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Editorial: Meaning in and of the Galaxy

**Shimmy Joseph Vayalil**

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Immanuel Kant's 'What is Enlightenment?'

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Facing Our Short-Term and Long-Term Problems:  
Developing Cosmic Perspectives for Sustainable Life

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Communication: From Illusion to Communion

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Globalisation and Progress:  
With a Sustainable and Shared Roadmap

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The cover depicts the gentle gaze of AI on our precious earth within the cosmic background

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## Editorial

### Meaning in and of the Galaxy

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Humans might be the only intelligent beings in our galaxy, so destroying our civilisation could be a galactic disaster, Prof Brian Cox has warned leaders in the run-up to Cop26, the 26th United Nations Climate Change conference. It is scheduled to be held in the city of Glasgow, Scotland, between 31 October and 12 November 2021. Prof Cox is an English physicist and former musician who serves as professor of particle physics in the School of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Manchester. He is also working at CERN as a physicist (APS, 2021).

He went on to say that if the planet were to perish, the galaxy would lose its purpose. The unique events that lead to the birth of human existence and civilisation may mean that its extinction will ‘eradicate meaning in the cosmos for all time.’

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The physicist and presenter, speaking at the launch of his new BBC Two Series *Universe*, said that after speaking with the scientists who advised the show from around the world, he believes that humans and sentient life on Earth “might be a remarkable, naturally occurring phenomenon” that “world leaders might need to know.”

Cox delves into the “Goldilocks” theory, which claims that our planet’s position in respect to the Sun, as well as the unique circumstances that formed Earth over billions of years, made it “just perfect” for significant life to emerge and evolve.

In *Universe*, Cox delves into the “Goldilocks” theory, which claims that our planet’s position in respect to the Sun, as well as the unique circumstances that formed Earth over billions of years, made it “just perfect” for significant life to emerge and evolve.

“We’ve discovered – and I believe this is a realistic working assumption – that there are relatively few civilisations per galaxy,” Cox added. “I think sometimes that viewpoint is vital,” Cox remarked when asked how crucial that discovery was for politicians dealing with the climate catastrophe.

“I would suggest that if our civilisation does not persist, for whatever reason, and that reason may be an external occurrence or our own action, nuclear war, or whatever we decide to inflict on ourselves, whomever presses that button has the potential to erase meaning in a galaxy for all time.” He added: “And I believe that’s something that world leaders should be aware of.” It’s possible that it’ll be a significant act” (Conlan, 2021).

“The more I learn about biology, the more astonished I am that we exist at all,” he continued, adding that while astronomers estimated that there were about 20 billion Earth-like planets in the Milky Way galaxy, “so we might expect life to be everywhere,” “almost every biologist I speak to says, ‘Yes, but it will be slime at best.’ We live in a violent cosmos, so the idea of planets that are stable enough to support an uninterrupted cycle of life could be limiting.”

“There are very few areas where atoms can think,” Cox added. Because “meaning exists only in our thoughts,” the extinction of Earth may result in the extinction of meaning.

“If you believe that meaning comes from sufficiently complicated biological machines, then the only place those machines could exist is here; it’s true to say that we’d live in a meaningless galaxy if this planet didn’t exist.” That’s not how life works. There is a distinction between living and living intelligently” (Conlan, 2021).

He also mentioned a concept known as the “great filter,” which suggests that “civilisations don’t last long.” It’s possible that the difficulties of industrializing a civilisation are too severe, and that our wisdom lags behind our knowledge or capabilities, leaving us unable to handle the transition to a space-faring civilisation.

“Climate change is also a problem... Civilisations encounter numerous hurdles as they gain knowledge and competence, and it’s possible that civilisations have a natural lifespan.” As conscious beings, we are in a privilege position to extend this lifespan.

In Universe, Cox – who was part of the band D:Ream, which created the optimistic anthem Things Can Only Get Better –

explains how stars are not immortal and one day the universe will return to darkness (Wikipedia contributors, 2021).

He said some of his ad-libs during Universe were more philosophical and “religious than I intended” than in his previous series, and that was because he wanted to explore why we cared about stars and the part they played in creating life.

As far as we know we are the only meaning making and meaning needing creatures. That is great. It is our greatest honour to preserve this meaning and to make it more relevant for our future generations.

In the first episode he calls the stars “mortal gods” and, watching a sunrise, says: “If you’re looking for gods, you don’t need to look any further, because these are the real things.”

We need to agree to Prof Cox’s definition of gods. But we can surely agree to his understanding of meaning in and of the galaxies. As far as we know we are the only

meaning making and meaning needing creatures. That is great. It is our greatest honour to preserve this meaning and to make it more relevant for our future generations. We do have that inner creativity and nobility to foster life, in spite of the danger that exist.

Most of the article in this issue focus on the need for global answers to global problems that we human being face collectively. We begin with a critique of Kant’s enlightenment and move on to long-term solutions that the world needs badly. Then we talk of the need for effective

communication to solve the problems we face, especially in terms of globalisation and progress. Then we refer to the need to understand nationalism in a global perspective.

Solving our problems globally, it is hoped, will further the meaning that we possess as human beings and will give meaning to the universe itself!

*The Editor*

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## **“People’s Situation is Self-imposed:” An Expose Based on Immanuel Kant’s “What is Enlightenment?”**

**Shimmy Joseph Vayalil**

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**Abstract:** The enlightenment has been blamed for many things. Immanuel Kant in his famous article tells, that the lack of enlightenment is self-imposed. In other words, he is telling that man has the innate capability to use his own reasons. If he does not use his own reason without the guidance from others, he is in bondage. Is this people’s situation self-imposed? Or does he alone the cause of his nonage (immaturity)? Has it got anything with one’s own upbringing and one’s own culture, and tradition? The author tries to argue that how a child is brought up to use his reason play a vital role for this enlightenment.

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**Keywords:** Enlightenment, Self-imposed, Nonage, Reason, Upbringing, Immanuel Kant

## Introduction

In his famous Essay on, “What is Enlightenment? Immanuel Kant defines, “Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self-imposed nonage. Nonage is the inability to use one’s own understanding without another’s guidance. This nonage is self-imposed if its causes lies not in the lack of understanding but in indecision and lack of courage to use one’s own mind without another’s guidance (Kant, what is enlightenment?).” Some of the translations use the word ‘immaturity instead of the word ‘nonage.’ The focus of this essay is on this ‘immaturity is Self-imposed’ (or some of the English translations use the construction, ‘self-incurred’) My intent is to explore how does Kant justify his claim that people’s situation is self-imposed? what does it mean by ‘self-imposed’? and what are the causes for self-imposed immaturity?

Before discussing the real argument, it is always apt to clarify some of the problems in translations. Immaturity and nonage are not a right word to express the real crucial concept ‘*unmundigkeit*’. It is more likely to misconstrue the real meaning. In normal English language ‘Immaturity’ is always linked or associated with behavior or in a psychological context. Here the author does not sense that. Likewise, ‘*Vormund*’ is translated as “guardian” or “tutor” in most English translations. Their common root ‘*Mund*’ (mouth) indicates that the underlying meaning of ‘*unmundig*’ is being unable to speak on one’s own behalf. For that purpose, one has need of a ‘*Vormund*’, a legally sanctioned “mouthpiece” to stand in front of (*vor*) him or her-as official spokesman (Green, 2020). Our concern is this situation, as Kant says, one needs to have a mouthpiece in order to speak, is self-imposed.

## The Literal Meaning of the Word ‘Self-Imposed’

What does it mean by self-imposed? In literal sense ‘self-imposed’ means to become liable or subject to through one’s own action; bring or take upon oneself. One is responsible for his own actions. Kant is telling that inability to use one’s own understanding, and therefore making guardians as mouthpiece is self-imposed. In the beginning, at times, with common sense viewpoint of view, we may tempt to think that Guardians make us slaves to their thoughts and we just follow them. We may think that the real cause of this imposition is the guardians. But Kant proves that it is self-imposed.

Here I try to elaborate his arguments to say that this situation is self-imposed.

