metal structure, from the individual atoms up to the molecular structure of the genetic substance DNA, - to the tissue structures of the plant and animal kingdom, and also from the individual atoms up to the physical and psychological structures of humans: - the development always runs from the simple to the highly complex.

As these examples show, the development from one step to the next not only results in a "more", but always as well in a "more and different". Besides quantity it is also quality which develops. In this general given context, the view that such a development of increasing quality and complexity should end with humans seems rather naive.

Notwithstanding the variety apparent in the individual elements of the total development - both in the temporal sequence and horizontally at any given time -: all of them are subject to the same universal laws. With regard to life as such, a further unifying factor may be observed, namely, the passing on of information from one individual to another through the physical structures of the DNA.

The highly complex molecular structures of the genetic information from the beginning of Life up until today are to a large part identical, and where they do differ, still compatible. In the debates about genetic technology this aspect has so far remained unnoticed. The arbitrary artificial changing of sequences of genetic information may quite possibly render such information incompatible with regard to the manipulated sections. The consequences for Life as such are totally unforeseeable. Nor is anything known about the metabolism of - be it manipulated or not - DNA absorbed via the food chain.

Life has been directed from its beginnings by the information stored within the molecules of the DNA. With the development of the central nervous system, in particular the neurons in the brain as well as the cerebrum, it created for itself a new medium capable of learning. To begin with, the high point of this development was the formation of Instinct.

The DNA is undoubtedly subject to the physical laws of nature, and the same may be said of animal instinct. Spontaneous alterations such as mutations will either prove their worth within the system of the Whole by enriching it, or else, where they endanger the foundations of living together, will soon eliminate themselves. Instinct not only serves the preservation of the individual but also that of the entire species and, over and above this, the living together in nature.

A most vital new phenomenon came about through the continuing development of the human brain is the emergence of free will. This has created a completely novel situation. For the first time in history there exists a creature who on the one hand by its very nature is totally subject to the natural laws but on the other hand is not readily willing to acknowledge this. Nature is thereby taking an extremely high risk, endangering its very own existence.

However, through its learning process covering thousands of years the newly emerging human being has gained the opportunity through steady growth in knowledge and awareness to develop its intrinsic human-ness. By experience humans are able to learn to understand, accept and observe all those laws which serve the maintenance of their own existence as well as the continuance of life around them. Through the continued growth of the cerebrum in the anthropoids, an immaterial medium of information has arisen in man. On the mental level we here find in close competition the various stages of consciousness, rational thought, the languages, the cultures, ideologies and religions.

Besides the expansion of creativity the freedom from being guided by the DNA or by instinct has also had a most negative effect. It paves the way for trouble arising from ignorance which, as is shown by the dark side of history up to the present day, may even culminate in wilful destruction. The separation from the state of securely being guided if not controlled in the interest of the living Whole (Fromm calls it 'biophilia') creates in man a kind of vacuum. This inner emptiness can later take the form of an 'emotional

deficit' if at birth certain primary natural needs of the young human are no longer being fulfilled. Whereas all animals, even our nearest relatives in the animal kingdom, instinctively know how to behave, we alienated humans, far removed from the natural knowledge of ancient cultures, no longer realise that the trauma of birth needs to be alleviated through continuous close touch between the parent and the new-born infant. The pain of being separated from being one with the mother, from the accustomed warmth, the accustomed comforting sounds of the mother's breathing and heartbeat, can prevent a positive imprint in the new-born. Moreover, the sense of being alone, oftentimes covered over by crying and whimpering, leaves no room for the innate instinctual trust to develop. The development of a healthy sense of social belonging is impeded and the experienced deprivation may cause the natural need for support and security to degenerate into the extremes of anxiety, greed, addiction or emotional frigidity ('necrophilia', as Fromm calls it).

With humankind's freedom there emerged for the first time an energy capable of independent thought. It forever confronts us with the essential choice: Will I be in alignment with the system of Nature, or in opposition to it?

The more human individuals in the interest of their continued growth manage to stop staring at partial achievements and particular interests manifested in the course of history, the more closely they remain aligned to their inner centre where they will regain the vision of the Whole. Many indigenous societies intuitively master this technique of letting go. Their trance experiences induced through dancing, drugs or meditation have a centering effect through connecting and harmonising the rational, more recently evolved aspect of being-human with the, in the history of the species more ancient, emotional one.

