
THINKING ON A CLEAN SLATE: PREFACE TO THE HUMAN STORY

Description

In ancient Africa, there was a saying: 'When an old man dies, a library goes up in flames'. Thus the next generation had to start everything **ON A CLEAN SLATE**. Some reptiles shed their skin (a process known as sloughing that makes these snakes medicinal), and thus they get rid of their degenerated systems to become fresh. So Nature demands us to start everything – be it a new home, a new system, a new civilization or even a new knowledge – **ON A CLEAN SLATE**.

No species, including the pre-modern humans, leave behind any how-to-live manual for their offspring or their next generation. Such 'instructions' are automatically 'written' and handed down by Nature to the DNA of the next generation who will further develop their own innate intelligence best suited to their new environment or habitat. Thus this naturally and gradually developing intelligence would go on again being naturally 'written' down and handed down to their succeeding generations. Thus Nature, through her millions years of human evolution, made man the 'noblest' and the 'crown' of all creations' – as a free thinking species – literally the 'most wondrous of all wonders'. That is why the great French philosopher Rousseau called man the 'Noble Savage'.

Suddenly, with the introduction of the printing press a few centuries back, everything got reversed. Having suddenly got the intelligence, knowledge, opinions or ideas of others in ready-to-use and long conservable packages, in the forms of books and other printed materials — these are a sort of **SECOND-HAND KNOWLEDGE** developed outside the **KNOWER** — modern humans soon started the non-use and non-development of their own innate brain or intelligence. Thus, how this independently thinking human species has today come to live by solely depending on others opinions/ideas and overload himself with all sorts of mechanical information and other second-hand knowledge – indeed mentally polluting waste – that has led to his premature degeneration, with himself evolving , or rather devolving, as the 'curse' of all creations, is this story all about.

In our rapidly globalizing world, continuous readjustment of civilization on the scientific basis has become a serious blockade to sustainable development. Therefore an attempt on the reflections, from a transdisciplinary perspective, of modern knowledge process, our cultural diversity and environmental sustainability has become a prerequisite for sustainability.

"Not until we are lost do we begin to find ourselves." ~ **HENRY DAVID THOREAU**

"Remember, for everything you have lost, you have gained something else. Without the dark, you will never see the stars" ~ from DEEP LIFE QUOTES

"For a seed to achieve its greatest expression, it must come completely undone. The shell cracks, its insides come out and everything changes. To someone who doesn't understand growth, it would look like complete destruction" ~ **CYNTHIA OCCELLI**

"Cleanliness should not be limited to physical cleanliness but should also include the thought process." ~ **SMRITI IRANI**, Human Resource Development Minister of India

AFRAID OF THE BRANCH BREAKING,
BECAUSE HER TRUST IS NOT IN THE
BRANCH, BUT IN HER OWN WINGS.
ALWAYS BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.



TODAY there is sudden and growing awareness that the majority of basic life-sustaining materials like food, water and air in the world today are highly polluted and have become unfit for consumption without extensive laboratory test, refining and other detoxification process. We also know that chemicals have poisoned all of the world, harming humans, wildlife, and plant life. But why we were unable to smell, taste or understand this massive poisoning of our vital lifelines that began on a very big scale ever since the industrial revolution and the massive mechanization of agriculture and animal husbandry some 200 years ago. Nearly almost all pre-modern humans and the hunter-gatherer had highly developed sense organs, like the olfactory receptors of dogs, to detect the fitness of food, water or air for their consumption.

Food-poisoning or problems from foods are very rare among wildlife species, native animals, hunter-gatherers and the tribal people who are untouched by civilization. However we, as highly civilized modern humans, find our food as almost 95 percent problematic. May be the hitch is due to the different approach to food by these two different groups: while the native animals, hunter-gatherers and the tribal choose and take their food solely according to their own individual instinctive reasoning or innate intelligence, modern humans choose and take their food according to the opinion or reasoning of others, like what their media and market say.

Having long been subjected to repeatedly fooling us by the market in selling us all false things using the 'expert' opinion and ideas of others, especially the celebrity-

brand-ambassadors, we have lately become more and more confident of the approach of the native animals to food, that we sometimes take the help of animals, like dogs and cats, to understand the truth about our own food, especially when we are doubtful whether it is good/eatable for humans.