Likewise, ‘*Vormund*’ is translated as “guardian” or “tutor” in most English translations. Their common root ‘*Mund*’ (mouth) indicates that the underlying meaning of ‘*unmundig*’ is being unable to speak on one’s own behalf. For that purpose, one has need of a ‘*Vormund*’, a legally sanctioned “mouthpiece” to stand in front of (*vor*) him or her-as official spokesman.

## Refusing to Think for Yourself

We all are endowed with the capacity to think. Kant speaks, “Nature has freed them from external guidance (Kant, 2021).” By the time of adulthood, with the guidance from our parents and teachers, the development of mental operations forms our intellect into a full adult intellect even to think more on abstract principles. Afterwards, we are free to think for ourselves, even we are free to question the authority or the parents what they have imparted on us

and to choose what our intellect tells us. A few authors would say Kant uses the metaphor of adulthood in his essay on Enlightenment. It is the passage from the status of minor child to the status of adult. Enlightened modernity is the adulthood of the human race (Green 2020: 292). The contention is that the adults can take decision for themselves and use their own understanding, they are endowed with the grown potentialities of intellect. But on the contrary to the expectations, Kant says, a large part of mankind remains minors all their lives. This situation is self-created, because we refuse to think for ourselves, although we are endowed with reason. Are we living to this potential? What is the use of the reason then? So, Kant is absolutely right if we do not use our reason and therefore still in immaturity, the mistake is our part, we refuse to use our reason and just blindly follow our Guardians.

Kant holds that one of the reasons to be in Immaturity is Laziness, this laziness is a form of intellectual laziness. Thinking for yourself is not so easy. It is like a sport, you have to exert, you have to exercise. Sometimes you have to take the path the others have not trodden. Sometimes you will be left alone, but it is your decision. We have to train our intellect to think and ask questions. We have to cultivate this quality. If we just blindly follow others, there is no sweat of your brow; just loaf around. Kant uses the word, “it is always easy to be minor (Kant, 2021).” To be a minor in thinking is one’s own decision,

Kant holds that one of the reasons to be in Immaturity is Laziness, this laziness is a form of intellectual laziness. Thinking for yourself is not so easy. It is like a sport, you have to exert, you have to exercise. Sometimes you have to take the path the others have not trodden.

Kant is telling “....which has become almost second nature to him. He has even grown to like it (Kant, 2021).”

### **Duty to Think for Himself**

For Kant the term duty is very much important, according to him, the rightness or wrongness of actions does not depend on their consequences

but on whether they fulfill our duty. As we are endowed with reason, we have a duty to think for oneself, without worrying its end results. Those who do not think for themselves will never question anything that had been told to them. Every thought that originated in their mind comes from an outside authority. They don't think for themselves. They just flow like a piece of wood that flows in a

Every thought that originated in their mind comes from an outside authority. They don't think for themselves. They just flow like a piece of wood that flows in a river. Kant says, “It is a state of inability, it is a state of indecision”

river. Kant says, “It is a state of inability, it is a state of indecision” (Kant, 2021).

Often our thinking is circumscribed by feelings, emotions, beliefs, politics and social contract. As a result, we are biased to follow our guardians. Kant narrates, “These guardians make their domestic cattle stupid and carefully prevent the docile creatures from taking a single step without the leading-strings to which they have fastened them (Kant, 2021).” .” What we required is courage. Kant says lack of courage is another cause to be in Immaturity. When one feels his worth through his logical thinking, and he feels that he can think for himself. He can stand on his own feet. Courage is something that which comes from within. Aristotle defines the courageous person thus: “The

courageous man withstands and fears those things which it is necessary [to fear and withstand] and on account of the right reason, and how and when it is necessary [to fear or withstand] them, and likewise in the case of being bold (Moore, 2015).” Courage and Reason are both interlinked. Reason tells us to avoid irrational fear and stand for our logical convictions instead of blindly following anyone. Kant advocates what is very essential for Enlightenment is freedom. He says, the public use of one’s freedom must be free at all times, and this alone can bring enlightenment to mankind. He further clarifies what does mean by ‘Public use of reason’. He adds, “I mean that use which a man, as scholar, makes of it before the reading public (Kant, 2021).” In short, he is telling that one must use his intellect and should defend his position all that are against his reason. When one becomes a scholar, he has full freedom and an obligation, and his views does not contradict his own conscience. If one does not indulge in public use of reason means, he is in immaturity and the cause for it, is he-himself.

### **Some Observations and Conclusion**

Till now I have been focusing on how the peoples’ situation is self-imposed, however here I would like to bring out a few observations that can subside Kant’s linkage of guilt with self. The basic requirement or foundation for free use of one’s own understanding depends on how one has been brought up in one’s life. ‘Upbringing’ plays a crucial role. For example, Gladwell in his famous book ‘Outlier’ writes basing on the idea of Middle-class parenting from the Sociologist Annette Lareau, how important is a child’s upbringing to take decision in one’s own life (Gladwell, 2008: 69).”

Gladwell quotes Lareau, “[Even in fourth grade, that middle-class children were appeared to be acting on their own behalf to gain advantages...”] By contrast, the working-class and poor children were characterized by [“an emerging sense of distance, distrust, and constraint.”] They didn’t know how to get their way,...” (Gladwell, 2008: 69).<sup>1</sup>

Gladwell also narrates an incident which he owes to Lareau in his book, a nine-year-old boy’s visit to see the Doctor. His parents are well educated and wealthy professionals. While his mother drives him in her car to the doctor. She prepares the son how to articulate before the doctor. She tells her son, “You are free to ask whatever you wish to ask before the doctor.” The boy is telling that he has got bumps on his under arm.

Mother is replying to him. “you must tell the doctor.” Upon meeting the doctor, the doctor tells the boy, “you are ten years old” But the boy tells that, “I am not ten” Doctor replies him, you are nine years and ten months, and we count the closest year.” But the boy asserts again, “I am

“[Even in fourth grade, that middle-class children were appeared to be acting on their own behalf to gain advantages...”] By contrast, the working-class and poor children were characterized by [“an emerging sense of distance, distrust, and constraint.”] They didn’t know how to get their way,...”

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<sup>1</sup> Gladwell, 2008: 69. The texts within the square brackets are originally from the Sociologist Annette Lareau and it is given in double inverted commas in Outlier. The author Gladwell does not give a proper citation for this quotation. He just tells Lareau means or calls. I am under the impression that he quotes Lareau from her lectures or talks, while we come across the phrases like, ‘in one telling scene’

not ten.” Further, they had some conversation with regard to his sickness and boy succeeded in asserting himself (Gladwell, 2008: 69).”<sup>2</sup>

At times we may be apprehensive to ask? is it a stubbornness of child? But my point is, how the parents taught him how to articulate and how defends himself. “It is not genetic....Alex (the boy’s name) has those skills because over the course of his young life, his mother and father-in the manner of educated families-have painstakingly taught them to him, nudging and prodding and encouraging and showing him the rules of the game right down to that little rehearsal in the car on the way to doctor’s office (Gladwell, 2008: 70).”<sup>3</sup>

Philosophers like William James, and Amelie Oksenberg Rorty also say that our desire, emotions and functionality do play a role in our course of life, not reason alone. We are forced not to rule out these dimensions where we are prone to follow the Guardians.

Children seldom get this kind of upbringing, hence they are not able to assert or articulate themselves especially against the authority. Not everyone is educated, not everyone has the ability to think for themselves. Hence, we cannot accuse some of the adults for not using their own reason as Kant envisages. Philosophers like William James, and Amelie Oksenberg

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2 See, Gladwell, 2008: 69, I have paraphrased the incident in my own words. The author Gladwell owes this incident to Lareau.

3 Gladwell, 2008: 69. The texts within the square brackets are originally from the Sociologist Annette Lareau and it is given in double inverted commas in Outlier. The author Gladwell does not give a proper citation for this quotation. He just tells Lareau means or calls. I am under the impression that he quotes Lareau from her lectures or talks, while we come across the phrases like, ‘in one telling scene’



Rorty also say that our desire, emotions and functionality do play a role in our course of life, not reason alone. We are forced not to rule out these dimensions where we are prone to follow the Guardians. Johann Georg Hamann, a contemporary to Kant, raised some serious question about Enlightenment. He accuses the Guardians as the guilt for ‘self-imposed’ situation, if they as individual engage in ‘Public use of the Reason’ they may not act as guardians. So, the real culprits are Guardians. “...Kant is right that the problem is the liberation of the immature, but he chooses the wrong target for his critique. It is not the women and other voiceless groups who incur guilt but rather the “enlightened” monarchs and their court philosophers (Green, 2020: 299).”

