

.....

In view of the impending war on the population of Iraq, I dare make public world-wide my June 2001 paper on the "Sustainability of Humanity." It reiterates my appeal to Germany to make an offer of reunification to Israel in order to avoid the

SECOND HOLOCAUST.

The survival of Isreal is at stake again. So is the survival of the majority of young people on the planet if no one – not even Saddam Hussein – dares to give them a survival guarantee like Lampsacus, hometown of mankind on the Internet.

I am fearing – along with Nelson Mandela and the Pope – that the suffering majority might rise up against the rich European-descent minority in desperate violence in response to the planned assault – which would then serve as an excuse for the second holocaust (on the majority). This prospect is currently accepted as being potentially unavoidable by a silent near-majority of the minority – just as the impending first holocaust was in Germany in the 1930's (as Einstein sensed). The memory of the children murdered in the first holocaust (to whom I have a prsonal relationship) gives me the authority to speak up.

All

WOMEN OF THE WORLD

who love the next generation join me in my appeal. In particular, Jeannette Fischer of Zurich, Switzerland, and the Hatsabe children of Tanzania are joining-in.

I also thank René Talbot of the Irrenoffensive Germany, who organized the last Foucault Tribunal, and the Evangelical Students' Parish Munich for moral support.

Tubingen, February 19, 2003

Otto E. Rossler
Chaos Professor

Sustainability of Humanity

Otto E. Rossler
Division of Theoretical Chemistry,
University of Tübingen,
Auf der Morgenstelle 8, 72076 Tübingen, F.R.G.

ABSTRACT

The sustainability of humanity is a topic that exceeds the powers of any individual. Thus it is easy to treat since one cannot do it justice anyhow. It is proposed to break the topic down into three parts, the force of science, the force of technology, and the force of the Buddha (or Messiah) nature. A combination of all three efforts is advocated.

(June 16, 2001)

1. Introduction

Sustainability of humanity refers, with one of its two meanings, to the question of whether a humane attitude can be defined and maintained in principle. Strangely, the second meaning (survival of humankind) depends on the answer to the first question. So, maybe the main question is: What is a humane attitude?

A humane attitude is the avoidance of cruelty. Animals cannot avoid cruelty because they do not know what cruelty is. So they also cannot be inhumane. Being human therefore seems to have to do with the knowledge of what cruelty is and how it can be avoided. Cruelty is if personal dignity is violated.

Can personal dignity be defined? And, if so, can cruelty always be avoided, especially on a global level? We live in a period of transition. Almost all people who are going to live a hundred years from now will be the descendants of the great majority of young people who inhabit the planet today. Strange enough, this overriding importance of the young majority is not in the consciousness of the opinion-makers and world mass media of our day. This amounts to the existence of a major global "repression" phenomenon (in the sense of psychoanalysis). One could, therefore, infer that the question of the sustainability of humanity is a modern taboo, perhaps *the* modern taboo.

2. The Genius of Paulus

There was once a charismatic, Buddha-like person living in the holy land whose dignity was violated in a cruel act of execution. A second charismatic person of the same period, who had lived abroad and possessed only second-hand information about the deplorable act itself, suddenly saw (as if in a lightning) the chance for turning

this knowledge into a motor on behalf of the survival of humanity. The postulate of justice having an inalienable place allowed him to convince the hearts of many millions of persons over time that cruelty must and can be avoided. A similar beneficial effect had been spread by a Nepalese saint half a millenium earlier, and was to take form again around an Indian saint, almost two millenia later. In the case of Buddha and Gandhi, the surviving traces of their souls are at the root of their influence.

In the case of Jesus too, his “brother” Martin Buber very much later sensed an unmistakable voice in the extant (post-contemporaneous) reports, as few as they may be. However, there is also this “second ingredient,” invented by Paulus. The greatest moving power originating from the executed innocent person came, not from what he had said or done, but from the fact that an innocent person was executed. This is something that *must not* happen among persons. The riddle of such cruelty occurring is so great that, if it has taken place among humans, it calls for the greatest elaborations to be reconciled with the human self-image. A time-honored way of rationalizing the human desire for a humane world is the older biblical idea of a latter-day Jacob (the so-called Messiah). The “bi-sociation” (A. Koestler) of putting these two elemrnts together was made by Paulus.

Is a science of the Messiah possible?

3. The Most Recent Messiah and the Danger of the Second Holocaust

Mankind is perplexed. There is the bomb on the one hand and there is a maximal inequality of wealth and human dignity as far as a minimum livelihood and medical care is concerned, on the other. But there is no world government in existence and there is no consensus toward installing one. Can humanity be defined, and can humanity, as a consequence of this definition, be sustained?