Dogs will be turned off by food that is spoiled in some way. We may know about where a piece of food came from, how it was processed, which plant it's from, who has been around it, and so on. A dog, on the other hand, simply sniffs something and either eats it or doesn't. Many animals, including cats and dogs, have a better instinct or are just more "particular" about what they will eat. Most dogs know which flowers & weeds to stay away from, and which ones are ok to munch on. Here we seem to grow more confident of the 'opinions/ideas' of animals than our science, celebrity-brand-ambassadors, the media and market. The celebrity gossip industry is utterly pathetic.

A recent study proved that dogs could sense evidence of bladder cancer by smelling it in urine and can predict seizures. While many medical professionals do not doubt that there are dogs with the ability to predict seizures, they are however wary of relying on them 100 percent. We've all heard the tales of dogs barking before an earthquake hit. Many hours before an earthquake dogs may begin to act restless and distressed, and this, if closely monitored, can prove their ability to predict a forthcoming earth tremor.

All these point to the fact that dogs and other animals have far better sense organs, like the olfactory receptors, than those of modern man so much that man today is depending on animals like dogs to understand certain realities and truth of his own life.

As the latest human sub-species, we've ruined Nature, and also the real human nature in us. Many basic skills for staying alive have long been forgotten or erased from our sense organs, like the olfactory receptors of dogs. But Mother Nature still seems to love us. This can be shown by the incredible number of ways animals like dogs can help us, with their amazing power of their sense organs like their olfactory receptors which we too, as hunter-gatherers and tribal people, possessed in far more robust condition before, as little as till a few centuries back. Today the simplicity of modern life is making us more stupid, according to a latest scientific theory.

Well, this is about the growing fragility of the innate intelligence of modern humans to comprehend the reality and truth regarding the food for their body. Now let us examine the instinctive or innate human ability of modern humans to comprehend the reality and truth regarding the food for their mind – food for thought – when they come across some new information or new idea, say, in the form of a new book. Although dogs can detect bladder cancer by smelling it in urine, can predict seizures and earthquake however cannot come to our rescue here. At this point, when we cannot instinctively or innately evaluate the worth regarding the truth and reality of a new book or a new idea, we look for the profile of the author of the book and its reviews by high profile experts, celebrities and the popular media.

This means we have to depend on “others” opinion or on SECOND-HAND KNOWLEDGE for our survival today. But in the present market-regulated (free market economy-led) world, finding truths and realities have always been the million dollar question in modern world. If you switch on your radio or television, or open your newspaper, corporations speak to you. They do it through public relations and through advertising. Global corporations spend more than \$400 billion yearly on advertising and almost 90% of even news are market-promotion schemes. Thus corporate advertising, using half-truths, is the dominant educational institution or the others’ opinion/second-hand knowledge propagation institution in the present realm of modern lifestyle.

“Four billion square feet of our total land area has been converted into shopping centers, or about 16 square feet for every American man, woman, and child. Most homes are virtual retail outlets, with cable shopping channels, mail-order catalogues, toll-free numbers and computer hookups. People can shop during lunch hour, from the office. We can shop while traveling, from the car. We can even shop in the airport, where video monitors have been installed for immediate on-screen purchasing.” Harvard Professor of Economics Juliet B. Schor says in *The Overworked American*.

Well, not much different is the state of affairs in the rest of the world today. As the most fleeced society in human history, the industrialized and globalized modern society has rendered the whole planet Earth itself as a literal multi-national corporation (MNC). Now, in the midst of the torrents of these half-truths and lies (others’ opinion or the market-sponsored second-hand knowledge) that are coming from all directions, how do we know the realities and truths?

All species, including humans and animals, have the capacity or intelligence to solve their problems and to evolve themselves to their higher state. This in-built or inherent intelligence has been the prime mover of every species, as this natural intelligence also evolved to higher state over space and time. The human species, being the most freely moving intelligent entity among the rest species, thus became the “crown” and the “most wondrous” of all creations in Nature, so far as man was guided by his inborn intelligence, till a few centuries back.