People are individual who have sacred right to think freely and to be free, and to decide the course of life freely and that is everything. The value of human being lies more in using his own intellect. Kant identifies enlightenment with the process of undertaking to think for oneself, to employ and rely on one’s own intellectual capacities in determining what to believe and how to act. Although, there are cultural and structural exceptions to Kant’s linkage of guilt with ‘self-imposed’, Kant is right, to a greater extent the lack of enlightenment is due to refusal to use one’s own reason and hence the situation is self-imposed.

People are individual who have sacred right to think freely and to be free, and to decide the course of life freely and that is everything. The value of human being lies more in using his own intellect.

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## **Facing Our Short-Term and Long-Term Problems: Developing Cosmic Perspectives for Sustainable Life**

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*Abstract:* We are constantly faced with problems. This article focuses both on our short-term problems and our long term ones, and proposes that a larger cosmic perspective will enable us to tackle our problems creatively and collectively. After focussing on some of the urgent and day-to-day problems, we look at some of the far ranging ones, including the possibility of wiping ourselves out of the earth: the sixth mass extinction. Then we propose that a higher consciousness or cosmic perspective can help us cope with these challenges of our times! Such a perspective, it is hoped, will make human life sustainable and earthly existence viable for all living beings.

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*Keywords:* Problems and Challenges, Cosmic Perspective, Higher Consciousness, Sixth Mass Extinction, Global Sustainability.

## **Introduction**

Most of us, most of the time, live from hand to mouth. We are immersed in so many important activities. We are engaged in managing so many crises and conflicts. From early morning to late evening, we need to manoeuvre through many diverse problems and challenges. Count us fortunate if we get some time to watch TV or to relax a bit. As such, our daily lives move from one crisis to another, mostly created by ourselves.

This series of crises demands immediate attention. We need to solve them and go beyond. At the same time, we cannot afford to let these crises blind us to the larger challenges and problems that we face, both as individuals and as a community. So in this article, I want to open our vistas to some of the larger or long-term problems that we face, so that we can have long-term solutions. Such solutions are as much needed as the short-term solutions to our immediate crises.

This article focuses both on our short-term problems and our long term ones, and proposes that a larger cosmic perspective will enable us to tackle our problems creatively and collectively. After focussing on some of the urgent and day-to-day problems, we look at some of the far-ranging ones, including the possibility of wiping ourselves out of the earth: the sixth mass extinction. Then we propose that a higher consciousness or cosmic perspective can help us cope with these challenges of our times.

## Some Day-to-Day Problems

We meet problems as we breathe. But it doesn't get to us until we feel a major impact, and that's when it becomes a source of concern, hurt, or sorrow.

Life problems, depending on their magnitude, can be clogs in the wheel of our personal progress, and we may not be able to attain our full potential if we don't learn to place our problems in the proper perspectives. For most people, the main challenge they face is making ends meet. Getting up early in the morning, they go on working hard and return home tired. They do not have much time even to think of their problems, except the basic financial and health problems of food, shelter and medicine (Ho, 2011).

Life problems, depending on their magnitude, can be clogs in the wheel of our personal progress, and we may not be able to attain our full potential if we don't learn to place our problems in the proper perspectives.

## Some Long-Term Problems

Besides the daily problems of food, health and financial stability that each one of us face, some of the more long-term problems that we as a human family face are:

### Food Security

At the global level, the number of hungry people in the world has increased over the past few years. It is calculated that one in nine people in the world go hungry each day, and suffer from nutritional deficiencies as a result.

Food security has been one of the biggest threats to the overall health of the human population for many years. So far, 2020 and 2021 have seen the most severe increases in global food insecurity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting vulnerable households almost everywhere. Current estimates show that today, 957 million people across 93 countries do not have enough to eat (van Vuuren, 2021).

How is it that even in 2021 people are still going hungry? Unfortunately, the problem is not that we aren't producing enough food, but rather that people lack access to food. Many people do not have enough money to purchase food and can not grow their own. According to the World Food Programme (WFP), countries with the highest level of food insecurity also have the highest outward migration of refugees.

Food scarcity is intimately connected with poverty. More than 70 percent of the people in the world own less than \$10,000 — or roughly 3 percent of total wealth in the world. A lack of global emphasis on foreign aid, conflict and political factors have kept poverty as a driving factor. In the last two decades, however, things have started to improve. The “middle class” has doubled in size from seven to thirteen percent.

Food scarcity is intimately connected with poverty. More than 70 percent of the people in the world own less than \$10,000 — or roughly 3 percent of total wealth in the world.

### Water Scarcity

As with food, there is actually enough fresh water for each person currently living on our precious earth. However, access

to that water is not always possible for everyone (van Vuuren, 2021).

Issues such as poor infrastructure, displacement, and conflict mean that many people often have to use unsafe water sources. This is a clear health and sanitation risk.

It is estimated that about two billion people still use a source that is contaminated with human waste, and about the same amount don't have access to adequate toilet facilities.

Closely related to water scarcity is the pollution of the ocean. As we know, most of our planet is covered in water. We depend on the ocean to maintain our rainwater systems and many populations rely on it for food and income. The ocean also absorbs carbon dioxide and produces more than half of the oxygen on Earth (van Vuuren, 2021).

But despite its importance, the ocean is under threat. Overfishing and unsustainable fishing practices are causing the endangerment and extinction of many marine mammals. In addition, global warming has caused an increase in coral bleaching, where reefs lose vital nutrients and can no longer sustain the ecosystems that depend on them.

Commercial fishing practices dominate the market and inhibit the economic progress of local fishers, who can't compete with these boats.

And with the effectiveness of modern-day fishing techniques comes the problem of bycatch: where marine species such as dolphins and turtles are caught in commercial fishing nets, and are later discarded. Pollutants like boat fuel, pesticides, fertiliser, sewage, and plastics

cause “dead zones” – spots where no organism can live – to form in the ocean.

## Biodiversity Loss

Related to food security and water scarcity is the loss of flora and fauna. Biodiversity loss refers to the decline or disappearance of biological diversity, understood as the variety of living things that inhabit the planet, its different levels of biological organisation and their respective genetic variability, as well as the natural patterns present in ecosystems. The important reasons for it are changing use of sea and land, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, pollution and invasive non-native species.

*The Guardian* reports that humanity has wiped out 60% of mammals, birds, fish and reptiles since 1970, leading the world’s foremost experts to warn that the annihilation of wildlife is now an emergency that threatens civilisation (Carrington, 2018).

Extinctions are happening at alarmingly fast rates. Not only are we losing flora and fauna, we are also damaging our ecosystems, and throwing them out of balance – the effects of which we cannot anticipate due to the intricate and complex nature of these systems.

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## The Sixth Mass Extinction



It is in this context that we want to summarize the gravest problem facing humanity in terms of the sixth mass extinction (Gary, 2019). Palaeontologists and scientists characterize mass extinctions as times when the Earth loses more than three-quarters of its species in a geologically short interval, as has happened only five times in the past 540 million years or so. Biologists now suggest that a sixth mass extinction may be under way, given the known species losses over the past few centuries and millennia. Here we review how differences between fossil and modern data and the addition of recently available palaeontological information influence our understanding of the current extinction crisis. Recent scientific results indicate that current extinction rates are higher than would be expected from the fossil record, highlighting the need for effective conservation measures (Barnosky et al., 2011).

The ongoing sixth mass species extinction (also known as the Holocene extinction or Anthropocene extinction) is the result of the destruction of component populations leading to eventual extirpation of entire species. Populations and species extinctions have severe implications for society through the degradation of ecosystem services.

### **Cosmic Perspective or Higher Consciousness**

In the context of the problems and challenges humanity faces – both long term and short term – it is useful to widen our consciousness or have a long-term perspective. Astrophysics and modern cosmology urge us to have global and cosmic perspectives in spite of the acute problems that we face. Though human beings may not be the center of the world, a cosmic perspective informs us that our universe might not even be the only universe.