In the following, it will be argued that science can do this. In addition, there exists a simple method how to engineer the survival of dignity on the planet. Nevertheless, both these means currently at our disposal are, perhaps, not enough. A force is needed that sweeps the other two into the forefront of our consciousness. The discovery made by Paulus may be needed to do the job.

The third force – besides understanding and providing – is a turnabout of the heart. In the following, all three forces will be described briefly.

a) The First Force

The first force is knowledge. Can we know about humanity and dignity? The answer is, we can. Humans are persons.

Humans are biological organisms with biological brains. The function of the latter can be understood both in biological and in mathematical terms. There exist other, some of them mightier, brains on the planet that may (or may not) share one property with the brains of their human counterparts: personhood. So far, no non-human person has been discovered – despite the ancient claim of white-elephant saints existing. The conditions

for finding them or, perhaps, creating them can, nevertheless, be indicated (whales and dolphins and corvids like the magpie and great apes and elephants, even giant octopuses, are potentially eligible).

The theory of personhood was greatly influenced by the child psychiatrist René Spitz, who discovered “hospitalism.” Well-fed infants in an institution died. Attachment and bonding are the strongest forces in early childhood, but surprisingly, also in later life. The human smile signals both bonding and happiness. This is a unique combination amongst primates (J. van Hooff). Moreover, the French pathologist Bichat discovered long ago that starving human infants (who are already virtual skeletons) retain the fatty sponge in their cheeks even though they could effectively prolong their survival through metabolizing it. But then, they could no longer smile at their mothers.

The whole human species can be looked at – with its soft naked skin and its well-rounded pairs of buttocks and breasts – as a species exhibiting “multiple self-mimicry” on the theme of the two cheeks that, apparently, founded mankind in evolution.

The indistinguishability of the smile of happiness (exhilaration) and the smile of friendliness (bonding) contains the seed for a “misunderstanding” on the level of two interacting individuals. This misunderstanding, which is no misunderstanding in the end, generates personhood. More specifically, this misunderstanding turns an autistic grin-bearing animal into a considerate and thoughtful person. This interactional process (a so-called bifurcation or function change in the sense of R. Rosen) is amazingly hard to describe mathematically, although every toddler becomes fully competent in this mathematical game. It is almost as if the adults of mankind had difficulty, for hundreds of millennia already, to re-fathom what they knew all too well as small children.

Let me try to give you a glimpse of the interactional catastrophe (in the good, mathematical sense of the word) that occurs. A happy child is charming. The charmed mother then smiles too – but not because she is momentarily attached but because the witnessed charm makes her happy (as a reward for successful mothering). It is this latter component which is so dangerous as the source of a potential misunderstanding. Without it, nothing but a prolonged “bonding bout” would occur – a celebration of friendship. But the mother, too, has cheeks and breaks out into a broad smile when happy herself. Her merely happy smile is mistaken by the infant for friendliness. So the child is mistakenly led to reinforce the mother’s happiness whenever there is a way. When she notices that, she is “moved” (or touched, as the technical term goes). She falsely believes the child wants to make her happy, even though he only wants to get at her charm source as it were. The same thing takes place symmetrically. Both mistake the other’s egoism for altruism. Strangely, the very idea of benevolence on the other side creates benevolence. A self-fulfilling prophecy occurs. So an act of creation-out-of-nothing can be witnessed. “I am because I am” is one of the most frightening sentences in one of the oldest books of mankind.

Is the creation genuine or not? It is genuine.

b) The Second Force

After a bleeding-heart story from the science of benevolence, we turn to another bleeding-heart story – that of Lampsacus, “hometown of mankind on the Internet”. This time, the computer (which is also the model for explicit brain equations in coupled optimizers and their bifurcations) is the technical culprit. The “WohlWollensWelt” (benevolence world) or “www” of Tim Berners-Lee makes it possible to date to create a world-wide resource vastly superior to what any individual little country could provide for its own citizens in the past regarding the supply of free information and education and good advice, at a comparable cost. Since the costs are virtually negligible (some ten billion dollars suffice for a permanent installment), it is very hard to see a reason why it should not be installed – and why it should not have been installed already during the past seven years after it was first proposed.

There are some interesting technical challenges (like the multi-level lexicon) which would greatly aid in the progress of science itself. At the same time, everyone who discovers something new would have an automatic forum to offer it to the world community. The greatest boom of science is hence preprogrammed. Nevertheless, apparently a “good excuse” is needed for jumping over the shadow of installing this instrument in earnest. This brings us to the topic of the third force.

c) The Third Force

You already know what I am up to say. My mentioning of Paulus was too conspicuous. The natural next step, historically, is of course the “Holocaust Messiah”.