Now, in order to move forward in life by solving our problems, we have to look backward to see how we have fared in the past and how our intelligence evolved over the many past generations. Surprisingly since the last couple of centuries, the later-day human species, more exactly, the modern human, has made a sharp exception to this general feature of the long human intellectual evolution: along with its innate intelligence, modern mankind began to mechanically develop a parallel intelligence outside the knower to augment its organic intelligence, in the forms of devices which we call machines. This arrested intelligence/knowledge, which is stored outside the knower in devices and systems, may be called the second-hand intelligence or second-hand knowledge which subsequently got categorized as modern science and modern arts, and which got all sorts of promotion and development with the beginning of industrial revolution in the forms of schools, colleges, universities, ‘think tanks’ etc.

The ancients spoke of poets, artisans, geometers and philosophers, all of whom were men. The modern man speaks of art, philosophy, mathematics and science, which are not men but abstractions. The student in ancient Athens traveled to Plato’s Academy to become a philosopher. The modern student goes to school/college to study philosophy, which is not quite the same thing as becoming a philosopher. Here abstract reality is pitted against the steadily obscuring natural reality resulting in the failure of natural reality. We moderns see no necessary relationship between philosophy and the philosopher, math and the mathematician, science and the scientist. In general, for modern man there is a gap between knowledge and the knower, and into this gap man (the knower) has disappeared.

Today, when universities and other second-hand knowledge-producing research institutions having degenerated as mere degree-producing “factories”, and their CEOs, in the guise of vice-chancellors and other heads, as mere appointees of political and other vested interested lobbies, we can only imagine the wretched condition of the ‘products’, namely, the fast-food (food-for-thought) type second-hand and highly degenerated ‘knowledge’ coming out of these ‘factories’. Here the raw materials are again the highly degenerated British colonial legacy of the second-hand knowledge with which the colonial powers enslaved us and obscured our pristine knowledge. Our continuing legacy of enslaved mentality is obviously demonstrated and celebrated even in our own convocation dress code that we ‘religiously’ follow when these highly poisonous and destructive second-third-fourth-fifth-hand ‘knowledge’, in the forms of degrees, are conferred on us.

Modern world perceives truths and facts the way modern science describes them. But the description is not as the described. Jiddu Krishnamurti said: “I can scientifically describe the mountain, but the description is not the mountain, and if you are caught up in the description, as most people are, then you will never see the mountain”. Like a camera taking the picture of a lively object, science understands only the surface of the verifiable seen or unseen matter and even then it can understand it only in its simplest single-dimensional and flat forms, by arresting or killing its motion, endlessly splitting it, depriving all its ‘unwanted’ parts and analyzing it in the mechanically created environment (laboratory, for example) whereas the original matter is multidimensional, non-flat and changing at every next moment, and which only our live conscience and other sense organs can grasp and perceive in whatever fragile way they can.

Nevertheless, the over-promotion and the over-development of the arrested second-hand knowledge industry, in the forms of hi-tech machines and systems – come to be known as the TECHNOSPHERE – have indeed downed and overpowered the live, innate and organic intelligence of individual human, the knower. That is why it is said that today ‘modern man has become the tool of his own tools’. Mary Shelly, in her novel described this monster system, developed by second-hand knowledge, as Frankenstein. Nevertheless, like setting a wolf to watch the sheep, we have here set our hi-tech tools and systems to control, watch and service Nature and us humans. It is not the fault of the wolf that it is eating the sheep; it is the fault or rather the failure of the shepherds to recognize the wolf in the shepherd’s clothing.

Why do we find dogs and other animals as more trustworthy truth-finders than the many modern-day celebrity-brand-ambassadors and the media-market nexus that still go on endorsing and even promoting, for example, modern fast foods that have already proved highly injurious to all life forms, and even to the natural habitat, by way of creating all sorts of degeneration diseases?

It is simply because, having long been a society totally dependent on second-hand knowledge, we humans (who once prided themselves as the 'crown' and 'noblest' of all creations) have today far more extinction-threatening problems and crises than all other animals and creations. Here I don't blame any particular celebrity-brand-ambassadors and other media-market nexus for this pathetic state of affairs. Here I am only blaming the kind of Nobel Prize-type awards and other media-market dependent culture/civilization that go on winning in putting the whole humanity under a sort of COLLECTIVE STUPIDITY, on the wholesale, since long in modern era.

