

Pleas, Plights and Environment: Part II

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Power, Mass Psychology and Environment

The crisis of the environment, viewed as such by men of science, is partly the result of politicians not giving due perspective to the selfish individual, and partly the result of state failure. Governments are charged with the adoption of counter measures but, in practice, may face limitations. At times they are not equipped, in terms of agencies and manpower, to tackle unforeseen man-caused ecological problems (Brown, 1981). Governments must bear their share of responsibility, particularly in developing countries, where the problem of depletion is more pressing. In Brazil's Amazon, for example, legislation demands proof that plots of land donated to migrants do not remain idle. The result is that one of the first things that new owners do is to bulldoze the areas covered with virgin rain-forest, irrespective of cultivation, to guarantee legal possession of the land (Fearnside, 1985).

Profit is a driving force toward the depletion of natural resources in capitalist societies. Fearnside's (1982) plea that "the forces driving deforestation must be addressed if the process is to be understood and controlled" is obsolete. Causes and effects are already mastered. The point is whether there is enough disposition to adopt counter measures and, if so, how best to deploy them.

The roots of the contemporary environmental havoc are not difficult to identify. A fundamental point is to redirect the production of goods while maintaining full employment. Graziano da Silva's (1987) view lays down three guidelines towards

better harmony between man and environment. First, it is necessary to produce new ideologies, from which the rise of novel social conscience follows. Second, the relations established between man and nature should reflect the sort of relations existent between human beings. Third, before new technologies are invented, it is necessary to decide in advance what kind of society man wishes for himself. Thus, philosophy is summoned to deal with the problem. The proposal suggests that absolute knowledge rather than scientific knowledge should prevail, if any solution is ever to be achieved. However, this is dependent on political will which is, in turn, regulated by mass behaviour. It follows that a reversal of behaviour of the relationship with the environment will have to wait for the results of interaction between institutions and masses.

Is there a common point to which the ruling elite and the mass converge? The analysis of the historical social evolution of the elites reveals that there has always been a mutual relationship of convenience between rulers and governed (Bottomore, 1966). It then becomes difficult to conceive any other causal relationship harmonising the interests of both classes, given the view that either the state acts with universal conscious connivance or this is obtained through the spread of state-terror or, alternatively, relies on massive alienation. In the conceptions of Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto ('political class') or Marx ('ruling class'), the elites are always small in number. Their stay in power has, of necessity, to be the result of empathy. Their voicing of dormant wishes of the masses ensures the creation of the needed empathic bond. Thus viewed, such a social relationship of mutual interest is not antagonistic but rather the result of effective introjection regulating mass behaviour. The individual regards the ruler as having

Fig. 1 Plantation of cocoa and banana trees (foreground) with less disturbed patches of Atlantic forest (background) in NE Brazil. This photograph was taken in the municipality of Itabuna, State of Bahia, in August 1985. Bahia's lead in cocoa production explains why this very pleasant landscape spans 400 km of the coastal territory. The cocoa crop demands such a shade habitat to thrive properly.



Fig. 2 The most widespread type of vegetation in NE Brazil, *caatinga*, seen here in the municipality of Acuri, State of Rio Grande do Norte, in August 1985. *Caatinga* is a deciduous and dry vegetation with a dominance of thorny *Acacia* species and many species of cacti. In the semi-arid areas of NE Brazil sizeable patches of *caatinga* still persist, due to the harshness of the climate rather than to conservation measures.

Fig. 3 About one-fifth of the Brazilian territory is covered with the savanna vegetation known as cerrado, seen here in the municipality of Niquelandia, State of Goiás, in March 1982. Huge areas of cerrado have been converted into farmland over the last 25 years, particularly in the states of Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul and Goiás.



Fig. 4 Flat *cerrado* is completely converted to facilitate the use of mechanisation. This stretch once ranged to the horizon and has been cleared to plant soya bean plantations.

materialised what the individual seeks. From this dialectic springs respect and compliance with enthroned powers.

If, as implied, non-coerced creatures can oscillate, making real the prospect of voluntary adhesion, then self-access to enlightenment is prevented. If, as a result, reason gives way to understanding, it follows that there can be no other alienation than that generated by social mores. This is different in its effects on the mind from that supposed to arise from the dialectic imposed by the modes of production. Thus seen, economic alienation is something of a myth.

Pareto's (1966) diagnosis that society has managed to 'rationalize non-logical conduct', precedes 'critical theory' in time and agree of boldness. But, unlike exponents of the 'Frankfurt school', Pareto saw the individual working actively for the maintenance of the *status quo*. His conception that what is 'true' in social matters is often reduced to a bond, in which the hopeless soul is merely embodying the elitist 'sentiments' (Pareto, 1935), uncovers the presence of rampant echolalia amongst the masses.