In the process of human living and learning, joy and well-being are our rewards, whereas suffering, neediness and pain constitute important warnings of developments going wrong.

Human reasoning's tendency to consider as absolute what are only partial findings, the stagnation of knowledge through dogmatism as well as greed for power at all costs are the obstacles blinding us with regard to what needs to be done. They impede the further development of humanity and its ability to find a way out of the self-created predicament. For as long as discomfort and pain are suppressed or subordinated to special interests, no wrong course of action will be corrected and dead-end paths will continue to be pursued. In pursuit solely of our own interests we fail to notice the suffering we humans have been, and still are, causing on this planet. Were this not so, we would all be screaming with pain, non-stop, and would devote all our energies to a closure of this quarry of death that we call life.

In the context of these ideas it seems plausible to assume that the products of rational thought, our ideas right up to the various world views and ideologies, must also be subject to those laws which brought them into being. Whatever is being thought can no longer be a matter of indifference. The quality of our thinking directly affects the quality of our life. Culture and philosophy, ideology or religion - in view of the complex interrelationships coming to light, their teachings and assertions must be able to be assessed with the wellbeing of the totality of Nature in mind. No longer can they live in conceited isolation with impunity, without negative consequences for everyone involved. For these days, the human potential transcends all boundaries. There is no longer any place on this planet that remains unknown and thus safe from humans.

With regard to the social dimension this poses an urgent task for alienated humanity. Unless it wants to forego its own basis of living - or better: survival, it will need to learn to adapt to the continuity of Nature as a unified Whole.

There is as yet no generally accepted blueprint for a society committed to safeguarding the Whole, not to mention its survival. The hierarchical structures of the world's population continue to serve solely particularised interests of certain individuals or individual groups. In this endeavour they even turn a blind eye to the large-scale destruction of their own species and its base for survival. This has widely led to a general condemnation of hierarchies. As long as they continue to disregard the welfare of the Whole, failing

to secure for it a viable future whilst pursuing their individual concerns at others' expense, they lack all credibility: they will need to be resisted and changed.

Humanity alone is free to serve that "vital system", the Earth - the rest of Nature, lacking free will, is fixated to it through genetic or instinctual imprint.

The full potential of human creativity will only unfold in voluntary ("freely willed") service to the Whole. This does not mean that the overcoming of human destructiveness through the voluntary limiting of our free will must necessarily result in empty boredom. Certainly there will be less waste of time with products of a leisure industry subservient to the whims of consumers at the cost of precious resources and a clean environment. However, the gain will undoubtedly be an improved quality of life as well as more spare time through more meaningful work. Time which will then be used for relaxed idleness or active meditation, for conscious rest as well as responsible enjoyment or cheerful celebration in joyous harmony with others.

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Ethics today must create a moral impact capable of over-hauling the political system!

Without information and analysis of the comprehensive dimensions of a patriarchal project (1) which has lasted for more than 5000 years, the anthropological mystery will remain unresolved and the following question will remain unanswered: „why are people acting against their very own interests of survival?“, all of which, as a consequence, make global Holocaust increasingly likely.

The insanity of normality (2) is the consequence of a thinking reduced to black and white contrasts; finally this insanity is the expression of an intellectual separation of the death-drive from the life-drive (3). Only mankind alienated from natural coherence of life and existence is ready to sacrifice his own life together with mother Nature's to Mammon, just for the sake of continued existence of capitalism, the youngest off-spring of the patriarchy.

Today's ethics threaten to lose sight of this anthropological mystery. As long as ethics fatally and simply fade it out of perception, ethics cannot contribute any solution. Separating people into good and evil thus remains unquestioned; it becomes allegedly natural and is hardly even discussed. The profound and cryptic character of the ‚cultural creating process‘ of patriarchy is not being broadly discussed by scientists. A proper understanding of human nature is consequently lost in the web of tensions of complex and secondary interests.

That is why today a destructive dynamics akin to necrophilia is able to present itself as a new world order. In comparison to the deadly arrogance of decision makers of modern societies even the wildest animal appears to be completely harmless.