Who gets to celebrate this cosmic view of life? Not the farmworkers who have to move from job to job just to feed their families. Not the factory worker building electronics for little pay. Certainly not the homeless people rummaging through the trash for food. We need the luxury of time not spent on mere survival. Or we need to be young, comfortable enough that we don't need to worry about food or safety, and willing to look up at the stars in the sky (Tyson, 2019: 130)!

The American astrophysicist urges us to imagine a world in which everyone, but especially people with power and influence, holds an expanded view of our place in the cosmos. With that perspective, our problems would shrink—or never arise at all—and we could celebrate our small earthly differences, not fight and argue about them (Tyson, 2019: 131).

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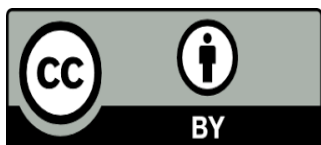
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## Communication: From Illusion to Communion

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*Abstract:* Based on the insight from Pope Francis's encyclical letter, "Fertilla Tutti" "we are looking into the illusion of communication. For this, we go through communication, traditional communication, and modern communication, in order to see how people are switching from traditional media to new media. Digital communication wants to bring everything out into the open; people's lives are combed over, laid bare and bandied about, often anonymously. The more we communicate, the less we suffer, and the better we feel about everything around us

*Keywords:* media, communication, traditional, modern, illusion.

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## Introduction

The concept, “communication” is central to all forms of human interactions cum endeavours. It is a two-way interactive process, between the sender and receiver that involves the sharing of ideas and experiences. According to Oso, communication is an important resource for any social organization. This is true given that communication, irrespective of the level or setting, carries with it meaningful messages that could lead to a healthy exchange of ideas, knowledge, feeds, experience, and other factual information. Communication relates to the exchange of facts, opinions, or emotions by two or more people, and in an organization, it could be words, letters, symbols, or messages, in a way that one organization member shares meaning and understanding with another. Many scientists agree that communication is the transfer of information from one person to another, but only if the information is understandable

by the receiver.

Communication maintains and animates life. It is also the motor and expression of social activity and civilization. It leads people and peoples from instinct to inspiration, through an unregulated process and system of enquiry, command and control. Communication creates a common pool of ideas, strengthens the feeling of togetherness through the exchange of messages, and translates thoughts into action. It integrates knowledge, organization, and power and runs as a thread linking the

Communication creates a common pool of ideas, strengthens the feeling of togetherness through the exchange of messages, and translates thoughts into action.

earliest memory of man to his noblest aspiration through constant striving for a better life.

Media has changed the way humans interact with each other and it has also evolved tremendously over the years. Many people are switching from traditional media to new media and every day we spend much qualities of our time on technology. Whether it is to communicate through mobile phones or delivering of work through e-mails or enjoying entertainment such as watching television and so on, our life just seems to revolve around technology.

In order to arrive at this, first I want to reflect on communication, and then on traditional communication. It leads to modern communication, and finally, the illusion of communication. This leads me to study the significance of this topic and apply it to my own life.

### **Communication and Communion**

The exchange of information or passing of information, ideas or thought from one person to the other or from one end to the other is communication. According to some scholars, communication is "a process of meaningful interaction among human beings. More specifically, it is the process by which meanings are perceived and understandings are reached among human beings." Communication may be understood as "an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions or emotions by two or more persons." Thus communication brings people together, closer to each other, leading to genuine communion.

Communication is one of the important tools that aid us in connecting with people. Whether you are a student or a working professional, good communication is something that will get you far ahead. Proper communication can help you to solve a number of issues and resolve problems. Communication is not merely essential but the need of the hour. It allows you to get the trust of the people and, at the same time, carry better opportunities before you. Some important points to be considered are as follows:

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- Help to Build Relationships

No matter what you are studying or working on, communication can aid you in building a relationship with people. If you are studying, you communicate with classmates and teachers to build a relationship with them. Likewise, in offices and organizations too, you make relationships with the staff, the boss, and other people around.

- Improve the Working Environment

There are a number of issues which can be handled through the right and effective communication. Even planning needs communication, both written and verbal. Hence, it is essential to be good at them so as to fill in the communication gap.

- Foster Strong Team

Communication helps to build a strong team environment in the office and other places. Any work which requires teamwork is done in a team. It is only possible if the head communicates everything well and in the right direction.

- Find the Right Solutions

Through communication, anyone can find solutions to even serious problems. When we talk, we get ideas from people that help us solve issues. This is where communication comes into play. Powerful communication is the strength of any organization and can help it in many ways.

- Earns More Respect

If our communication skills are admirable, people will love and give us respect. If there is any problems, we will be the first person to be contacted. Thus, it will increase our importance. Hence, we can say that communications skills can make a big change to your reputation in society.

## **Traditional Communication**

Traditional communication means that two or more people are carrying on a conversation in person, so they can see body language and other non-verbal signals. Much of this is lost in non-traditional communication, making it trickier to convey ideas. Even as tech continues to improve, many people still prefer interpersonal interaction. Human interaction is

Traditional communication means that two or more people are carrying on a conversation in person, so they can see body language and other non-verbal signals.



powerful. Making time to interact with potential clients face-to-face leaves a lasting impression. Our effort to build relationships can yield high returns for your organization. This traditional communication can bring new business opportunities.

In this time and age, people can communicate in many different ways rather than speaking face to face. Technology is worldwide and you can communicate with people from anywhere in the world in a matter of minutes. Communications technology can include mobile phones, tablets, iPods, iPhones, iPads, and social media.

### **Modern Communication**

In today's world, communication has become very easy for people to contact and communicate with people around the world, and it is because of communication technology. Mobile phones are the best example of communication technology. Through mobile phones, people can contact and communicate with people, friends, and relatives around the world very easily and at less cost. Before the invention of mobile phones and telephones, people used letters for communication with their relatives and friends. It was very difficult for people to communicate through letters because sending letters takes a lot of time and also charges money.

Technology wastes our precious time. We might wonder how I can say that modern technology wastes our precious time. Actually, this is one of the bad effects of technology on us. But we didn't recognize it. There are a lot of modern technological gadgets that most people use and waste their precious time. Like television, video games, play stations, music players, and most mobile phones. People mostly use

these kinds of technological devices most of the time and waste their precious time doing unimportant activities. They use these devices during their work time, study time, and even in bed instead of sleeping. They like to use such kinds of modern technological devices.

## **The Illusion of Communication**

One of the disadvantages of using social media is the loss of social skills. The reason behind this is that many people are found to be socially awkward when it comes to interacting with people in person. Therefore, they are unable to converse well with others. Oddly enough, while closed and intolerant attitudes towards others are on the rise, distances are otherwise shrinking or disappearing to the point that the right to privacy scarcely exists. Everything has become a kind of spectacle to be examined and inspected, and people's lives are now under constant surveillance. Digital communication wants to bring everything out into the open; people's lives are combed over, laid bare and bandied about, often anonymously. Respect for others disintegrates, and even as we dismiss, ignore or keep others distant, we can shamelessly peer into every detail of their lives.

For their part, digital campaigns of hatred and destruction are not – as some would have us believe – a positive form of mutual support, but simply an association of individuals united against a perceived common enemy. “Digital media can also expose people to the risk of addiction, isolation and a

One of the disadvantages of using social media is the loss of social skills. The reason behind this is that many people are found to be socially awkward when it comes to interacting with people in person. Therefore, they are unable to converse well with others.

gradual loss of contact with concrete reality, blocking the development of authentic interpersonal relationships”. [46] They lack the physical gestures, facial expressions, moments of silence, body language and even the smells, the trembling of hands, the blushes and perspiration that speak to us and are a part of human communication. Digital relationships, which do not demand the slow and gradual cultivation of friendships, stable interaction or the building of a consensus that matures over time, have the appearance of sociability. Yet they do not really build community; instead, they tend to disguise and expand the very individualism that finds expression in xenophobia and in contempt for the vulnerable. Digital connectivity is not enough to build bridges. It is not capable of uniting humanity.

