



The Fundamental Force: The Sexual Drive and Human Nature-Culture

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ABSTRACT

In this essay I outline a theory where knowledge and the broad categories of culture as defined by religion, art, science, philosophy and mysticism are described as expressions of an underlying cause, namely sexual lust and urges. I argue that it is this natural disposition that is at the heart of the search for truth and knowledge and cultural formations, as well as the creative impulse for new ideas and thus it is no surprise that it is this "act" that is the circuitry that enables life to continue and generate over time and space. Nature thus is never conquered as it were but commits itself to a dance where mind and body are necessarily related and thus connecting our highest human pursuits with copulation, pleasure, joy and ecstasy.

KEYWORDS: knowledge, sexuality, religion. art, science, philosophy, mysticism.

INTRODUCTION

Pondering the question as to the most fundamental drive in human nature and its influence on culture, it appears to me that the sexual drive is that very force. I will begin by defining this drive and then show its seminal influence on the major foundations of human development and expression. Each of these "stages" or "phases" though they still exist and remain powerful in themselves, and thus not cancelled by the stage that follows, has at its core, I will argue, this sexual principle.

One might envisage each of these "stages" as a triangle, where the base consists of religion; followed by less area for art; then follows science and as it tapers toward the apex, there is first philosophy and at the "highest" point we find mysticism. While this essay does not complicate each of these realms and deals in generalities, I believe such a demarcation is sound. Although each such phase has in itself changed over hundreds of years and obviously influences one another, again I will be arguing as if such a demarcation exists in its ideal state, each separate, hierarchically unfolding and yet all present in some or other form through the ages including this current epoch.

So, to begin with definitions. Sex is that biological drive where one species is attracted to the mate of the same species. It is a desire for union. It can be described as gaining knowledge of the other. It involves mechanical actions that produce tremendous pleasure and an ultimate cessation at which point is its highest level of pleasure. It results in ejaculation

into the female, who then takes the seed and over a gestation period, may produce offspring. Sexual play is the elixir of life and the very necessary cog ensuring survival, evolutionary progress and stability. Essentially it emanates from a desire to both give and receive, an act of love, and accordingly I exclude violence and trespass as having anything to do with sexual joy and sensitivity; such heinous acts emanate from a drive for violence and devouring, which I believe to be less fundamental and pervasive as a healthy sexual drive and desire. Given such a definition, how might one correlate this with the various domains of human expression, ingenuity and creativity? In other words, how can nature and culture converge?

Religion

The underlying root of religion is the reference to gods or a god or God as the sole cause of all that exists in the spiritual and physical realms. Around such an entity or entities (and these are variously described by various religions over human development with the survival of the major world religions until the present day – Judaism; Christianity; Islam; Hinduism and Buddhism) are derived ways of connecting to such primeval entities or entity, through ritual; beliefs; holy books; prophets; kings; the wise and so on in the hope of fulfilling some sort of vision, or simply achieving a higher state of self or soul. In this sense, one might find commonalities between the major faiths and primitive inklings of religion (in fact, Christianity is both the product of paganism and Judaism for example), although their claims may be mutually exclusive (Judaism asserts a singular incorporeal God the



Creator which is distinct from most other faiths which are not monotheistic, or which dispute the ultimate prophesy of Moses and Israel).

Yet what is behind the quest as found in religious fervor? The desire to know the ground root of reality whether defined by gods or god or God is the desire to connect and bind oneself. This is the very same impulse for fleshly union, a communion of intrinsic connection, oneness and pleasure. To be enraptured in spiritual terms is to bond with the beloved through the medium of the body. To ejaculate is tantamount to enlightenment, revelation and union. To excite and be excited is the lower world and higher world enveloped in a oneness. While this precise formulation will come under the later level of mystical delight, already at its primitive origins in religion, ritual and tradition, is the same intrinsic force: sexual union as religious worship, devotion and trust in some or other higher power or powers.

Some kind of religious belief has been found universally amongst all cultures at all times and is as ubiquitous as the drive to procreate. To find meaning and explanation even when false is more significant than to hold to nothing, while the promise of sex yields instant pleasure and enduring generations to come, thus solidifying and passing on such beliefs so that not only one's children shall endure the stronghold of time, but also ideas and the identity of a tribe. This defines the rudiments of the diversity of those that have lived and yet only some nations, peoples and ideas have actually survived. The rest is but history. Today in a materialistic culture buttressed by the force of science, religious habit and belief are usually part of a baseless set of ideas that lie outside of work, family, state and day to day living – yet seethes as an irrational force prevalent on a few days here and there and remembered when a person dies, although a great many hold steadfastly to their faith, pursue world domination (such as Christianity and Islam), but being false (for how can there be a new covenant in either case if the Jews still exist?) and yet perhaps they did free the world from the even more erroneous forces of paganism. In any event, domination is usually on the side of violence, not love and this is an anathema to true religion and sexual union.