The reliability and support of the masses for environmental plights are uncertain. The responsibility is thus emphatically shifted to the ruler. The Hobbesian formula equated the state's fallibility leading to the individual's fallibility. Ruling over disputes the sovereign could not fail. This view, associating leadership and wisdom, was further elaborated by Aron (1950). He subsequently postulated that contemporary politics revolves around the 'corruption of power principle' (Aron, 1968). He observes that past vows and pledges succumb in the race for power within institutions (see Gorer, 1966a, on the same theme). The implications of this rationale for the environment are sinister. If the environment can only rely on the state for remedial action, then prospects are bleak.

Support for Aron's views are scattered throughout the literature. Hume's (1952, p.480) scepticism goes straight to the point: "that perfect disinterestedness, so often pretended to, is never expected in individuals". Hobbes' professorial account shows the role of theory in the making of history: "I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death;... and when that is done, there succeedeth a new desire; in some, of fame from new conquest; in others, of ease and sensual pleasure; in others of admiration, or being flattered for excellence in

some art, or other ability of the mind" (from Hobbes, 1968, p.161). Bullock (1962, p.382) gives a disturbing account of the syndrome in modern times: "to say that Hitler was ambitious scarcely describes the intensity of the lust for power and the craving to dominate which consumed him; it was the will to power in its crudest and purest form;... Germany, like everything else in the world, was only a means, a vehicle for his own power;... by its nature this was an insatiable appetite, securing only a temporary gratification by the exercise of power, then restlessly demanding an ever further extension of it". Literature (Ibsen, 1966) and philosophy (Nietzsche's 'the will to power' theory, discussed in Stern, 1978, and Hegel, on the role of 'World-historical individuals', exposed in his lecture 'Lectures on the Philosophy of History', discussed in Bullock, 1962, p.383) further explored this theme. Recent empirical studies shed additional light on the far-reaching penetration of the phenomenon. Although not a case for reductionism, the traits of power and social dominance are equally shared between anthropoids and human beings (Attenborough, 1983; de Waal, 1986; Hand, 1986 and McGrew, 1986). Social dominance is also rampant within the scientific establishment (Albury, 1983; Richardson, 1984).

How far the true aims of rulers stand from the individual's expectation is perhaps best illustrated by a phrase of a contemporary Brazilian politician: "Power is orgasm". This frightening, but illuminating, admission shows that state control and, for that matter, prestige and full-time occupation, is their real target. The ruling class is for the most part concerned with keeping power. The political dialectic of the environment thus ends in stalemate.

Economics, Materialism and Environment

There may be truth in the view that tropical forests should be left untouched if they are to persist (Leslie, 1977). But people depend on further farm land (Plumwood and Routley, 1982) and wildlife meat (de Vos, 1977) to subsist. It is a truism that the people there have to eat. However, what cannot be ignored is that *laissez faire* and bad planning permeate decision-making. This facilitates recourse to social determinism as an explanation for the trouble in official places.

Historical materialism, human population growth and conservation are antagonistic forces which partially depend on the state and, for that

matter, the elites, to be harmonised. Planned demographic control, coupled with increasing industrial employment, could lower the grip on natural resources. However, in industrial societies, the spectre of redundancy is often present.

Migratory agriculture accounts for, respectively, 35, 70 and 40 per cent of the deforestation in tropical zones of America, Africa and Asia (FAO, 1982). What will happen when the natural resources run out and the masses come down to already swollen urban centres in search of bare subsistence?

A programme for birth control is essential if the grip on natural resources in the tropics is to be mitigated. However, as pointed out by Davis (1967), the matter evokes negative responses in people. The culturally-conditioned sociological insistence that "the main purpose of marriage is to replenish the human population of the globe" (Russell, 1929, p.121), or that the happy marriage is that bearing children (Parsons, 1980), further compound an already chronic problem. Besides, in the third world countries, one has to reckon first with the church and the military on such issues. In China, for example, government officials admitted in September, 1988, that the planned stabilisation of the population to 1.2 billion until the year 2000 was being abandoned. The programme worked satisfactorily in the big cities, but failed badly in the country. This is customary for sparsely industrialised countries, for child labour is massively deployed in rural areas.

In the previous section, the view that the humanities regard man's self-estrangement with the environment as the result of failure at self-enlightenment was discussed. Likewise, sequels of this thought seem to hold good for the social curse of this century, *i.e.* a formidable lack of knowledge, absolute and scientific, could be behind much of the 'craving for motherhood'. It may turn out to be not an instinct derived from biological imperatives, but rather a drive, the expression of a mosaic composed of tradition, curiosity, fortuity and compulsion (Hastings, 1976; MacIntyre, 1976; Chodorow, 1978; Shorter, 1982; Hoffnung, 1984; Badinter, 1985). If so, the implications for demography become obvious.