- Distraction from Real Life

Sitting next to someone who is engaged in a heated text message conversation can cause you to feel lonely and left out. When people use technology as their primary means of communication, they can become so engrossed in their gadgets that they acquire a form of tunnel vision. Without realizing it, these thumb talkers may forget about job responsibilities, neglect relationships with family and friends and become dangerous drivers.

- The Lost Art of Conversation

Technology such as text messages and email allows us to communicate in short, carefully-edited sentences that lack immediacy and completely remove the contextual information provided by tone of voice and body language. As a result, people who connect with others primarily through technology might find it difficult to engage in

normal conversation, since they may have issues understanding non-verbal cues due to lack of practice with face-to-face interaction that can't be paused, edited or filtered.

- Deteriorating Language

Books, dictionaries and treatises have been written on the vocabulary and peculiarities of online and text messaging slang. This slang can prove extremely confusing for people who are not native English speakers, making it harder to discern the meaning of a sentence. People who regularly text or chat online may end up using it, out of sheer habit, even in situations where it is inappropriate or out of place, such as in business messages or school essays.

- Enabling Rudeness

Because communicating through technology creates a barrier between people that isn't there when speaking face to face, some may find it easier to be rude and aggressive. Insulting or threatening messages from anonymous commenters are par for the course for anybody who regularly publishes online content, and even lack of anonymity doesn't alleviate the issue. So Facebook arguments and the like are also relatively common. Sherry Turkle, professor of the social studies of science and technology at MIT, suggests that this happens because technology keeps us from having to see the reaction of the person on the receiving end of the message, making it harder to empathize with him.

## Conclusion

Communication is of the utmost importance. It is important to share one's thoughts and feelings in order to live a fuller and happier life. The more we communicate, the less we suffer, and the better we feel about everything around us. However, it is all the more necessary to learn the art of effective communication to put across one's point well gently and genuinely. So we need both

Genuine communication makes us good and understanding people. Such communication will help us to encounter the other with empathy! That is true communion.

traditional and modern communication. When we take this together, it's so helpful to our development. We just remember that both have advantages and disadvantages. So we want to select the good side and remove the negative effects. Genuine communication makes us good and understanding people. Such communication will help us to encounter the other with empathy! That is true communion.

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## **Globalisation and Progress: With a Sustainable and Shared Roadmap**

**Carel Hezil D'Souza SRA**  
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*Abstract:* Basing on the enriching encyclical Fratelli Tutti by Pope Francis the author reflects on one of the dark cloud mentioned in the letter as “Globalization and process without a shared road map”. In this essay the author highlights the importance and the uniqueness of the Human being and the importance of the right of the individual. The globalization has brought the entire world together but while coming together they have given a rise to greed, possessiveness and selfishness which has turned the sacred human souls into evil. The human beings who were regarded higher than the other living beings because intelligence and creative minds are now left less good than the other creatures. Taking present crisis caused by the evil the author reflects on the suffering of the human being specially the poor and the disabled understood as powerless. The goal is to give due respect and considering everyone equal and a fellow travellers travelling in same boat.

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*Keywords: Progress, Sustainability, Fratelli tutti, Fellow travellers.*

## **Introduction**

Is progressed globalization beneficiary? If it benefits people, then why there is lot of sufferings and differentiation in human life? Who is the cause for all? Will it be possible to reunite this torn world? Inspired by Pope Francis's call to fraternity I want to show in this article the role of the human being in globalization and its impact on the present generation.

First and foremost, I want to understand the human nature and the abilities of the human being and the developments in all the aspects of life. Secondly I want show how the human being has become proud and gone out of the path in order to become popular. Thirdly I want to come to a conclusion by finding the solution to the problem. Here mainly I want to focus on the invention of Stephen Hawking. And finally want to show that each and every individual is precious and it is our duty to make this world a better living place.

## **Globalization and Progress**

“The uniqueness of humans has been claimed on many grounds, but most often because of our tool-making, culture, language, reason and morality. We have them, the other animals don't, and so the argument goes that's that” says Carl Sagan (n.d.). Human beings are one of the supreme creations of this universe than the other animals, birds, plants and all the living beings. It's true that there are lot of similarities we find in the life cycle of human beings and other living creatures but still they cannot be as effective as human beings. There are three highest categories that makes human as unique and different. First and foremost is the conceptual language. It is true that the language can be spoken by the animal, birds and also by plants. But human being is able to communicate a



conceptual language that is relating to the ideas and the qualities that cannot touch. Secondly human being is creative. If we see in the world of today there are lot of development done by human being, we can see the creative art, paintings, dresses, creative dance styles, usage of techniques and so on. And so to say there is creativity in an animal kingdom too. Still they cannot be compared with creative minds of the human beings. Thirdly we can say that the human being is related to the particular religion, beliefs or the gods and are also performing various rites and rituals based on their beliefs where the animals can never and ever are able to form such understandings (Pandikattu, 2011).

There is a sharing of ideas, resources, cultures and strengthening of economical sate of the country and the relation between nations and also the improvement in the people's welfare and the development of new technologies.

Such is the human being. In the holy Bible we clearly get to read the accounts regarding the creation and developments of human being with their new inventions, skills and ideas gradually starting from a point to the whole mean to say from place to place, state to state and countries to countries the assimilation of economics and society through the flow of information, ideas, technologies, goods, services, capital, finance, and people shortly to say

globalization. There is a great impact of globalization on the world. There is a sharing of ideas, resources, cultures and strengthening of economical sate of the country and the relation between nations and also the improvement in

the people's welfare and the development of new technologies.

### **Outbreak of Tension**

We feel proud when we hear about the achievements of the human being in all the aspects of life. One hand there is lot of goodness in the world through globalization but at the same time it has turned to be disaster due to the selfish motives we can say. Especially if we see in this modern world the advanced technology plays a major role in globalization where the means of transport, communication and information has become much easier than ever before. So to say by the influence of this advanced technology the world has become the fast moving world. We want everything fast just like what we call it as fast food. The people have lost patience in everything. There is no patience to listen to the other person, there is no patience to look around to see what exactly is happening, there is no patience even to listen to once own conscience and as a result the value of life is faded out.

The major consequences of globalization today can be of unemployment where the work of the four persons is done by one machine. The other bad impacts can be of the competitive power of the rich countries, the political leaders or the famous businessmen over the poor and the developing countries however they are neglected. Thirdly the impact on the culture and the traditions so to say the discipline of life is lost. There is no room for morality. Life has become like happy go lucky. And fourthly the impact on nature due to the excessive usage of the technology, electronic gadgets and the chemical industries. Basically to say the aim is to gain power, richness and to live a comfortable self centered life free of pain. In an everything sufferers are only the poor and innocent people as Pope Francis makes a statement in his Apostolic Exhortation

that “whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor” (Francis, 2013: 2).

### A Shared Roadmap

As we see the world, the world has no longer left good to live for. We find lot of evil, suffering, the increasing diseases, wars, the global warming, and natural calamities so on. Nobody can ever imagine how the world will be in the future. Being well aware of the potential threats like artificial intelligence, climate change, GM viruses and nuclear wars, Stephen Hawking one of the famous scientist speaks something similar to it. He gives the solution for the present challenge of the world that of leaving this earth and to move to the Mars or the other planets in order to begin new lives over there or else face extinctions (Rincon, 2018). In one way to say his predictions are very much true but in other way moving to the Mars is not the real solution. If at all we move to the Mars, will not Mars too will one day turn just like earth?

“Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor” –Pope Francis

So the solution is not in running out of the problem rather in challenging it. So to say the real solution is depends on our individual initiatives to come together to turn this world into a living world. It is not a one man show rather it is the concern of the whole human race. There is a great need of unity. And this unity will not possible until we break the walls that we have erected out of selfishness between the rich and the poor, the able and the disable. The solution is in reaching out to the people keeping in mind

the welfare of the human family just as our Holy Father says “How wonderful would it be, even as we discover faraway planets, to rediscover the needs of the brothers and the sisters who orbit around us” (Francis, 2020:31).