How does our dependence on second-hand knowledge promote collective stupidity? In our day, for example, the credibility of an author is very important, and is generally a prerequisite, in determining the quality of his/her writings. Here we want to know, in advance, his/her address, recognition, expertise and the like in the respective field of study. It is primarily because, in our modern-day industrial society, we live by second-hand intelligence or on other's opinion. Thus our knowledge of every subject, if not the whole of it, is second-hand. Take the case of what we call our KNOWLEDGE. We say we know this or that. But what do we really mean here? We mean, surely, that we have read it somewhere, or heard about it, or seen it on television. We have no direct knowledge. It is all based on hearsay, on second-hand, third-hand, and tenth-hand information, on conjecture and gossip.

But how do humans used to know things in the world? The answers include: Personal experience, the senses, perception, memory, intellectual intuition, inference, feelings, reading, being told things, and so on. Some of these consist of first-hand knowledge that we experience and gain for ourselves directly. Others of them consist of second-hand knowledge or depending on the testimony of others for our own knowledge.

However about 500 years back, there were literally no printed words, let alone any printed book or newspaper. Therefore few depended on second-hand knowledge in life. Humanity then had to rely on word-of-mouth for whatever little second-hand knowledge then. Thus the spread and influence of second-hand knowledge had only very insignificant or no role for millions of years of human life.

The process of mechanization and the real contamination of human knowledge and its automation began only in the 15th century with the introduction of the Gutenberg printing press where text and ideas became open to commodification, the drastic and immediate consequence of which was expressed in the following words of the famous French revolutionary Rousseau:

“Consider the frightful disorders which printing has produced in Europe. Wherever ‘philosophy’ (science at that time was referred to as philosophy) arises, the moral health of the nation decays. There was even a saying amongst the philosophers themselves that since learned (expert and scientific) men had appeared, honest men were nowhere to be found.... I venture to declare that a state of reflection is contrary to Nature; and a thinking man is a depraved animal. It would be better to abandon our over rapid development of the intellect, and to aim rather at training the heart and the affections. Scientific education does not make a man good; it only makes him clever-usually for mischief. Instinct and feeling are more trustworthy than reason.”~ (from Rousseau’s Social Contract).

However, forty years after the invention of the press, there were printing machines in 110 cities in six different countries; 50 years after, more than eight million books had been printed, almost all of them filled with information that had previously not been heard of and unavailable to the people. Nothing could be more misleading than the idea that computer technology introduced the age of information. The printing press began that age, and we have not been free of it ever since.

In 1990, in America alone, there were 260,000 billboards; 11,520 newspapers; 11,556 periodicals; 27,000 video outlets for renting tapes; 362 million TV sets; and over 400 million radios. There were 40,000 new book titles published every year (300,000 world-wide) and every day in America 41 million photographs taken, and just for the record, over 60 billion pieces of advertising junk mail come into our mail boxes every year. Everything from telegraphy and photography in the 19th century to the silicon chip in the twentieth has amplified the din of information, until matters have reached such proportions today that for the average person, information no longer has any relation to the solution of problems.

We, in the post-modern society,` have easy access to a huge amount of information. With many things we simply trust what we are told, and it is only confirmed by empirical evidence later, if at all. As such there is a now a ‘huge division of epistemic labour’ in modern society. But we have less and less knowledge that we can actually validate these things for ourselves.

Never before have so many people understood so little about so much. Shouldn’t we be worried about our epistemic dependence on specialized knowledge-area experts, on our own arrested intelligence getting manipulated through machines?

Evolution of Organized Religion and the Development of Spirituality Outside the Human Mind: The same thing happened to the innate human spirituality. For millions of years, every human, like every other species of Nature was innately spiritual, and it further developed its consciousness mainly by watching their parents and elders. It was only with the emergence of the organized religions in modern age that spirituality or the human mind was subjected to training and taught to develop

spirituality or consciousness outside, that is, in churches, temples, schools etc. This outside development of spirituality rendered it to degeneration as second-hand or mechanized spirituality.

Every species in Nature, like the human species, has conscience and is spiritual. A dog exhibits its presence of mind/conscience if we can closely observe it. A dog or even a snake does not bite the hand that feeds it, not because it is not given catechism classes but because it is innately spiritual or conscious. But modern man does bite the hand that feeds it because he lost his innate spirituality or consciousness and replaced them with all sorts of second-hand or mechanized and commercialized spirituality through his incessant spiritual, training and education. His modern experience taught him that only bullying or mafia type spiritual cohesion will work out result on the business line. Thus people have to pay all sorts of 'offerings', including money, for solution/salvation every time they commit crime. Thus modern man has evolved a highly commercialized culture by selling solutions to problems of their own creation.