Concern with self-sufficiency is present even in gathering societies, where people fight tooth and nail for their own piece of land (Harlan, 1975). This could be interpreted as evidence of an innate 'germ of capitalism', but more properly, may indicate man's feeling of insecurity. Material

self-sufficiency haunts the mind. The social consequences of this political dialectic are far-reaching. Since the means of production are concentrated either in private hands or under state control, most individuals can no longer resort to nature, as their ancestors did, to ensure subsistence. The individual thus becomes dependent on alien will to satisfy his material needs. This bears serious reflexes on the exercise of the 'freedom of the will', carving deeply into dialectical materialism. However, since the state is a body concerned mainly with itself, the compelling realisation of this historical reality shifts the responsibility for much of the human suffering to the family. The point is whether self-aware family members morally have the right to deliver well-being to the state.

Mass psychology participation, a crucial issue in conservation, is best summed up by the incisive remarks "conservation has not become an activity in which most people have any feeling of interest" and "most people in most places are concerned with keeping alive" (Dasmann, 1979, p.156). The first argument stands for the value set, while the second, a version of dialectical materialism, conveys the notion that the masses will only move if and when immediate material survival is demonstrably linked to an injured environment. Thus, defenders of the battered environment can only count on the state, completing a vicious circle.

The matter of excessive accumulation of capital, with its attendant infliction of variable disarray elsewhere, is best teleologically referred to the social sciences. But are they in the position to reverse so widespread a practice? At issue is not the confirmation or denial of the existence of an animistic 'pathos', granted for the sake of the argument, but the assessment of the real feasibility of reversing a rampant trend.

An example of the stalemate follows. Interviews conducted amongst Argentinian proletarians and capitalists as to their material wishes, displayed their tendency to follow a gradual and 'logical' time sequence. Ambitious 'top priorities' loomed naturally in mind after basic material needs had been fulfilled (Turner, 1976). A step-by-step trend towards material wealth is readily detectable in the study. The doubt remains as to how much of this is 'pathological', and hence explainable by the social sciences. The importance of the study lies in its showing distinct classes sharing common material ideals. Would rhinos be safer from

extinction if fair wages existed in black Africa? How much is a fair wage? Could it be that man, in spite of a fair wage, would still poach big game to increase his income? In Brazil's state of Bahia, coatimundis are killed to prepare an aphrodisiac from their genitals. This is done on the side by rural workers enjoying full-time jobs. A glimpse at the literature (Conway, 1970; Sand, 1979; Anderson, 1984; 1985) shows that the wildlife trade works with quick and easy profit. Poaching is a profession, not a misfortune.

To blame only the capitalist for the ecological crisis is unfair. The everlasting conflict between rich and poor was never waged on principles, but rather on fortuity and fate. Hatred in this setting meant, historically, a wish to replace the lucky fellow, and not to change the ruling structure. Everyday contemplation shows that the needy are fond of luxury.

In the area of goods production, both the capitalist and the workers are united to make the maximum profit. Both share the view that a free trade economy is best regulated by supply and demand. It follows that chance, and not value sets, distinguish the proletarian from the capitalist. Both alike are accountable for the historical ecological crisis. Myers (1983) points out that capitalists and peasants are taking turns in the conversion of tropical forests. Of course, peasants have to make a living. But there is no guarantee that, had they the material means, they would not adopt the same approach to forests that the multi-nationals do. Some migrants in Brazil's Amazonia are attracted by the possibility of quick profit.

The view that the abolition of property would instantly be replaced by other equally malevolent substitutes (Weber, 1983, p.9), is a signal to stop and reflect. The trend to exploit natural resources has never given signs of receding. If a trend shows no indication of abatement, despite the incoming of successive generations, this means that new proselytes, sharing self-identification and common volition, are continuously being enlisted into the main stream.

Man's exploitative attitude towards nature is mainly dictated by needs of subsistence or economic interests. But there are degrees of exploitation, variable from state to state, and from region to region. For instance, the Japanese might have spared the forests in their own country, not because they love nature any more than in the west, but simply because the precarious geological conditions of the country left them no other alternative (Holzner, 1983). In fact, it has

long been public knowledge how eager Japanese corporations are to exploit the forests of south-east Asia, or those of Amazonian Peru and Bolivia, to fuel their economy. Nations will respond to foreign economic proposals of depletion, proportional to their estimates of nature's worth in monetary terms.

The view that mankind encompasses elements for making a single universal state (Toynbee, 1961) is not based on historical records. Similarly, the view that ethnic identity is only culturally generated and based on superstitious beliefs (Shibutani and Kwan 1965, p.589) lacks historical insight. There are empirically-recorded differences between states (Gorer, 1955; Leach, 1982). The reality of independent and distinct social evolution of allopatric human populations (Benedict, 1934; 1971; Brown, 1963; Wilson, 1980), coupled with 'social drift' promoting schisms within the same ethnic stock (Kelley, 1971; Wilson, 1980), reasonably suggests that final expectations of human-made damage to the environment will be patchy. As expressed, "the cynical reader who is familiar with political realities in Latin America may argue that designation of parks and reserves will do little to solve the problem of plant species preservation" (Gentry, 1979, p.124).