## Conclusion

As I have reflected on this enriching encyclical of pope I feel that the greatest challenge in the present world context is human himself. It is true that God the Heavenly Father is the author of our lives. But it is also true that the humans have made themselves the authors of their death mean to say humans are the cause of their own destruction. Today what we can see in the world is only misery. The suffering and the death caused by the Pandemic, wars, conflicts between nations, implement of new laws by the political leaders which are against the welfare of the people specially the poor. Genuinely to say in all the ways the innocent poor people have become the victims. We have regarded them as powerless when we fail to realize that we too are in a same boat.

Finally, the need of the hour is not the project to Mars rather it is the building of the larger human family here on this earth. Human beings are the centre of this universe though rich or poor all are humans belong to the same family of *Homo sapiens*. So each and every individual person has to be respected, honored and are given opportunities to have their rights to live and also to be part of the global activities and the sharers in the resources. Our survival is in our hand. If we are going to continue what we are doing at present surely the

Each and every individual person has to be respected, honored and are given opportunities to have their rights to live and also to be part of the global activities and the sharers in the resources. Our survival is in our hand.

chapter of human race will be closed one day as per the prediction of Hawking. If not let us be a change, let us be brothers and sisters to our fellow human being. let us be a beacon of light in the lives of the suffering individuals.

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## **Nationalism: Global Problems Need Global Answers**

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*Abstract:* Today we are living in a fragmented world. We, the modern Homo sapiens have built barriers around us in the name of safety, security, state, country and nationalism. The nationalism is born to offer solutions to the existential realities of the mother earth. The problems are such as nuclear, technological and ecological. The act of the modern man is endangering the survival of the species including the human species. Therefore, I have taken the article “Nationalism: Global problems need global answers” as the primary source which is written by Yuval Noah Harari in the book *21 lessons for the 21st century*. Throughout this article, I will explore on the question Does returning to nationalism offer real solutions to the problems that induced the nationalism to be born? I will explore the areas of how the modern world deforms the mother earth for their selfish motives, what could be the real substantial solution for the

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cry of the mother earth with the summary of the Harari's article, my personal critical evaluation and applying it into the present scenario.

*Keywords:* *Homo sapiens*, Nationalism, Nuclear, Technological, Ecological, Isolationism Cosmotheandric spirituality and interconnectivity

## **Introduction**

There once lived a miller with his daughter. When the miller was at work all day turning grain into flour, he loved nothing more than to think up tall tales to amaze people.

One day the King came to town. He heard the miller talking about his daughter. The miller was saying that his daughter was the most amazing girl in their village, if not in all the land.

"You there!" said the King. "What is so amazing about your daughter?"

The father bowed. He said, "Your Majesty, my daughter is so clever that she can spin straw into gold!"

"Spin straw into gold?" said the King. "That is amazing! She must come to my palace. I will put her to the test!"

"But I mean..." said the miller. He wished he had not told the King such a thing! But now it was too late.

So the miller's daughter had to go to the King's palace at once. The King took her to a room piled with straw from floor to ceiling. He pointed to the spinning wheel in the middle of the room. He said, "Now get to work! If by morning you have not spun this straw into gold, you will die!"

The King slammed the door and locked it behind him. The girl was all alone.

The world today is following just like that king who was greedier. We can drink the milk from the breast but not blood. The globalized world today is sucking the blood of the mother earth in the name of technology and

For the life of her, she did not know what to do. She had no idea how to spin straw into gold! "What will I do?" she called out to the air. "No one can do such a thing!"

Just then, an odd little man stood before her. "Did I hear you say, 'no one'?" he said.

"What?" said the girl, shocked. "Where did you come from?"

"Never mind that!" said the imp. "What matters is I can save your life. For a price, of course."

"You can spin straw into gold?" said the girl. "What kind of price do you have in mind?" She did not know if she should trust this stranger.

"What you give must be important to you," said the imp. "How about that necklace?"

The girl thought, "Indeed, my necklace is very dear to me. But not as much as my freedom." So she said to the imp, "Very well. If by morning you can turn this room full of straw into gold, this necklace is yours."



The little man got to work. Very busy he was, all night long. Whirr, whirr, whirr, until morning. By then, not one piece of straw was left in the room – all of it was turned into piles of pure gold thread!

“You did it!” said the girl.

“Of course I did!” snapped the imp. “Now hand over that necklace!”

“A deal is a deal,” said the girl. She took off her necklace and gave it to him. And he was gone.

When the King stepped into the room, he was very glad. “Look at that!” he said, running the gold thread through his fingers. “Pure gold!”

“Yes,” said the girl. “Now if you please, sir. I’d like to go home now.”

“Not so fast!” said the King. “I will have my servants bring new straw to fill up a room larger than this one. You will stay there tonight. Beware – by morning all the straw must be spun into gold. If you care about your life!” (Pandikattu, 2002).

The world today is following just like that king who was greedier. We can drink the milk from the breast but not blood. The globalized world today is sucking the blood of the mother earth in the name of technology and development. Humankind’s life longs for happiness, serenity, peace and love in the world. This happiness, serenity, peace and love are attainable when everyone is together irrespective of all the conditions. The Homo sapiens for millions of years lived and died in this way but modern humankind constrained them with limitations on the basics of nation, state or country. There are various factors which induced to this nationalistic life that we see later. But the question, we have to arise is Does returning

to the nationalism or nationalistic life offer real solutions to the factors that induced to the nationalism? When we look at our life of nations, states, districts and provinces from multiple angles, we arrive at a conclusion that other creatures such as birds, animals, and reptiles are more independent than human kind. They can explore the whole world; they can venture into any corner of the world. But, do you think that humankind can do as same as they go on venturing and exploring. The genuine answer is no. Returning to nationalism has not offered real solutions to the challenges that induced people towards the nationalistic and individualistic life and more over I would say that nationalistic is not naturalistic but individualistic and destructive.

### **What is Nationalism?**

Nationalism is an idea and movement that promotes the interests of a particular nation, especially with the aim of gaining and maintaining the nation's sovereignty over its homeland. The nation is a territorial community of nativity. One is born into a nation. The significance attributed to this biological fact of birth into the historically evolving, territorial structure of the cultural community of the nation is why the nation is one among a number of forms of kinship. It differs from other forms of kinship such as the family because of the centrality of territory. It differs from other territorial societies such as a tribe, city-state, or various 'ethnic groups' not merely by the greater extent of its territory, but also because of its relatively uniform culture that provides stability, that is, continuation over time. I feel that this definition itself is meant for the human beings. This definition for nationalism is not inclusive. They worry about the Liberty, Equality and fraternity of the human beings but never bother about the other species. We need to break this attitude first and foremost to bring a balanced earth where everyone is safe including all the species. The problem, Harari warns, starts when benign

patriotism morphs into chauvinistic ultra-nationalism. Instead of believing that my nation is *unique*, which is true of all nations, I might begin feeling that my nation is *supreme*.

### Inducements for Nationalistic Life: Harari's Basic Insights

Our life is at stake in this millennium because we are deforming the face of our mother earth in the name of development. The natural calamities are the signs that show that our mother earth is in anguish, sorrow and she is constantly weeping for the enormous harm we have done to her. Today the ecology is more inclusive and everybody feels the pinch of it since in one or other way they are affected by the eco problems. As human beings have symptoms for each sickness, Mother Earth also has some symptoms to show us that she is sick. The symptoms are erratic climatic changes, melting of the polar ice caps, rising of the ocean levels by over two feet, inundation of coastal cities and towns, a rise in the frequency and vehemence of droughts, storms, rains, floods, tidal waves, nuclear and technological challenges. It isn't a coincidence that skepticism about climate change tends to be the preserve of the nationalist right, says Harari. You rarely see left-wing socialists tweet that climate change is a Chinese

When there is no rational answer, but only a global answer to the problem of global warming, some nationalist politicians prefer to believe the problem does not exist. So these ecological, nuclear and technological problems are the factors that induce the people to return to and to be

hoax. When there is no rational answer, but only a global answer to the problem of global warming, some nationalist politicians prefer to believe the problem does not exist. So these ecological, nuclear and technological problems are the factors that induce the people to return to and to be constrained by nation and nationalism.