An increasing cold lack of compassion can be detected like a thread running from the Mongolian assaults, through the extermination of indigenous populations in all corners of the planet, through the annihilation by the Inquisition of our valuable know-how about nature so particularly deadly for women and through industrial killing of Jews pursued by the Nazis, right up to today's systematic exploitation of mankind and nature by corporate globalization.

Up to now, a lack of empathy consigned the satisfaction of the human social drive to obscurity in its global dimension: existence and the vital necessity of a human social drive has been virtually drowned in a deceitful error which excessively highlights the alle-

ged ‚holy grail‘ of the pursuit of individual ‚fortune‘. The erroneous quality of such an attitude simply drowns out the union of existence. Instead of solidarity, a ruthlessly competitive society prevails. Instead of natural joy and abundance prevails a system which takes advantage of fear and scarcity. Instead of health, illness prevails. Instead of peace, war.

Let us therefore commemorate the great lifework of the philosopher, sociologist, psycho-analyst and humanist Erich Fromm (4) who shaped the term „biophilia“ and acknowledge this by coming out on the love for life! Jointly with Wilhelm Reich, many more scientists and the majority of indigenous peoples at all times from all over the world Erich Fromm in contrast for example to the wide-spread teachings of Sigmund Freud exactly understood that the drive of life is the one and only autonomous force of life in the cosmos. It is creative by Nature. Dysfunctional motivations and desires as shown by history are inherent to this civilisation which makes a general well-being impossible. They are of secondary nature, that means they are mere consequences of alienated human thought and deeply inhuman conduct of life. Those never can be satisfied and consequently entail the well known insatiability of affected people, their nations and cultures. Violence, blood and thunder, suicide, war together with destruction of the fundamentals of life are a proof which can no longer be ignored.

In front of these cannibalistically appearing tendencies it is plain ignorance in the service of capital which today permeates all social strata and sacrifices the many hard-won social achievements to the neo-feudal god of the global market.

An ethics, which truly seeks to meet its own standards cannot ignore the complexity of this topic and must not flinch from demands to replace the system! A truthful ethics would liberate itself from the totalitarian clutches of power-strategists and clearly place itself on the side of life. We all, to whom life is dear and valuable, should support and promote this process of emancipation by engaging in it and by making our opinions known wherever we feel concerned (5). We can no longer leave ethics just to scientific specialists in universities, but we simple people must instead prove to be the actual promoters of an ethics and a conduct of life, which are neither corruptible nor subject to any Zeitgeist!

Footnotes:

(1) - Claudia von Werlhof, „Ökonomie, die praktische Seite der Religion“ - Wirtschaft als Gottesbeweis und die Methode der Alchemie - Zum Zusammenhang von Patriarchat, Kapitalismus und Christentum, in Ursula Marianne Ernst, Luise Gubitzer, Angelika Schmidt (Hg): Frauen, Forschung und Wirtschaft, Ökonomie M(m)acht Angst, Band 7, Peter Lang, Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1997

- Claudia von Werlhof, Patriarchat als ‚alchemistisches System‘. Die (Z)Ersetzung des Lebendigen, in Maria Wolf (Hg): Optimierung und Zerstörung. Intertheoretische Analysen zum menschlich Lebendigen, Sozial- und Kulturwissenschaftliche Studientexte Band 3, Studia Universitätsverlag Innsbruck, 2000

- Claudia von Werlhof, „Schöpfung aus Zerstörung?“ Die Gentechnik als moderne Alchemie und ihre ethisch-religiöse Rechtfertigung, in W. Baier (Hg): Gentechnik, Einführung und Kontroversen, Graz 1997

(2) - Arno Gruen, Der Wahnsinn der Normalität - Realismus als Krankheit, eine Theorie der menschlichen Destruktivität, dtv 1999

(3) - Bernd Senf, Die Wiederentdeckung des Lebendigen, Erforschung der Lebensenergie durch Reich, Schauburger, Lakhovsky u.a., Omega, 2003

(4) - Erich Fromm, His Life's Work

(5) - Kurt Singer, Zivilcourage wagen - Wie man lernt, sich einzumischen, Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, Neuausgabe 2003!

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