Can't we become true FREE-THINKERS? Here the basic question is whether it is better to be epistemically autonomous, as we were existing since millions of years, just before the modern scientific era? Is it even possible? Do we have no choice but to trust experts or the clergy?

We get information from books, TV, radio and the newspapers, from snatches of conversation overheard on the tube, from chance remarks at parties. How great is our dependence! We daily see our media people at TV channels promptly depending on EXPERTS to fully make us understand things when some unusual or new things happen. And these are experts who 'know more and more about less and less'. The thought is quite a horrifying one. So long as we are dependent on them, we are allowing ourselves to become enslaved by them.

The practice has become such a mechanical and business-like affair that 'high-profiled' experts have indeed become the much sought after 'commodities' and are even 'manufactured' in the modern intellectual industry through the institution of 'recognitions' by bestowing on them mechanical honors, awards and prizes. However, there cannot be a more damaging and fraudulent fad in the intellectual ingenuity as this fallacy of giving prizes/awards to thinkers, scholars and scientists. Who would have dared to give award to Socrates, Jesus Christ, Rousseau, Swami Vivekananda or Gandhiji?

All these add up to the conclusion that this very concept of giving awards, prizes or sponsoring greatness is a market affair, and the result is that the whole society itself has degenerated to be a simple mechanical system. Post-modern scientists are largely a Nobel Prize-towed lot. Being a competitive and linear process, the competing participant can only think of the next building block that can be put on top of the steadily building science edifice of the linear knowledge structure.

The way society is today means people do not have to use their brains for anything other than to survive a mundane existence comprising work, television, Smartphone,

kids etc. Here, I believe, people are getting dumber because of their brain atrophy resulting from the continued non-use of their live brains or their natural intelligence. I mean, people are relying on technology, know-how so much that they do not know the basics of it. They buy the latest Iphone but are ignorant in how these things work.

In the present world, almost 99.9% humans, including our leaders, are living by depending on second-hand knowledge, unlike in the past when almost 99% humans were living by depending on the first-hand knowledge or their own brain or individual knowledge for almost 99% of the millions years of human existence. The second-hand knowledge is indeed the degenerated form of knowledge – today we call it information – which we get through the mechanization of certain arrested knowledge or opinion that are largely framed under the influence of some VESTED INTEREST.

It is due to our total dependence on second-hand knowledge that today and every day almost 99% humans are in front of the screen for hours on end, be it before TV at home or the Smartphone screen while travelling. An average post-modern adult is found to spend about 4 to 6 hours per day looking at screens, generally in the case of the younger generation.

Here, the market controlled roller-coaster and memory booster techniques, by adding all sorts of special effects, always tell us and sell us the unrelated as related, the unimportant as important, the useless as useful, the past as present etc. This is like expecting the snakes/reptiles, that periodically shed their skin (a process known as sloughing that makes these snakes medicinal) and becoming fresh, not to shed their skin but to carry their periodically discarded skins with them, with many added beautiful frills and other decorations that last much longer than the snakes themselves. For, individually, modern man is unable to remember and distinguish things even as he is surrounded by the heaps of millions in the mechanical memory lane in a highly compartmentalized world.

No wonder, market has succeeded in perpetually keeping almost 99% humans on a consumerist, festive mood by commercializing almost 99% of human activities and sectors like religion, politics, media, education, agriculture, science, arts, crafts, entertainment, sports, and so on, to the extent that today market is sensationalizing even catastrophic crises to speed up selling its products and service. Here who has got the time to take HIS time! If it is not COLLECTIVE STUPIDITY, at its vituperative best, what else it is?

Here the only pertinent question is: Where are we going, at this break-neck speed? Why is it becoming noticeable that today people are becoming smarter than they need to be?

A big problem is that people don't know there's a difference between being smart and innately intelligent. Smartness is how many facts you know; intelligence is your ability to see a problem and make a logical conclusion. In the developed and developing world today, the average person has a hectic lifestyle, with information pouring in from many sources. Everywhere he turns, somebody is trying to advertise something. The phone's ringing, the TV is blaring, stocks rise & fall, bills need to be

paid. There are all kinds of things to worry about – chemicals in food, radiation, personal finances. He also needs skills such as touch typing, driving a car, studying for exams, and so on. It's an information overload – no wonder people get stressed. By the way, the world is doing a great crime against humanity, and ultimately against itself, by allowing some 0.01% humans to own the mass media and other communication channels, through which the highly developed and the so-called second-hand intelligence passes and being distributed, to manage and exploit the mind of the rest 99.99% humans, just in the name of profit or purely on business line.