Because, the scary factors such as ecological, nuclear and teleological cannot be solved very easily unless a group of people come together under one wing as a nation, state or country as for Harrai. We see in the book that Take, for example, the ancient tribes that lived along the

Only a common effort to build huge dams and dig hundreds of kilometers of canals could hope to restrain and harness

Nile River thousands of years ago. The river was their lifeblood. It watered their fields and carried their commerce. But it was an unpredictable ally. Too little rain – and people starved to death; too much rain – and the river overflowed its banks and destroyed entire villages. No tribe could solve this problem by itself, because each tribe commanded only a small section of the river and could mobilize no more than a few hundred laborers. Only a common effort to build huge dams and dig hundreds of kilometers of canals could hope to restrain and harness the mighty river. This was one of the reasons why the tribes gradually coalesced into a single nation that had the power to build dams and canals, regulate the flow of the river, build grain reserves for lean years, and establish a countrywide system of transport and communication. This is how gradually people started the nationalistic life.

### **a. The Nuclear Challenge**

Humankind successfully rose to the nuclear challenge. Russia and the USA have recently embarked on a new nuclear arms race, developing novel doomsday machines that threaten to undo the hard-won gains of the last decades and bring us back

to the brink of nuclear annihilation. It was extremely difficult to construct the internationalist regime that prevented nuclear war and safeguarded global peace. No doubt we need to adapt this regime to the changing conditions of the world. But abandoning this regime altogether and reverting to nationalist power politics would be an irresponsible gamble. True, in the nineteenth century countries played the nationalist game without destroying human civilization. But that was in the pre-Hiroshima era. As long as humans know how to enrich uranium and plutonium, their survival depends on privileging the prevention of nuclear war over the interests of any particular nation. Zealous nationalists who cry ‘our country first!’ should ask themselves whether their country by itself, without a robust system of international cooperation, can protect the world – or even itself – from nuclear destruction.

### **b. The Ecological Challenge**

Humans are destabilizing the global biosphere on multiple fronts. We are taking more and more resources out of the environment, while pumping back into it enormous quantities of waste and poison, thereby changing the composition of the soil, the water and the atmosphere. We are hardly even aware of the myriad ways in which we disrupt the delicate ecological balance that has been shaped over millions of years. Modern industrial farming is based on artificially fertilizing the fields with plenty of phosphorus which caused the plants to become extinct. Whole ecosystem is degraded. If we continue with our present course it will cause not just the annihilation of a large percentage of all life forms, but it might also sap the foundations of human civilization. In order to avoid such things, the nationalism and nationalistic isolationism

comes in. Nationalist isolationism is probably even more dangerous in the context of climate change than of nuclear war.

### **c. The Technological Challenge**

The third existential threat of the twenty-first century is technological disruption. The nuclear war and climate change threaten only the physical survival of humankind, disruptive technologies might change the very nature of humanity, and are therefore entangled with humans' deepest ethical and religious beliefs. While everyone agrees that we should avoid nuclear war and ecological meltdown, people have widely different opinions about using bioengineering which shows that the technology became inseparable and part and parcel of the human existence. The technological revolutions of the twenty-first century should really be understood in cosmic terms since everyone in the world interconnected through technology. Therefore, in order to make wise choices about the future of life we need to go way beyond the nationalist viewpoint and look at things from a global or even a cosmic perspective.

### **Jesus the Cosmic Liberator**

Jesus in his life and teaching very much emphasized on the togetherness and community living with loving each other as brothers and sisters. He didn't give way for the division among peoples. But, today everyone is divided on the basis of social structures. Jesus learns and draws profound insights from nature such as God's unconditional love, whereby he sends rain on the good and bad alike. His parables were drawn from nature and he taught using insights from nature, using imageries like the sun and the rain, salt and light (Mt 5:13-14), the birds of the air (Mt 6:26), the lilies of the field (Mt 6:28, Lk 12:27), the grass (Mt 6:30), grapes (Mt 7:16), good trees producing good fruit (Mt 7:17-18), the seed, the rocks, and the foxes (Lk 9:58), the mustard seed (Mt 13:31-32), the sowing

of seed (Mt 13:4-9, 18, 23), vine (Jn 15:1-17, Mk 12:1-12, Mt 21:33-44, Lk 20:9-19), the lost sheep (Lk 15:4-7) and shepherds (Jn 10:1-15). He is the Good Shepherd (Jn 10:11, Mk 6:30-44) who brings abundant life (Jn 10:10). In his preaching he identified himself with water (Jn 4:13-14), bread (Jn 6:48) and light (Jn 8:12). In and through such imageries he taught the people to have a loving disposition towards nature. For him the Father's love is for all that he has created, even the lilies and he says that God provides for them all (Lk 12:24).

### My Personal Take

Today we are living in a fragmented world. We, the modern Homo sapiens, have built barriers around us in the name of safety, security, state, country and nationalism. Chaos and confusions are taking place in the name of nationalism. This very nationalistic thinking crates a vibrant selfishness among the people of particular nation who don't even consider the neighbour people of other nation as equal with them. This superior complex reality instilled in them is very precarious and easily it helps them to take violence on other nations, people and nature. Just remember the war of the USA over Iran. The US wanted to take the oil wealth of Iran and therefore, on the name of war it fulfilled. This is how the ecology is being destroyed on the condition of nationalism. They are now an independent nation with nationalism and

Each of these three problems – nuclear war, ecological collapse and technological disruption – is enough to threaten the future of human civilization. But taken together, they add up to an unprecedented existential crisis, especially because they are likely to reinforce and

ideology but the question is does returning to nationalism offer real solutions to the facts that induced the nationalism to be born? The genuine answer is no.

Each of these three problems – nuclear war, ecological collapse and technological disruption – is enough to threaten the future of human civilization. But taken together, they add up to an unprecedented existential crisis, especially because they are likely to reinforce and compound one another. At present our mother earth lost her originality and original face. She is dominated by the climatic chaos the climatic chaos are overconsumption of natural recourses, air pollution, deforestation pesticides, artificial fertilizers, developmental destruction, globalization, water scarcity, water pollution, global warming, vanishing species, overpopulation, genetically modified food, noise pollution and ozone depletion. The ecological crisis is endangering the very survival of the human species together with all other life forms within this millennium. Within the next 100 years the average temperature of the planet will rise by 4.5 degree Celsius and this rise in temperature is a purely man-made phenomenon due to the uncontrolled emission of poisonous gases from the industrialized nations. Due to this rise in temperature of the planet there will be erratic climatic changes, melting of the polar ice caps, rising of the ocean levels by over two feet, inundation of coastal cities and towns, a rise in the frequency and vehemence of droughts, storms, rains, floods, and tidal waves. This time calls for immediate and concerted action from all concerned. Though the human race has been vandalizing the resources of our planet for more than a century for the selfish needs of a consumerist society, Mother Earth is constantly struggling to protect herself from such vandalism. She cries in anguish at the destruction of the environment threatening the very survival of all living beings including the human species. What is the cause for the degradation and



deformation of the mother earth? The three principal and important causes are nuclear crisis, technological crisis and ecological crisis. Nationalism is born to offer real solutions to this existential ecological crisis of our mother earth. As raised in the beginning, does returning to nationalism offer real solutions to the existential problem? The genuine answer could be no. why because a nation cannot eradicate all these problems alone. It needs the cooperation and collaboration of all the nations since all of us are travelling in the same boat called mother earth. Every nation should conscientize the people that human species is one among the species on earth and there is interconnectivity between all the species.

The interconnectivity is being broken by the nuclear, technological and ecological crisis. The technological gadgets which are connected through the radiation and magnetic waves are engendering the survival of the birds. Many birds vanished due to this electromagnetic wave and radiation. This technological problem breaks the interconnectivity that is

The interconnectivity is being broken by the nuclear, technological and ecological crisis. The technological gadgets which are connected through the radiation and magnetic waves are engendering the

present in all the species. When the interconnectivity is broken, then the species are vanishing and the continuous vanishing of the species would cause destruction of human survival on earth. For instance, Trees would live without human beings' presence but human beings cannot live without trees. Einstein says "if the bees disappeared off the surface of the globe then man would only have four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more

plants, no more animals and no more man”. And like trees many other creatures can live without human beings but we cannot continue our existence without those creatures. This shows the interconnectedness. Therefore, don’t harm nature; don’t deform the face of the mother earth. Mother earth can fulfil the need but not your greed. When we conscientize people like this through education, then we can give the medication to the wounded mother earth.