Equally inconsistent has been the way nations have reacted to offers of international help for the conversion of part of their foreign debts to environmental projects. Costa Rican parks are already being invaded by migrants (Tangley, 1986). Many Latin American and African countries regard such overtures as a matter of foreign intrusion into their sovereignty.

As discussed earlier, capitalism is all too often blamed for the accelerated conversion of nature's resources. However, diverse historically-rooted cultural and political settings are the active forces responsible for capitalism presenting distinct faces in different countries. Max Weber, for instance, preferred to report on the existence of 'capitalisms' (see Aron, 1970). If one thinks for a moment of the contemporary capitalism practised in most of Latin America, tropical Africa, the United Kingdom, Scandinavia and North America, and the distinct way the environment is treated in each of these places, it becomes evident that societies may be worlds apart, albeit under the patronage of the same economic system. This leads conclusively to the view that the spirit of capitalism reflects the spirit of the state.

The Plight of the Environment *vis-a-vis* Knowledge

The crisis of the environment reflects the failure to foresee, and hence to anticipate, consequences. This is the realm of knowledge. Thus conceived, the ecological disarray exposes a crisis of knowledge. A return to a situation of originality might be obtained in either of two ways: through state-imposed will, thus eliminating multiple value sets, or through individual revisionism (ontological will).

Economic arguments and faulty visionary planning account for a structuralist view of the problem. Much could be gained from draconian state coercion. However, a combination of elusive policy-making will, division of powers, bureaucracy and the convention that society moves along historical materialistic premises, all mitigate against effective progress.

The complementary ontological viewpoint admits innate or acquired components leading to the infliction of harm on nature. It becomes important to discover the state of mind of the dominant species, for much of the fate of the world is tied to it. The idea that innate components exert pressure upon behaviour, negating free will, leads to sociobiology. There might be a congenital sense of non-identification with nature, prompting disrespect for the organic and mineral worlds, leading to generalised exploitation. This frame of mind leaves little space for manoeuvre other than coercion.

Deviant acquired behaviour is the domain of anthropology and psychoanalysis. The 'Boasian paradigm' (Freeman, 1983) that all social behaviour is for the most part culturally-determined, and that genetics is rendered irrelevant to the foundation of personality, shows a remarkable degree of convergence with Freud's psychoanalytical tenets. Although Boasian anthropology and Freudian psychoanalysis can contribute considerably to explain parts of social behaviour, both epistemologies are ill-equipped to subdue deeds, acts of willing. As with sociobiology earlier, these sciences also depend on coercion to harmonise their tenets with being. This is a consequence of their principles. Both set out to explain behaviour without making provision for the fact that words may not suffice to stop actions.

A great deal of the conversion rate being exerted on the environment reflects ill-deployed energy-drives, as will be argued later. This points

to pre-emptive measures as the best strategy to counter undesirable realities. Once again, this depends on the availability of foresight.

What remains unclear is how much of the phenomenon of conversion can be explained by the social sciences. In other words, how much of the phenomenon can be explained by resorting to psychoanalysis, or to socio-biology, or to both? It is impossible to know. Causality in this context is out of reach of experimentation.

The social sciences can no longer avoid the challenge posed by the irrationality in affairs. However, to say that irrational conduct follows from the fact that the mind is over-equipped (Koestler, 1982, p.674) is sheer nonsense. Rather, a breakthrough in attitude will depend both on an increasing recourse to metaphysics and on de-emphasizing socio-graphic orientation. Human sentiments cannot be translated into graphics (Gorer, 1966b). Sociology has the clear mandate to provide the reader with the means to comprehend why phenomena occur (Boudon, 1980). Because it is not known how much of the crisis of the environment can be explained by the social sciences, there is a premonition that something sinister is underway. The stage is set for the acknowledgement of a breakdown of absolute knowledge.

The seemingly naive pleas of conservationists that "the intrinsic value of nature... cannot be proved... but is instead an ethical demand" (Westhoff, 1983, p.21), or "the maintenance of genetic variation is essential for survival... it is biological common sense, and no more" (Frankel, 1978, p.105) are metaphysical precisely because of their seeming naiveté. The message appeals to rationality and, if it sounds pathetic in essence, this is because it implies breakdown of true knowledge on a large scale.

Optimistic pedagogic conservationist messages argue that by educating the public, a more harmonious relationship could be established with the environment. However, they seem to regard the problem in terms of cognition rather than knowledge, *i.e.* it is assumed that rationality can find its way as long as technical information becomes available through scientific knowledge. This standpoint is not supported in this study. Rather, it is felt that a critical scrutiny of the social sciences is more likely to contribute epistemological elements enabling a better understanding of what went wrong in the dealings with the environment. Man's reckoning with determinism cannot dispense an enquiry into

knowledge. But, even here, there persist acute conflicts of interest.