Art

The next level is art. First in servitude to religion – an adoration of the gods in material form and only later as a separate enterprise of aesthetic and eventually purely secular whim. Yet just as in religion, this expression of human enterprise engenders a creative spirit. Creativity implies abundance, proliferation, offspring, an ever-flowing fountain, newness, birth and these aspects are related to sexual activity and the spawning of generations. Inspiration in the arts – the act of generating ideas; the power of imagination to form imagery; the act that brings about the work of art as one is lost in the creative process and the reflection subsequent to creation as one is satiated and declares the artwork finished – these are all moments of sexual arousal and interest in the object of

one's creation and in the inner transformations that occur through such a process.

Each epoch of art: cave art; Greek Classicism; Roman practicality; Middle Ages Europe and the Christian icon; the flowering of the Renaissance and the movement towards art as secular; the plethora of art movements under modernism and the subsequent postmodern voiding precisely of any mystical, universalism are all moments wherein the sexual is sublimated for the sake of higher ideals or in the last case the debunking of any such ideals. It is the surge beyond the physical towards the metaphysical and then back to the local and social where in the latter epochs no such Archimedean absolute is assumed. Yet, still in all such cases the "object" of art is the beloved as it were, and while the idolatry of religion is no longer paid homage to, the institution of the gallery, the museum, the biennale, is a cultural expression of almost religious import, where human nature – and the sexual urge in particular – can be seen "lurking" behind and within.

The fixation on human form, on form as such; the veneration of the image; the worship of beauty even when it is the abject and horrific and distorted and disfigured – is a hankering after form and the physical – and a desire to know and consume, just as the world become more and more discovered and new lands and new peoples were found, promoting trade, cultural exchange; and often war. Yet still, it is that urge to envelop the other that motivated exploration, and it is art that defined a certain culture, even as we now live in a global village, and the earth is known, the digital realm and space are uncharted territory, and the hearts and minds of the other are uncharted territory, but the insatiable drive to know, to caress, to become one with motivates further creativity and artistic production, as institutions and disciplines of knowledge grow and masses are educated (in the past the bulk of the populace were illiterate and before that, an alphabet may not have existed, but pictures and sculptures and architecture and songs and music are far older and tied to that first primitive impulse – religion. And all this is the cultural manifestation overlaid with nature, a nature that wants to have sex as often as possible with as many as possible – such is the instinct for survival.

Some kind of artistry has been found among cultures of all kinds in every time and place and is thus as pervasive as the sexual desire for gratification and family formation, the basis for the line of kingship and the security of progeny in order to exist beyond one's own death, just as art is said to endure over time, the archeological records gives us clues from material culture of the kinds of men and woman of a certain time and place.

Science

Science and scientific methodology are a watershed moment in human history marking a movement away from seeking explanation and understanding of nature not from a pantheon of gods and unseen forces, but natural causal processes,

both mechanistic and reductive. Armed with logic, empirical observation and experiment, as well as a healthy skepticism, appealing neither to authority nor dogma.

This has proved tremendously successful is mans assertion of his dominance of nature, his manipulation of nature and development of tools to probe, understand and pier beneath the surface of the world, indeed the universe as a whole. Logic, whose queen is mathematics, allows for calculation, formulas and proofs that appear to demonstrate how nature changes and how it in turn can be altered.

One would not be far off the mark if one characterizes the modern and postmodern eras as scientific in temper. The result is the descent into scientism which in turn has created a philosophical climate of secularism, materialism, and a lack of spiritual wisdom. Yet, in line with the subject of the essay, one can still observe that science, as with religion and art, is clearly a desire to know the universe. I have equated knowledge and the acts and methods whereby one can come to know, as precisely the sexual passion for embracing the other and seeing it inside and out. And science has left little to the imagination, indeed the mass of the universe could possibly be calculated, even its shape, and the very "immaterial" or "unseen" forces, objects and causes that given rise to the phenomenon we perceive. Little entities called atoms are said to be its building blocks, and their design in turn produces a set number of chemicals, the combinations of which produce sentient life – a story that moves from the cataclysmic nuclear reaction of the stars to the human being – breathing, walking, thinking and talking.

Similar to art and religion though, the scientific quest, even within a strict methodology – requires creative ingenuity and inspirational moments of clarity. In this sense, it does not flatten nature, and need not be seen simply as secular in tone leaving little room for magic. In fact, the very fact that our reason could come to quantify the natural world enables not only practical knowhow, but also gives us control over it, so that things are not simply unpredictable or fated. Man becomes an adult and takes charge. This need not be the end of religion or God or the gods, only its fulfillment in a more mature human now seeking a rational discourse with the universe, and still wondering at a thousand questions and marveling at the grand design. The argument that the universe is simply the product of luck or random forces and events, given the mathematical precision of certain fundamental quantities and variables, is indeed a weak argument. Hence the faith versus reason debate is nonsensical. Although the challenge of evil is real, the usual cause of such evil is human and not some immaterial force/s in the first place.