About one million children were processed in a murderous factory, all at least as innocent and moving as the adult child-like Jew named Jesus. If there is a good voice in the off, anywhere, whether you call it G.D or Buddha, he will call these souls his children.

One could also put it all more soberly in terms of a theory of evil. Evil was not touched upon above (except when the word “cruelty” was mentioned). Evil and cruelty are the same thing. Evil is the actively and consciously denied right to appeal a decision on the part of another person that is unbearable for you as its victim. While we saw how Good was invented, evil was never ever invented. It only spreads through contagion. It also makes use of the principle of justice, but in a different way. It says: “It would be unjust if you were treated any better than I was.” This is the voice of evil. “Unappealability” is a trait that can only be exhibited by persons who have suffered evil themselves and who consciously or subconsciously want to perpetuate it.

This verdict must be taken with a grain of salt, of course. It is very easy, if you are caught in a tense corner, to explode. Autistic animal-like excusable mistakes are human: But they can always be “made good” again through active acts of exculpation. Misunderstandings are a part of life, but they can be dealt with – if need be, with money. “Tit for Tat” is the slogan. It has nothing to do with evil. Only the irreversible denial of the right to have a voice is evil.

4. The Three Forces, Combined

Today, Palestine as part of the third world, and Israel as part of the first world are in a deadlock, as everybody sees. No re-compensation for the expulsion by those who had been expelled from their right to survive as persons in Europe, is in sight. Why? Because the message of the Holocaust Messiah has not yet made itself heard. The voice of the incredulous murdered children is the strongest voice of history. It says: Germany must make an offer of re-unification to Israel. And: Until this offer is in, Germany promises re-compensation to the expelled Palestinians because it bears the responsibility for their expulsion.

But this is nonsense? The symbols of a heart-felt excuse are never nonsensical. The only way to get rid of evil is to transform it into a source of goodness that strives to be even greater (if this were possible) than the original evil.

The reader will hopefully have seen that the topic just mentioned was not made frivolously, or at least not only frivolously. The proposal made indeed has a paradoxical further consequence which is no less frightening: Should Germany do what the gloomy hearts of all outside onlookers believe to be well-nay impossible, it would suddenly change the fate of the globe. The “sea of tears” that would erupt would sweep away the callousness of virtually all human hearts that is responsible for the unforgivable denial of Lampsacus to the youth of mankind.

5. Discussion

Person rights were first defined in the Enlightenment, by Thomas Jefferson, after even the rights of slaves had already been defined in the Bible. Loss of a tooth from the hand of the master, for example, entailed the gift of freedom. Science is, since Turing, on the verge of creating artificial persons. However, no person can ever be artificial as we have seen, no matter how artificial the hardware. This is because a person becomes a person by inventing the personhood of the other – so as it were for the first time in the history of the universe.

If persons have a right not to be let down, great efforts are demanded on the part of the planetary community. The word solidarity becomes scientifically definable. But is this not Utopia? There exists a positive historical precedent: On the “miniplanet” South Africa where Gandhi had lived, Mandela and de Klerk achieved sustainability, by extending a survival guarantee to the younger generation of the underprivileged majority. Never before had a ruling minority voluntarily relinquished power in a controlled fashion in favor of the human rights of the majority.

The same thing is necessary on a planetary scale to date. A new service on the Internet (project Lampsacus) suffices. Every person who so wishes gets access to all knowledge-type information he or she feels to need – as a human right. Lampsacus predictably becomes the fastest-growing investment and the largest-growing employer because of its assured success. The country or organization or town or individual who implements it brings about the greatest positive change in history. Therefore, it only remains for the international community to decide whether it allows or forbids the installation of hometown (by Bill Gates or the Pope or the Emperor or the Queen or King Saud or the mayor of Jerusalem).

A shortcut to the acceptability of Lampsacus was pointed out above: direct access to the hearts of all “beings of good will.” Hereby science again has a word to contribute. Like goodness, evil can be understood scientifically. It is nagging. Even though it has no face any more, it is begging to be reversed, although this by definition is impossible after the act. A historical person who first exploited this lever for the benefit of the sustainability of humanity was mentioned (the Roman citizen Paulus).

To conclude, the secret love between a mother and her child has been exposed in the hope that the mechanism of creation out of nothing, dealt with by teachers of the past, finds a voice again in modern society. A “galactic mission” is, perhaps, taking hold of the hearts of humankind again. Bonding, as a matter of life and death, is even stronger than another, more well-known human attachment (as war-mongers always knew), but its powers are still untapped as we have seen.

Acknowledgments

I thank George Lasker, Kensei Hiwaki, Wilfried Kriese and Artur Schmidt for their help, and Dietmar Kamper, Jutta Höcht-Stöhr and Ulrich Dettweiler and Rüdiger Tschacher for discussions. For J.O.R.