Cartesianism (Descartes, 1968) rejects reflection and metaphysics as factors of knowledge and, in its wake, positivism argues that science ought to replace philosophy, thus banning metaphysics and inductivism from the realm of knowledge (Giddens, 1978).*

Existentialism is even gloomier in the search for knowledge for, after Descartes, it conceives the world as being, albeit irrational and hostile, and advises accommodation (Sartre, 1948; 1965; Heidegger, 1962).

Structuralism looms as the most evil theory of knowledge. Its acceptance is incompatible with enlightenment. To say that the sexual drive is a small component in the decision to get married (Lévi-Strauss, 1971) or that the state is to be blamed for the existence of prostitution (Foucault, 1981) is unreasonable, disregarding both biology and will. In history structuralism advises either accommodation or utter falsehood. "Let us reject the notion of the historian as a hanging judge, and turn to the more difficult but more profitable question of the passing of moral judgements not on individuals but on events, institutions or policies of the past" (Carr, 1961, p.78). "Hitler certainly knew of the Jewish deportations throughout Europe, but certainly not about their fate" (Irving, 1984).

Freud's epistemology of the mind offers clues towards an understanding of non-logical conduct. But psychoanalysis depends on an alien willingness to be effective. Thus, its effectiveness is dependent upon the receptive mind, something in the sphere of probabilities and hence stochastic in principle. This crudely exposes the shortcomings of the discipline as to the problem of determinism (but see last section).

Locke's epistemology conditions access to knowledge to obligatory experience. The older the individual, the better the quality of knowledge. Metaphysics is thus rendered almost irrelevant in Locke's system.** Knowledge and hermeneutics

are intermingled, stated by Locke in a letter to his friend William Molyneux in January 1698: "I know there is truth opposite to falsehood, that it may be found if people will, and is worth the seeking, and is not only the most valuable, but the pleasantest thing in the world" (Dunn, 1984, p.87). The reassessment of Locke's intention shows a convergence with parts of Kantian philosophy, for never has an 'empiricist' statement come so close to Kant's *a priori* knowledge. But the gap soon becomes evident in Locke's use of 'will'. For the search of knowledge does not depend solely upon will, but also on the degree of robustness of the senses. Thus, Locke's regard for will has to be split into two constitutional factors: will as a genetic endowment *per se* and will as a commensurable attribute. It follows that access to knowledge is not a matter of 'wishing' but rather of 'being able'. The fact that the creature may repeat the same painful social experiences, with constitution prevailing over will-power, is a blow to Locke's empiricism. This reality raises Kant's epistemological contribution to one of primacy, for it considers simultaneously experience and the crucial role that the critical and sceptical mind plays on the way to knowledge.

Unlike Locke, Kant considered in great detail the role of volition, condition by innate elements, in his body of doctrine. In Kant's (1979) philosophy, knowledge can arrive solely as a result of the intellect impressing the meaning of objects as 'things in themselves'. Hume's scepticism or Huxley's agnosticism are reminders of man's mental limitations towards absolute knowledge. But in the Kantian proposal this can be over-ruled by the progressive use of metaphysics, thus banning mental inertia if experience is not present. In Kantian philosophy, the full emergence of criticism will depend on the individual's degree of perception and on their will. As such, negation and nonconformism may be regarded as *a priori* knowledge on a level with thinking of objects as 'things in themselves'. This

* It is significant that an exponent of psychology turned to metaphysics after the completion of his major work: "after publication of the *Principles*, James lost interest in 'this nasty, little subject; all one cares to know lies outside it'" (Foreword, James, 1952, p.vi).

** In all fairness, Locke (1974, p.325) approves intuitive knowledge as an epistemological asset. In the *Epistle to the Reader*, he implies that the search for truth is conditioned to will. Like Kant's, his writing is at times ambiguous and hence

misleading. Kant, for example, insists that all knowledge derives from experience, passing himself as an empiricist, but simultaneously develops the full might of rationalist epistemology. The enunciation of his 'objects as things in themselves' and 'objects as phenomena' confirm this interpretation. Kant's (1979, p.16) assertion that "while we surrender the power of 'cognizing', we still reserve the power of 'thinking objects, as things in themselves'", is the strongest overture that philosophy has ever made towards sharing synthesis of knowledge with psychoanalysis.

may explain the presence of distinct social behaviour and warrants the existence, but not necessarily the recognition, of idiosyncratic judgement^{***}