### **Contextualization**

There is something fundamentally wrong with the world we live in. Added to it, there is also something basically wrong with the humans who live in this world. So however hard humans try to improve the world, there is really no scope for a better future. (Pandikattu, 2002). There is a tremendous transformation stuck between the homo sapiens of the past and present. The homo sapiens of the past were more of leavers and the homo sapiens of the present are more of takers.

### **Difference between Leavers and Takers**

#### **The Leavers Are More Awakened, Vigilant and Cosmotheandric in Nature**

Why do I say that the leavers are more awaken and vigilant? It is because; they were aware and conscious about their past, present and the future. With this awareness, they approached each and everything on the earth and as a result they were very friendly with the humans, nature and divine. There was a Cosmotheandric world view.

## No Superiority Complex over Other Species

The leavers were so concerned about the upcoming species including human beings. The interesting fact is that they didn't have a superior mind set over the other creatures. Therefore, they loved and left us the creatures without missing any species that was created on this earth. Today the question is: Can we leave everything to the next generation that we see, experience and enjoy on this earth? The genuine answer is no. That is why the present generation is called takers.

## Takers Are Destroyers and Utilitarianist in Nature

The takers are destroyers. They do all the nonsense they want to do against nature to accumulate money and wealth. They follow utilitarianism. They don't bother about the implications of their acts. They do whatever they want provided it must be happy and useful for them. They don't care about the negative implications of their harm that they have done to nature.

The takers are destroyers. They do all the nonsense they want to do against nature to accumulate money and wealth. They follow utilitarianism. They don't bother about the implications of their acts.

## Dominion Over Other Creatures

The takers are dominant in nature. They dominate the whole creation by destroying them. They feel that they are the superiors of the whole creation. In order to prove it substantially, they misquote the biblical verse also. The ninety percentages of people today are takers. This ninety percent people are cruel towards the ecologists, eco warriors and eco activists.

If you are counting on rising oceans, dwindling food supplies and mass migrations to divert our attention from algorithms and genes, think again. As the ecological crisis deepens, the development of high-risk, high-gain technologies will probably only accelerate.

### Is the Leaver Life Possible Anymore?

The sad part is that it is almost impossible to revert to a Hunter, Gatherer way of life without significant, perhaps catastrophic societal collapse and rebuilding. It might be possible in remote parts of Africa, Alaska, outback Australia, or the Amazon jungle. But our world is just not set up for that way of life anymore. There are too many people to feed. We need agriculture to survive. Without it, our planet's natural food resources would be stripped so thoroughly that natural recovery before human extinction would be next to impossible.

If you are counting on rising oceans, dwindling food supplies and mass migrations to divert our attention from algorithms and genes, think again. As the ecological crisis deepens, the development of high-risk, high-gain technologies will probably only accelerate.

## Reversing the Eventual Destruction of Our Planet

Everybody should adopt the life style of the leavers. Why do I say that everyone should become leavers is that just look at the daily life of the people. They are some home fed the attitude of the takers. As long as the attitude of the takers lives with us we cannot save nature, we cannot love nature.

We can follow the Cosmotheandric Spirituality by the following means:

- In recovering the lost dignity and honour of Mother Earth we need to adopt a Cosmotheandric spirituality taking into consideration the intimate link between the cosmos, the divine, and the human race. The Infinite manifestation of the Divine is the Cosmos and Mother Earth emerges from the cosmos to give life to the human race. This spirituality makes the affirmation that every being is created by God. This spirituality invites us to live a life of harmony and peace with oneself, others, cosmos and God.
- We could stop using fossil fuels. Right now we are making the Middle East rich by buying their oil because it is convenient and easy. We need to rebuild our electrical grid so that it is modern, and can utilize solar infrastructure. Then we need to work hard to decrease our dependence on fossil fuels in favor of renewable energy technology.
- We could work toward establishing a societal norm that calls for smaller families. Gone are the days of high infant mortality rates and family farms that require many hands to operate. Families no longer need more children than parents. Two children in a family is enough.
- We could make electric cars the standard instead of the exception. At one time California required all manufacturers that sold cars in the state to have at least one electric car. It brought about some great innovations and vehicles. But the oil industry squashed this.

## Conclusion

Today we are standing at the crossroads. Nationalism didn't offer real solutions to the cry of mother earth. Today many disciplines are born out of nationalism which are more dangerous. They are liberalization, globalization and privatization. On these grounds, our natural resources are destroyed. In order to save mother earth, we need to have Cosmotheandric spirituality. If we continue deforming our mother earth, then we will meet the tremendous destruction caused by the eco problems. Through our education, we need to provoke the conscience of humanity to radical action for a sustainable and harmonious environment for the very survival of all life forms on this planet.

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## Book Review

Collins, F. S. (2008). *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*. London: Free Press. ISBN: 9781416542742 pp. 283.

Dr. Francis Collins, head of the Human Genome Project, is one of the world's leading scientists. He works at the cutting edge of the study of DNA, the code of life. Yet he is also a man of unshakable faith in God. Dr. Collins believes that faith in God and faith in science can coexist within a person and be harmonious. In *The Language of God* he makes his case for belief in God and for science. He has heard every argument against faith from scientists, which he refutes logically. He has also heard the needless rejection of scientific truths by some people of faith, which he opposes. He explains his own journey from atheism to faith, and then takes readers for a stunning tour of modern science to show that physics, chemistry, and biology can all fit together with belief in God and the Bible. *The Language of God* is essential reading for anyone who wonders about the deepest questions of faith: Why are we here? How did we get here? What does life mean? This is a journey from non-faith to faith that every believer should travel.

Some quotes from this book: “At this point, godless materialists might be cheering. If humans evolved strictly by mutation and natural selection, who needs God to explain us? To this, I reply: I do. The comparison of chimp and human sequences, interesting as it is, does not tell us what it means to be human. In my views, DNA sequence alone, even if accompanied by a vast trove of data on biological function, will never explain certain special human attributes, such as the knowledge of the Moral Law and the universal search for God.” (p. 140)

“I do not believe that the God who created all the universe, and who communes with His people through prayer and spiritual insight, would expect



us to deny the obvious truths of the natural world that science has revealed to us, in order to prove our love for Him.” (210)

“Today, we are learning the language in which God created life. We are gaining ever more awe for the complexity, the beauty, and the wonder of God’s most divine and sacred gift.” (2)

“In this modern era of cosmology, evolution, and the human genome, is there still the possibility of a richly satisfying harmony between the scientific and spiritual worldviews? I answer with a resounding yes! In my view, there is no conflict in being a rigorous scientist and a person who believes in a God who takes a personal interest in each one of us. Science’s domain is to explore nature. God’s domain is in the spiritual world, a realm not possible to explore with the tools and language of science. It must be examined with the heart, the mind, and the soul—and the mind must find a way to embrace both realms.” (5-6)

“Science is progressive and self-correcting: no significantly erroneous conclusions or false hypotheses can be sustained for long, as newer observations will ultimately knock down incorrect constructs. But over a long period of time, a consistent set of observations sometimes emerges that leads to a new framework of understanding. That framework is then given a much more substantive description, and is called a “theory”—the theory of gravitation, the theory of relativity, or the germ theory, for instance.” (58)

“The more I examine the universe and the details of its architecture, the more evidence I find that the universe in some sense must have known we were coming.” (76)

“In that context, I find theistic evolution, or *BioLogos*, to be by far the most scientifically consistent and spiritually satisfying of the alternatives. This position will not go out of style or be disproven by future scientific discoveries. It is intellectually rigorous, it provides answers to many otherwise puzzling questions, and it allows science and faith to fortify each other like two unshakable pillars, holding up a building called Truth.” (210)

“The pure, clean water of spiritual truth is placed in rusty containers, and the subsequent failings of the church down through the centuries should not be projected onto the faith itself, as if the water had been the problem.” (40) **S. Terrence G**

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