With the ongoing information explosions, people are mentally burdened with only information overload and becoming more and more mentally passive, just as they are physically overloaded with 'second-hand' (degenerated) cells creating fast food and becoming more and more physically passive, as is evident by the globally spreading degeneration diseases. To comprehend the degeneration of the human life structure, on every scale – from the mental to the physical, and from the microscopic to the macroscopic – please see Chapters 4 and 10 of *Life On Meltdown*.

Here, I see the evils of our addiction to the second-hand intelligence (machines and systems) as man-made problems or diseases which we can solve or cure only if we are able to escape from our mechanization (second-hand knowledge) addiction and captivity. No wonder, most of our modern-day diseases and crises like EBOLA and TERRORISM are just the 'gifts' of our addiction to second-hand intelligence (machines and systems) as this addiction has prematurely degenerated us to be hundreds of times weaker than our ancestors. Thus I see the evils of our addiction to second-hand intelligence (machines and systems) as the real EBOLA and the real TERRORISTS that are hundreds of times deadlier, in terms of their massive spread and toll, than most of our modern-day diseases and crises like the present-day sham EBOLA, sham TERRORISM, and the sham NUCLEAR THREAT.

For most humans living today, it is hard to imagine life without technology – without second-hand intelligence-dependency. But on the scale of human history, the internet and mobile devices are recent inventions, a few decades back, and the modern science and technology a few centuries back. Until just 5,000 years ago, we lived in small groups, hunting and gathering. While that life might seem to be ancient, it is also the life for which our bodies and our brains are adapted. So, we have something to learn from people who still live naturally, as we did for almost 99.9% of human life here on Mother Earth.

Every day we face endless choice points. As our technologies accelerate the speed and frequency of choices coming at us, the faster we feel compelled to respond to each choice. We can become overwhelmed by the emails, tweets, phone calls, text messages, voice mails, all piled on top of the basic life choices we must make in the course of a day. Technologies are eroding the natural rhythms of a healthy life.

Supposing there were no books, TV, radio, the newspapers, phone and the internet, we would know very little of what went on or going on in the world. We would have fewer thoughts, fewer second-hand ideas. Being less cluttered up mentally, we would be better able to concentrate on things near at hand. We would be able to live

more intensely. Perhaps we would be closer to REALITY, the real knowledge or the TRUTH. This was, of course, the condition of our ancestors in bygone days, even as it is still the condition of many people untouched by industrial civilization in some of the so-called 'undeveloped' countries.

Karl Pearson, a renowned statistician and eugenicist, argued intelligence could not be taught or earned, but merely inherited. Natural selection, he argued, had been replaced by "reproductive selection," in which evolutionary winners were "the most fertile, not the most fit," Pearson said.

Pre-modern man broadened brain. He came from a life of evolution, and kept all he learned in his larger brain with no place to write things down. He had many times more power to foresee things and had many times more sensing power like the more powerful olfactory receptors than us modern humans. Pre-modern man travelled all the Earth, was independent. And that was how he got evolved as the 'crown' and 'pride' of all creations in Nature, and was viewed as the 'most wondrous' of all wonders in the world.

On the other hand, modern man, groomed by religions, modern science and market, did retain only some of the original intelligence and independent thinking but overloaded himself with all sorts of mechanical information and other second-hand knowledge – indeed mentally polluting waste. Still modern man has a small brain than pre-modern man and thus has the DNA programming to end up only a FOLLOWER or as the exploited. And that is why he/she is currently ruled not by humans but by the mechanical systems, by the helps of paid employees like EXPERTS, SPECIALISTS and SCIENTISTS.

The catastrophic consequence of this steady non-use of the innate human intelligence is the steady degeneration of the human brain or its false growth to the altered mental status. Today we have many case examples of the various cerebral manifestations of metabolic disorders. If every generation has been getting progressively stupider from the beginning of modern mechanical era, and we are from the last and stupidest generation, how can we claim ourselves as intellectually superior?