Kant and Hegel for themselves claimed the attainment of true knowledge. Hegel's passage aims at trying to show Kant's failure in this endeavour, and has delighted any Hegelians: "We ought", says Kant, "to become acquainted with the instrument, before we undertake the work for which it is to be employed; for if the instrument be insufficient, all our trouble will be spent in vain... Unless we wish to be deceived by words, it is easy to see what this amounts to. In the case of other instruments, we can try and criticise them in other ways than by setting about the special work for which they are destined. But the examination of knowledge can only be carried out by an act of knowledge. To examine this so-called instrument is the same thing as to know it. But to seek to know before we know is as absurd as the wise resolution of Scholasticus not to venture into the water until he had learned to swim". Quoted in Norman, 1976, p.11).^{****} The paragraph reveals Hegel rejecting Kant's conception of objects as 'things in themselves' and hence denying man's *a priori* rational faculties. His view that to know depends on previous knowledge is misconceived. It recalls the Lockean system and, applied to the field of natural history, the view could allow for the message that man is innately amoral. Hegel embodies the individual who, precluded from taking Kant's path, because of distinct constitutional factors, could not conceive of objects as 'things in themselves' and, simplistically, decided on their non-existence. Hegel's assault on Kant's conception of knowledge reveals limitation of thought and this is made evident in the doubt now haunting Hegelians: what "... lead Kant to postulate his

unknowable 'thing-in-itself'; Hegel has made some acute criticisms of this idea, but has he really shown that we can do without it?" (Singer, 1983, p.72)

Hegel shows the way to reason, and hence to truth (his 'absolute knowing') in a rather accessible way: "it is in itself the movement which is cognition – the transforming of that 'in-itself' into that which is 'for itself', of Substance into Subject, of the object of 'consciousness' into an object of 'self-consciousness', *i.e.* into an object that is just as much superseded, or into the 'Notion'" (Hegel, 1977, p.488). Referring to history, he renders the search epistemologically biased: "but the other side of its Becoming (the 'Subject'), 'History' is a 'conscious', self-mediating process" (p.492). Hegel's structuralist view of knowledge is clearly expressed in the observation that, for him, "the end of history is the overcoming of political alienation in the political and economic realm; absolute knowledge is the overcoming of alienation in the epistemological realm" (Norman, 1976, p.107, quoting p.746 of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*).

Hegel's idealist philosophy does not provide its reader with the means to scrutinise critically the outcome of personal interactions, now grouped under the heading 'exchange theory'. But people are as much a material reality as institutions. He professed a monist approach to knowledge, disregarding the influence of animistic components in his doctrine. As such, Hegel proves incapable of dealing adequately with spiritual uneasiness, a fundamental trait of mankind in the making of history. In the same vein, Hegel's disproportional praise of science contributing to knowledge, later to influence Habermas, turned his scrutiny of knowledge into epistemics rather than epistemology.

^{***} Advanced positivism concedes conjecture as a valid epistemological asset conditioned to empirical evidence surfacing later (Popper, 1982). However, it rejects induction altogether (Giddens, 1978, p.260). Weber's positivist 'value judgement' (Aron, 1970, pp. 194, 197) strengthens the view that different explanations for the same phenomenon are permitted until empirical evidence reduces them all to a single unifying unit. At times, there is no material evidence and Scotland's unique verdict 'guilty, not proven' provides for this fact. The hasty condemnation of metaphysics set positivism on a collision course with hermeneutics. The scientific establishment is more open-minded when it admits that 'hypothesis-testing is not the *sine qua non* of science' (McNeill, 1984, p.285).

^{****} The fear that the origins of psychoanalysis might be traced to inductivism, thus supplying ammunition to those who regard it as a pseudoscience (Popper, 1982) led its founder to negate it: "it is an illusion to expect anything from intuition and introspection" (Roazen, 1979, p.513). This, despite Kant's voluminous contribution on the issue. Heterodox positivist thought is more lenient on such a critical issue: "evolutionism suggests that the information about the physical realities of our near-environment that our sense organs provide is generally rather reliable, otherwise we would not be here. Of course, they under-inform us... And they sometimes misinform us. But we can be confident that they do not systematically misinform us about those features of the world realistic appraisals of which are sometimes a matter of life or death" (Watkins, 1974).

Reaction to knowledge comes from elaborated critical theory: "even Kant... attributes to philosophy a sovereign role in relation to science" (Habermas, 1972, p.3). Habermas is here trying to compromise between science and philosophy, bluntly disregarding the harm this may bring to teleology. Immediately comes the fatal rationale, while deploring the disregard science faces in the realm of philosophy: "knowledge is not equated either effusively with the absolute knowledge of a great philosophy or blindly with the scientific self-understanding of the actual business of research" (p.4). This view is heretical to Kantian philosophy. It shows a basic 'failure' of Habermas, in Hegel's wake, in not separating absolute knowledge from scientific knowledge, which are worlds apart. Habermas' is a sophist argument, to sell the image of technical rationality. It is no small wonder that deviant psychoanalysis also turns to Hegel when discussing Knowledge (Lacan, 1977).

Hegel's view of the relationship between the individual and the state confers on the former a modality of knowledge, clearly expressed in the sentence where the creature "looks upon the authoritative power of the state as a chain, as something suppressing its being-for-itself, and hence hates the ruler, obeys only with secret malice, and stands ever ready to burst out in rebellion" (Norman, 1976, p.90, quoting p.252 of *Phenomenology of Mind*). There is something epistemologically wrong with this sentence for, as argued previously, the creature is actually opportune in action. The creature's universe of thought and action do not duly consider the state but, on the whole, its surrounding immediate social community. But this is not to say that man does not rebel. For, as Freud (1921) remarked, he is less gregarious than a herd animal. What the paragraph really shows is Hegel's understanding of a situation in which he tried, unduly, to confer a model encompassing idealist generalisation.

