



Commentary

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The Rise and Fall of *Homo sapiens*

Michael Gurevitz*

Department of Plant Molecular Biology and Ecology, Tel Aviv University, Israel

*Corresponding author: Michael Gurevitz, Department of Plant Molecular Biology and Ecology, George S. Wise Faculty of Life Sciences, Tel Aviv University, Ramat Aviv 69978, Tel Aviv, Israel

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Introduction

The spread and dominance of man-kind on Earth are attributed to his developed brain and cognitive abilities, which enabled social and cultural achievements, as well as raised metaphysical questions about the universe and place of our species in this creation. In parallel, technological advancements and aspirations of reaching to the stars, filled humanity with pride and corroborated the idea that the human species is still 'young' and may further develop and distribute in the universe. However, further scrutiny suggests that this self-gratification is over-stated in light of present and forthcoming uncertainties.

Utopic World Peace Versus Total Chaos - Two Irrational Alternatives

Selective pressures are the driving forces behind animal and human development, behavior, and constant struggle for survival by competing over resources and gene transfer to the next generations. Despite their physical limitations, humans were highly competent raising technologies and means for hunting, growing their food, proliferate, and acquire spiritual and cultural abilities. Establishment of a scale-of-values with educational, moral, and ethical rules had substantial impacts on human societies raising hopes for a bright and peaceful future. However, as these spiritual advancements turned toward mystic ideas about the existence of a universal superpower (God), responsible for the creation of the universe and selection of humanity to lead and control Earth (the various religions), humanity approached a stagnated developmental phase. The limited understanding of the origin of cosmic matter and emergence of life; the wonders and power of nature; and the obvious fears of the unknown and death have evidently buttressed these mystic ideas providing a golden opportunity to minor groups of 'sanctified mediators' to control the frightened masses [1]. From this point on, God was described as an unapproachable 'heavenly mysterious creator', that for some unexplained reason created humanity to witness his power and achievements. Although the current main religions are considered most advanced compared to

previous mystic beliefs, their main objective remained satisfaction of God via a variety of customs and rituals, that imposed tight behavioral frames strengthening the authority of the sanctified mediators, their wealth, and their control over people. Although the developing human society with increasing spiritual abilities and improved educational systems teach children the differences between good and evil with the objective to establish better social relationship, let them know their civil rights, lift the oppression over women and minorities, avoid unnecessary struggles and fighting, and increase the tolerance to others, the 'dream' to establish an utopic world of love and peace almost dissipated. Even obvious needs to maintain our species and protect nature and Earth from man-born disasters have not been realized. Instead, we witness now-a-days a chaotic reality of nationalism, aggression and war, continuous fighting over resources, control and political power, and massive destruction of the environment. As much as this path may seem illogical to an outsider, recovery is almost impossible due to several putative reasons: One is the fact that despite the spiritual progress we still maintain evolutionary animal traits and urges; Another may be the imbalance between the limited progress in mind and humanism of world leaders and the highly advanced technology that is far beyond their understanding, and so they may precede unintentionally our extinction (e.g., nuclear weapons; vicious engineered microorganisms); In addition, there is a limit of world resources to suffice the needs of the overgrown world population, which would worsen the competition and fights for survival [2]. Overall, the present chaos is an evident consequence of selective pressures that govern any rationale and dictate our life, and so in a reality of limited resources, fights will probably never end. Rather than expect an utopic world of peace, we should probably be prepared to a continuous aggression, competition, wars, cruelty, and increasing chaos [3]. We can only hope that this 'boiling' reality won't expedite our extinction in the near future.

Human History as an Intergalactic Show

The developed brain and cognitive abilities alienated humans from all other animals, and instigated, among a variety of survival



advantages, philosophical thoughts about the essence of life; the limited perceptiveness of our mind; attempts to understand the meaning of soul; as well as enabled a spiritual creation of a heavenly-superpower (God). Another distinctive human characteristic is great curiosity regarding our history, place in the surrounding world, and relationships with nature. As part of the desire to broaden their knowledge, people explore their environment and watch and study animal behavior. No wonder, then, that TV programs and movies about wildlife and animal fights over resources and survival are common and quite attractive. In these movies and shows, physical power, competing strategies, and killing (for prey and defense) are an integral part of wildlife, yet, some of these aspects are also part of human life. This is reflected on competitions in sports (e.g., boxings, hand-to-hand combats), on daily concerns, and in fights over resources (e.g., wars between nations or individuals). These similarities demonstrate the resemblance of human behavior to the behavior and instincts of other animals despite the evolutionary distance. To satisfy the human tendency for aggression, competition, and fighting, the Romans established and cherished the gladiators' fights and built special arenas (e.g., the Colosseum in Rome). Astoundingly, such kind of bloodshed has not totally dissipated as is exemplified in the popular Spanish custom

of matadors killing bulls for public amusement. Hence, humanity has not developed only toward peaceful life, spiritual enlightening, mercy and compassion, as people still maintain common animal urges of fighting, competing, and killing. Not only that this conclusion is disappointing, it may seem irrational to an outsider asking why do they destroy themselves and their life-supporting planet? Consequently, it raises an unbearable thought that human aggressive life and behavior, which resemble in a way the Colosseum shows, but on a much greater scale, could theoretically entertain an imaginary intergalactic audience. We can just hope that this dramatic show will not end with total extermination of its participants [4] or revert humanity to the Stone Age.

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