On the Road to Humanity - Via Humanitatis

The main stages of the Morphological and Cultural Evolution of Man | The Emergence of the Human Being

There is no doubt that, for the human being, the history of humanity (*via humanitatis*) is a primary path of the spirit and "teacher of life". In the course of history, through intellectual reflection and the commitment of will that matures thanks to philosophical self-reflection, man and woman have acquired the awareness of the absolute quality of their being, following the desire expressed by the Socratic Delphic imperative: *Know thyself – be yourself!*

For seven million years hominid evolution has been marked by major cultural leaps which have brought more freedom and more control over the environment, leading to the development of cognition and the progressive emergence of conscience.

Two and a half million years ago, when hominids manufactured stone tools, converting the hand in the tool of tools, and appeared to acquire articulated language, they were already fully human and capable of conceptual thought and moral decisions.

Nine billion years went by between the Big Bang and the formation of a primitive lifeless ocean on planet Earth, then another 4 billion years passed by between this primitive ocean and Man, with 100 billion brain cells and the ability to question his role in the History of the Universe and of Life and to reconstruct his own history.

This emerging quality of the human being becomes apparent in the progressive implementation and awareness of the *differences* between being and not being, good and evil, right and wrong, justice and injustice, love and hate; thus emerge the differences in the human practices that the philosopher attributes to the various theoretical, ethical and political sciences.

Indeed, since man has become a human being (*genus homo*), there is a sphere of being that each man finds in himself right from his mother’s womb and in himself and out of himself starting from

birth. It is the first environment of life itself in which man finds himself “thrown” or rather, and better, in which he finds himself gratified by God. Believers in Abrahamic religions know that the starting point is not amorphous chance or a twist of fate, as hypothesized by sceptics and materialists. Christians know they owe their origin to the Holy Trinity, who, with an act of love, granted them a privileged place to know and love God and to be the stewards of creation. This had already been glimpsed by religions in general and also by the pre-Christian philosophers, who considered human beings “the offspring of God”, as testified by St Paul to the philosophers of the Areopagus in Athens (*Acts* 17:22 ff.)

Although science is not in a position to prove directly the existence of God, it has not been able to come up with evidence to the contrary. It restricts itself to explaining how the facts of nature happen instead of why, i.e. the first and final causes.

Nonetheless, the laws of the Universe, the structure of the micro- and macrocosm, the evolution of the ever more complex living world and its marvellous mechanisms, reveal a continuous creative force named God by all peoples since the beginning. Man has progressed from being lost in a remote corner of the universe, to acquiring through palaeontology a pre-eminence he did not believe possible. With the human being, evolution has become conscious of itself in Man.

Is Man the culmination of evolution? Is he an incidental result of randomness? We are personally fascinated by the Evolution of the Universe, of Life, and by the appearance of the human being. We can only believe that this is a new proof of the existence of God the Creator.

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