Concluding Remarks

It is a possibility that nothing serious will happen as a result of the present interplay with nature. The damage is then certain to be psychological, sensitive minds being handicapped. These effects will differ according to genetic differences. Dobzhansky's (1962, p.112) view that "an environment optimal for one genotype may be mediocre for another and adverse for the third", addresses the fact that distinct reactions exist before common situations.

The plight of the environment, as a result of major societal upheaval, exacerbated by the fact that man does not easily give up unreachable ideals, cannot be assessed properly without taking into account the holistic rationale of the when and why of such a schism in knowledge. Any breakdown of knowledge is bound to release unsocial forces, in due proportion to the amount of power the individual holds. Individual differences decide whether such forces be restrained and, if not, how much be channelled towards an outside outlet.

The schism in knowledge is certain to have limited the expansion of foresight, thus restricting the access to wisdom. It is also certain to have caused perception of self-estrangement between sexes, as suggested by the intense male dispute for female favour. Because of distinct biologies, the genders generally show distinct social aims in life.

Civilisation favoured the biological properties of one gender at the expense of the other. This fact alone may explain the display of nonconformity by the male gender, when confronted with the observance of required and expected traits of social behaviour. Evidence to support the contention comes from Freud's metaphysical writings and from scientific circles which openly acknowledge that "the human sexual drive, though instinctive at base, is overlaid with so great a mass of culturally acquired conditioning and elaborations that it is chiefly non-genetic in its manifestations" (Dobzhansky, 1955, p.339). As a consequence, dissatisfied biological primacies may be driven to pursue equivocal societal outlets. Such a sequential model is likely to have taken place parallel with the advent of language. The origin of society has the existence of a natural biological conflict of interests between the genders as one of its roots. The command of language made this conflict of interests more intelligible. The attendant social consequences of this phenomenon may alone explain mental uneasiness.

Earlier parts of this essay suggested the existence of an association between ill-deployed time and loneliness, leading to further search for activity. Psychoanalysis seems to be true as to this conflict between nature and nurture: "boredom has a physiological foundation, namely that of the damming-up of libido" (Fenichel, 1951, p.361).*****

If, as believed, family matters will at some

point intersect with the crisis of the environment, the issue is conjecture for metaphysics. The historical non-egalitarian participation of women in decision-making cannot be explained solely in terms of the existence of distinct value sets. The woman's social plight, historically performing as a reified object, is the result of ecological pressures and self-participation. For example, to condemn marriage (Goldman, 1972) without simultaneously considering how much the female works for the maintenance of the *status quo*, is biased.

The importance of culture to determine social behaviour which can, of course, be learnt, copied, trained or conditioned, has been emphasised. But if some behaviour is innate, then volition is a factor to be dealt with in any hermeneutic discussion. Recent reassessments of the old-time debate of nature *versus* nurture tend, incompletely, to point to man's social behaviour as the result of the interaction between genetics and culture (Freeman, 1983, p.302). In fact, behaviour encompasses two other neat components which work as moderators of acts. One is the fear of reprisal as a consequence of improper action. The other, a most potent lever to regulate the nature of inter-personal exchanges in society, is the urge to be convincing in labour relations, bearing reflexes in the areas of genetic fitness, natural selection and historical materialism. The rationale goes back to Skinnerian psychology which, in the final analysis, looks for scientific ways to implement the Hobbesian political description of how best to achieve behaviour control. In turn, 'exchange theory' claims that values are learned (Bredemeier, 1978, pp.432, 453). This becomes

***** More to the point, this term is regarded as 'life instincts' (Marcuse, 1964). It indicates that in no place in his major work did Freud ever discuss the ethical basis of marriage, or the role of offspring in causing neuroses. His approach to the distinct biological needs of both genders is perfunctory and academic (Freud, 1925; 1977). Rather, he kept to the most part to a description of organic and psychological syndromes without questioning their teleologies. His concerned manuscript on the origin of anxiety (Freud, 1894) proceeds to differentiate this malaise (= accumulation of organic sexual tension) from melancholy (= accumulation of psychic sexual tension). However, he kept silent as to the transcendental social implications for culture of such a right distinction. His sentence "our civilisation is built up entirely at the expense of sexuality" (Roazen, 1979, p.512) is surprising at a time when there had already been set forth a dialectical relation between alienated labour and modes of production. The view advocating the human body as a self-contained structure (Sartre, 1958; Merleau-Ponty, 1962) is sheer sophism in the light of reality.

true only if a learned model devoid of volition is conceived.

