

# CREATIVITY, PASSION AND MISSION

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My last article in Vitalita has been rather poetical. This one is primarily philosophical and ethical in nature, exploring two incompatible approaches to understanding human life: Causality and Teleology.

I was asked by my colleagues to write and to present our work in Psychophonetics and Methodical Empathy through the topic of: 'Creativity, Passion and Mission'. I agreed to do it, before I realised what a huge task this presents me with both as a practitioner of personal development and as a philosopher and a historian. In my preparatory research I had to confront the huge gulf separating the philosophy underlying personal development from the underlying philosophy of the prevailing mainstream natural science, which also dominates social and psychological sciences.

I had to confront the reality that the Cartesian (Rene Descartes 1596-1650) assumption of the universe as a huge mechanical, impersonal clockwork and the Darwinian (Charles Darwin 1809-1882) assumption of natural selection as the only explanation of biological evolution – are totally dominant in what is considered scientific and even logical today. I also had to confront the fact that these scientific theories are not compatible with the possibility of consciously chosen personal development. I believe the difference between these two approaches is not based on logical, scientific or philosophical differences but on choices of one's world view: the ontological assumption about the nature of being.

Fundamentally, for the purpose of this article, I reduced the essence of these two approaches as follows: 1) The *Causality* approach to reality, namely: everything can be explained by *past causes* that lead inevitably to present situation: genes, instincts, environmental influences, mutation, survival of the fittest, natural selection, coincidence, or 2) the *Teleological* approach to reality, namely: everything can be explained by *future intentions and purpose*, the movement towards which organises existent elements into a functional form.

**Teleology** is the explanation of phenomena in terms of the purpose they serve rather than the cause of which they arise. The doctrine of design and purpose in the material world. Teleology is a reason or explanation for something as a function of its end, purpose, or goal (from Wikipedia). Notable teleologically inclined philosophers include: In antiquity Plato and Aristotle; in the early modern era G.W.F. Hegel, Wolfgang Goethe, Gotlib Fichte, Franz Brentano; Friedrich Nietzsche; in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Carl Marx, Rudolf Steiner, Alasdair MacIntyre, Thomas Nagel. For instance, Aristotle claimed that an acorn's intrinsic *telos* is to become a fully grown oak tree.

In order to be intellectually clear and honest I hereby acknowledge my philosophical position at the start: I live, by choice, on the assumption that human life and nature's life are fundamentally teleological – driven by intelligent purpose. This is considered very un-scientific today, as it has been, with some exceptions, throughout most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and still today. Yet the teleological approach cannot be completely dismissed from both biology and human sciences, as so much of observable reality can only be explained by purposeful drive. Look for example at a car moving on the road: the car is designed for a purpose, built for purpose, purchased for a purpose, driven by a conscious driver with the purpose to arrive from point A to point B. Without purpose the movement of the car on the road cannot be explained. Yet teleology is considered unscientific. As the biologist John Haldane (1892-1964) once said: "*Teleology is like a mistress to a biologist: he cannot live without her but he's unwilling to be seen with her in public.*"

So to me teleology is a wife, not a mistress, and I am going to be seen with her in public: I am going to speak about *Creativity, Passion and Mission* from the teleological point of view.

Let us look first at *Creativity*. Unlike animals the human race is an unfinished creation. We are still being created, primarily by ourselves. Leave animals alone in nature and come to visit them hundreds or thousands of years later – and they have not changed. Their creation is already completed. Leave a group of human beings alone for 10 years and come to visit them later – and you will find that everything has changed in the way they live, interact and govern themselves.

Our creation is not completed, that much is clear by any observation of human history. We evolve, not only by environmental pressures from outside – but by our own inherent tendency to evolve. It seems that the only constant element in human life is change itself.

There exist some special faculties in the Grey Matter of the Neocortex of the Cerebral Cortex of the Cerebrum, the major part of the human brain, which makes us humans a unique species: we can reflect, create mental pictures of our sense experiences, retain them as memory, access them at will and **create** out of them new possibilities in our interaction with nature and each other, that have not existed before. In other words: we constantly change as a result of our inherent creativity and we create new realities all the time. That is our very nature, what makes us human.

What exactly is the physiological foundation that enables this creative human capacity – is still a matter of discussion, but the function of it is self-evident. Some early 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century psychologists claimed that the essential difference that makes us uniquely human is not physiologically based at all, but inherently mental or spiritual in nature: Gotlib Fichte, founder of *German Idealism*, identified the essential human faculty of cognition with the human 'I' as an independent being; Franz Brentano, founder of modern '*Intentionality*', claimed the independent nature of the mind, and Edmond Husserl, founder of *Phenomenology* which claims that "the essential opinion of the phenomenon' can be known to the thinker. According to them the human mind acts *through* the human physical apparatus, but is not essentially *identified* with it.

We humans are creators. This is not just what we do, it is *who we are!* Down to our brain function and structure. What is the cause and what is the effect is hard to tell: are we creative beings because of our unique brain structure – or is our brain structure a result of the creative activities that we do? Genetics or Epigenetics?

What is not in dispute is that we humans are constantly re-creating ourselves and our civilization, and that is also applied to human work. In fact – that *is* human work: a conscious change in the given circumstances, natural or human. No other animal is doing work: they survive according to given and repeatable patterns which are ingrained in their instinctive structure and body. We do that also – acting for survival and following our given instinct. But what we call *work* is a result of consciously applying reflection, cognition and creativity to our interaction with nature and with each other. Work is not given by nature and by instinct. Work has to be consciously created from the simplest craft work to rocket science, from learning basic language to cutting edge research, from first aid to brain surgery. Without human creativity there is no human work.