In all times and places, humans have a story which explains the nature of the universe. Scientific explanation is a powerful story and one which has given humans great power, just as the Egyptians has the ability to build the pyramid or the ancient Greeks the Acropolis or the Romas the aqueducts or medieval Europe grand cathedrals or the great British Empire and its

Imperial grandness; or the scientific wellsprings from the 17th to the 20th century given rise to the industrial revolution and now in our times the digital information highways – all this is to augment a world that communicates with one another at lightening speed. Sex *is* communication.

Philosophy

Philosophy is peculiar. It is neither science nor religion nor yet art as such. It may often be influenced by all three, yet for the most part it remains aloof. Its methods are reason, analysis, dispassionate calculation in the form of argument or more intuitive and synthetic. The broad categories of metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics define its reach or terrain. It seeks clarity, deep understanding and penetrating insight. Like science is disapproves of long held beliefs, appeal to authority, generalizations and the traditional, mythic and wishful thinking. Its temper is thus one of a slow process of chain of reasoning and while metaphysics is perhaps no longer taken that seriously, many philosophers still appeal to the immaterial as a source of truth such as questions about the nature of mathematics ("are numbers real?") or that of aesthetics ("is beauty merely subjective?") seeking universal truths and unequivocal facts about reality.

The Ancient Greek adage at the Temple of Delphi – "know thyself" – is an invitation to explore within. To know thyself is also an invitation to play – to play with ideas and to play with one's body (hence it's no surprise the high value of sports and athletics in Greek culture). The mental realm and the physical realm ought to be integrated, though philosophy has been much maligned with a dualistic approach. This is further entrenched in the modern-scientific paradigm shift as a version of physicalism, that is a brain-body dualism. Yet still notions such as soul and the "ghost in the machine" remain alive philosophically, rendering a simple material approach to reality rather suspect.

How is philosophy related to sexual urge? Before I answer as such, note that I am not in this essay using the notion that male is equivalent to reason and transcendence and female to that of nature and immanence. When speaking of mind, this includes both the probing of male or female and nature in turn is not feminine as such, but rather the stage on which men and woman find themselves. Transcendence belongs to the idea of a Creator, while humankind in that respect – both male and female – are then in relative terms female and embedded within and as nature themselves, only it is our reason, intuition and senses that given humans the edge to "conquer:" nature or their own "nature" or better yet, work with such nature/s, integrating body and mind and in that act mimic the Creator that enclothes Itself within the universe. It is thus in the union of male and female that "God in nature" becomes humans with nature, and it is in the sexual act – wherein one can cede a child – that one is God-like as it were. Thus in answer to the question set out hitherto – philosophical speculation such as briefly put forward here is the act of pondering (with only the tools of

intuition and reason) in order to gestate and nurture ideas – a play of mind that is itself sexual, as the push and pull, embrace and tension is held, and as this paragraph comes to a close, so my appetite reaches to the full and I feel I have expressed myself. What joy. And now relaxed and satiated, I end with this full stop.

Mysticism

The apex of our triangle and rarest of the five categories elucidated herein is the mystical impulse. This is religion stripped of its externalities with only the direct connection to the Source of all, whatever the various belief structures and spiritual forces said to be at work. Accomplished neither by reason, nor by philosophical reflection, not yet by empirical observation and experiment, the methods employed by the mystic is one of mediation and prophetic revelation, the purview of few and the highest of pleasures that can be attained: a direct revelation of truth mediated to the soul of man.

Usually in order to attain mystical experience one would have to refrain from sexual activity, and it is precisely this control of this central force that gives impetus to the mystical experience, that lays the groundwork for entry into its paradise. By substituting the physical urge for the spiritual one can enter the garden, though alternatively I surmise that mystical union and cleaving might be attained through sexual experience itself and especially the moment of orgasm, though perhaps in my ignorance orgasm is but a small percentage of the power of what awaits a purely spiritual, mystically enhanced experience. I maintain my ignorance on the matter and simply conjecture.

CONCLUSION

In this brief essay I have argued that the natural lust for sexual gratification is at the heart of that which in broad categories defines culture. It is this nature-culture nexus through which sexuality is the conduit that defines the massive energy that goes into these various cultural pursuits and spawns' nations, belief structures, ways of life while maintaining the struggle to overcome Thanatos through breeding, and the formation of ongoing generational productivity and creative maneuvering.

Each of these levels: the religious, the artistic, the scientific, the philosophical and the mystical build on one another, overcoming their limitations and ascending the hierarchy of truth and knowledge and in that very quest for knowledge one discovers the need and joy in procreation and in bodies and minds coming together. This is the very essence of life. It was described as communication, as connection, as cleaving, and as the formation of methods whereby one can come to have true beliefs about reality, or at least imaginative foreplay.

I believe an essay of this sort is liberating, connecting the usually dispassionate and cold idea of knowledge into a realization of its passionate nature, where body and mind coalesce in the formation of knowledge system, methodologies, forms of life, language and instinct – an amalgamation that argues against culture as separate from nature, or as nature as inherently evil, violent, physical and random. Instead, knowledge acquisition is an act of love and sexual expression and example of such love and desire for connection, albeit it assumes many guises and forms.

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