The foregoing metaphysical discussion tends to highlight the influence of ecological and innate components in determining social behaviour. But, of necessity, the reasoning moved partly on to theoretical grounds, leaving room for the appearance of the imponderable. Social determinism is one such thing to be considered seriously in environmental issues, for the detectable trend of conversion shows no signs of receding (Myers, 1983).

Changes in the way man relates to nature depend upon instruments of change reflecting on some contributions emanating from scholasticism. To understand reality is to reach the truth. The process depends upon the robustness of the senses. The latter are controlled by constitution. The absorption of knowledge is thus a piece-meal sequence. The mind does not as a united whole. Rather, it tends to work in stages, with mental blocks being gradually activated or not at all. These phenomena depend upon the interaction of will and suitable stimuli. Philosophers of science come close to this: "unity of personality is not given to the individual as a matter of course, but must be realised and achieved through the individual's persistent, and perhaps life-long efforts" (H.E. Ellenberger, quoted in Eagle, 1983, p.156).

The *a priorist* proposition of the material dialectic of the environment is that all individual volitive accumulation of wealth, far in excess of one's needs, is meaningful only as long as there is a parallel disposition to exchange part of the wealth for commodities indicated by the libido. All else outside this context, particularly the infliction of the self-imposed miser, is regarded epistemologically as nonsense, hence the field of in-depth psychology.

Everyday life insists on showing the individual turning social unconscious or preconscious mental processes into conscious ones through personal inquisitive effort. Despite this, he continues to perform socially under the tutelage of the super-ego, *i.e.* no change of behaviour follows. This shows that social mores may overpower will in determining behaviour. Alfred Adler and Wilhelm Stekel rightly held that certain 'repressed' thoughts have nothing to do with the unconscious but rather with will-power (see, Brown, 1964, p.42). It follows that self-awareness and genuine social behaviour are not, obligatorily, continuous compartments. The

individual's final behaviour will ultimately rely on the interaction of multiple constitutional factors, close to Brown's (1963) 'nuclear personality'.

It may be argued that commitment arises out of self-conversion, as an instinctive act of empathy with a cause or plight. However, the individual may understand what happens, may know he has to react, has the power to react, wishes to react, but does not. Such is the evidence that the mind does not work as an integrated circuit, despite views negating the unconscious (Eysenck, 1973; Sartre, 1958; 1983; Eagle, 1983). However, if a mental component presses for action and resistance from other mind sites object to its surfacing, not because of 'repression' or immediate threats to the individual's self-survival, but because of innate inhibiting factors, the conclusion is that there are genic manifestations unknown to the mind.

This study implies that the plight of the environment arises from several sources, some interacting synergistically, others not. Past human-perpetrated depletion and extinctions lacked global historical perspective. They no longer do. An improvement of the present situation depends on the will of the elite. However, deeply-rooted *laissez faire* attitudes in decision-making makes the forecast unpredictable as to future ameliorative steps.

In spite of obligations to technology, the fact remains that leisure is instinctively associated with nature. It is a fact that technology may bring happiness. What remains most doubtful is whether it alone can ensure lasting joy.

Most of nature's sad plight can be traced to determinism. However, there are situations when the individual feels embarrassment, an odd feeling since determinism dispenses vindication. Such behaviour suggests will-in-action. Of course, pressing subsistence factors are accountable for much of nature's endurance, but social events are as much the result of biological acts as of biological omission. A self-aware biological act is rarely available for scrutiny, even less so its self-confession.

The penchant that part of the social sciences have for social determinism is associated with hatred of the state. They all too often take for granted the influence ecological factors exert on the subjugation of free will. At times, a demand for further rigour in the scientificity prevailing on mind research is the facade for the continuation of an uncritical wishful-thinking philosophy

(Masters, 1985). To its credit, psychoanalysis has tried revision of its principles. However, time, in a neutral and inexorable way, did not allow it to complete itself.

Psychoanalysis showed a perceptible shift of focus as its founder aged. At the age of 62, Freud comes remarkably close to parts of behaviourism: "what the human beast needs above all is restraint" (Roazen, 1979, p.518). At the same time, Freud proceeded to make overtures towards a biological basis of behaviour: "if the physician has to deal with a worthless character, he soon loses the interest" (Roazen, 1979, p.153). It is significant that this critic of civilisation saw the fleeting image of revelation in 1936, still in time to leave it on record: "constitution is everything" (Freud, at the age of 80, addressing Ludwig Binswanger, quoted in Roazen, 1979, p.186). A year later, two years before his death, he relented on the primacy of nurture: "one has an impression that one ought not to be surprised if it should turn out in the end that the difference between a person who has not been analysed and the behaviour of person after he has been analysed is not so thoroughgoing as we aim at making it and as we expect and maintain it to be" (Freud, 1937, p.3347; English translation taken from Roazen, 1979, p.186).

Social relations are the visible result of biological acts. If social relations were natural, there would be no need to seek the truth. The existence of thinkers concerned with the nature of reality suggests its artificiality. If so, the meaning of sociality and coexistence still remains an open question.

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