Obviously some of us are more creative than others: we do not just fulfil given functions and expectations but we create completely new possibilities for what we do with ourselves, with our relationships and with work. But I would name it like this: we all have the 'creativity genes' but some of us access the human creative potential more than others. Those who do not use their creativity consciously become in time frustrated, as the potential for creativity is not used to its full capacity. That unused potential creative energy, when left unused – can make us progressively sick: unused living energy starts to work against you, and it becomes toxic.

So to be a healthy human being you have to be a creative human being: 'homo sapiens faber'. The term 'Homo Sapiens': The 'Wise Man', the scientific zoological name for the human beings of the past 300,000 years, was created by Carl Linnaeus, the great Swedish botanist and zoologist in 1758. But the term 'Homo faber', the creator human being or the architect human being - is much older definition of the human race, going back to the Athenian statesman Appius Claudius Caecus in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC who wrote in his book *Senentae*: "*Homo faber suae quisque fortunae*" meaning: '*every man is the architect of his own destiny*'. Homo Faber was used by Renaissance Humanists and later philosophers like Benjamin Franklin, Karl Marx, Hanna Arendt, Max Sheller, Henri Bergson and Umberto Eco. It refers to man's ability to control his destiny, to create tools, to create art, science and civilization.

Let us now look at Passion and its relationship to creativity. What makes the difference between not using our creative potential and using it – is **passion**. Passion is the fire within the human soul that keeps us moving. Nothing creative can happen without passion igniting it. The term passion today embraces the combined meaning of vitality, energy, desire, motivation, enthusiasm and will. Until the 13<sup>th</sup> century it was a term for suffering (see *The Passion of Christ*). But something changed and from the 14<sup>th</sup> century it was extended to include the Greek term *Pathos*: intense feelings. From the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century it grew to include sexual love and from the 17<sup>th</sup> century it started to include enthusiasm (Online etymological dictionary). It is defined today as: 'A very powerful feeling, for example of sexual attraction, love, hate, anger, or other emotion' (Cambridge dictionary). What was once pain caused by outside factors - became in progressively an individual soul expression coming from the inside. This is the record of the unstoppable

process of individuation which is still the strongest drive in our current evolution: the human 'I' enters progressively into the human soul.

What enkindles one person's passion and what keeps another passive – is an enigma, the mystery of personality. It is nearly mission impossible for parents, teachers and friends to give passion to children, adolescents and adults. Passion is fire coming from the inside. It is potentially possible to enkindle it, to feed it, or to extinguish it. In the end, in terms of personal development – to have passion at any given moment is not a choice. But to re-discover it, to re-connect to it, to nurture and to feed it – is, potentially, a choice. People can be motivated to do something conscious about the lack of passion in their life, relationship, work. For us, Psychophonetics practitioners, when that is the person's wish – we use the suffering (the old meaning of the term *passion*) as the leverage energy to rediscover the buried or un-nourished passion – back into life. It can be done. Children are naturally interested, curious and passionate about life. We lose it later in life for various reasons. It can be re-discovered.

Passion can become the key with which to activate the potential creativity in everyone.

And what about one's Mission, one's purpose in life? Only on the basis of creativity activated by passion – can one hope to create a new connection to one's potential mission on earth. Here there is a choice regarding the fundamental approach to human life: option A) is it fundamentally a biological/physiological mutation/genetic based coincidence, starting in conception without any previous existence and ending in death, without any post-biological life extension? Or is it fundamentally a mission, a purposeful operation, designed long before conception and lasting long after death? Are we coming *FROM* our parents, or are we coming *THROUGH* our parents?

As I declared at the start of this article my position is clearly teleological: *human destiny is governed primarily by a mission and a purpose*, but what this purpose *IS* - must be determined by each individual for oneself. The drive to fulfil one's purpose in life is intrinsic to the human constitution, it is impossible to get it out of there, as much as it is impossible to get our basic instincts out of our system. They are wired into our human 'hardware'. Yet, unlike our instinctive life which is in operation with or without consciousness or choice - our inclination towards purposeful life is born blind: we know it is there but we cannot see it. The knowledge about our purpose can only be gained by individual conscious effort. To strive towards the meaning, the mission, the purpose of one's life is an option, a free initiative, something you can choose to do or not to do. No one can force you to do it. The purpose potentially exists but you have to create it to make it real.

*"I wasn't given my wings  
I had to grow my own.  
I had to fight for them.  
Strengthen them.  
Breathe life into them time and time again.  
They were no gift.  
They are signs of my sweat, blood, tears,  
faith, story, bravery, beauty and love.  
But I have made them my gift to the world"*

S.C. Lourie

Yet the consequences of *not* striving to create/discover one's purpose in life are not free at all. The whole human system is designed to be in service to that unknown purpose. Without the striving towards finding your mission and purpose in this life - the deep energy that lives in us for the purpose of striving for your purpose will become unemployed, redundant, atrophied. And that atrophy tends to spread to all levels, vegetating the human spirit, numbing the human soul, diminishing the joy of life, killing enthusiasm, taking away the meaning of everything, deteriorating the life of the body, and, eventually becoming nihilism, the most destructive life philosophy of all.

So there it is, the connection between the three: Passion ignites the Creativity which is intrinsic to the human being; activated creativity, driven by the longing to find one's purpose in life – enables inner connection to the potential mission of one's life that is waiting to be discovered. And, when enough people find a connection to their potential purpose in life – humanity as a whole finds a connection to its purpose of earthly life. Survival alone cannot give purpose to existence. Survival is the basic condition required for finding for acting on the essential purpose and meaning of human earthly life. This is the story of the evolution of human consciousness.

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