"Human intelligence may have actually peaked before our ancient predecessors ever left Africa", Gerald Crabtree, a genetics professor at Stanford University, writes in two new journal articles. Genetic mutations during the recent past are causing a decline in overall human intellectual and emotional fitness, he says. Evolutionary pressure no longer favors intellect, so the problem is getting exponentially worse. He is careful to say that this is taking quite a long time. He does posit that an ancient Athenian, plucked from 1000 BC, would be "among the brightest and most intellectually alive of our colleagues and companions."

His central thesis is that each generation produces deleterious mutations, so down the line of human history, our intelligence is ever more impaired compared to that of our predecessors.

Not surprisingly, the hypothesis, published in the prominent journal Trends in Genetics, has several geneticists scratching their heads. "There is a general feeling that evolution constantly improves us, but it only does that if there is selection applied," Crabtree said in an interview. "In this case, it is questionable about how much selection is occurring now compared to the process of optimizing those genes, which occurred in the jungles of Africa thousands of years ago." There's already evidence for this in other areas, he argues.

Harmful mutations in our genes which reduce our "higher thinking" ability are therefore passed on through generations and allowed to accumulate, leading to a gradual dwindling of our intelligence as a species, a new study claims. It'd be more beneficial to tap into the unconscious, ego consciousness is what is making us dumber. Basic skills of staying alive have been forgotten or erased from our sensory organs. Up to as little as a hundred and fifty years ago the selection for the ability to withstand disease and bad diet were supreme regardless of intelligence. Being innately intelligent may have given an ability to avoid some disease enhancing situations then. The tragic consequence of this blunt breakdown of our innate intelligence at the hands of the overpowering second-hand intelligence is that modern man has become hundreds of times weaker than the pre-modern, natural man.

Today's humans, for example, have only far fewer olfactory receptors than not only pre-modern humans but also even other animals. As scientifically 'developed', we're guided by our second-hand intelligence, not by our natural intelligence or sensory abilities like smell. For example, we can think about where a piece of food came from, how it was processed, which plant it's from, who has been around it, and so on. A dog, on the other hand, simply sniffs something and either eats it or doesn't.

Here the pertinent question is how humans lost their innate knowledge perception and other live sensory abilities like the olfactory receptors, or the knowledge/information as in a live seed, in modern era. It has long been established that both natural intelligence and conscientiousness are heritable traits. However the lack of use and stimulation will cause a decrease in ability and could lead to atrophy, just like the case of other continuously non-used organs.

The Soundness of Primal Perception: In ancient Greece, even slaves had a deep social role as part of a household, unlike even higher class modern workers, who are valued as things, interchangeable as parts in engines of profit. Medieval serfs worked fewer hours than modern people, at a slower pace, and passed less of their money up the hierarchy. We declare our lives better than theirs in terms of our own cultural values. If medieval people could visit us, I think they would be impressed by our advances in alcohol, pornography, and sweet foods, and appalled at our biophobia, our fences, the lifelessness of our physical spaces, the meaninglessness

and stress of our existence, our lack of practical skills, and the extent to which we let our lords (leaders of religion, government and market) regulate our every activity. They are sure to consider us as pitiful creatures.

Whether or not an individual awakens to the message of a tribal self depends on the mental condition of one's personal life. Crisis can open a person to ideas that would otherwise be shunned or rejected. A desperate or confused person seeking help may accept the notion of a tribal self intellectually. Intellectual awareness of one's tribal self, via the message, is the first prerequisite of a sane person, but it is not enough, not the same thing as hearing one's own primal voice. Each individual must validate or prove, for itself, the message or theory of a tribal self.

Imagine that you, and a small group of other people, were to wake up tomorrow with absolutely no memories of your past or even of the language you spoke, in the middle of a forest in a tropical wilderness. Even if none of you had ever spent a moment away from the shelter of civilization in your life, you would not awake and be filled with dread and fear. You think you might because in the 'real' world you have been conditioned to fear Nature, to see it as savage, violent, a struggle to survive. You have been taught and brainwashed to distrust and ignore your instincts. But now you would awaken with no such prejudgments. You would become, in many ways, as children, and your whole group would awake full of wonder, and greet each other awkwardly, and then, probably, until hunger and thirst and sexual desire started to command your attention, you would probably play with your new 'friends', exploring and discovering, as children do, and as the newborn of all species in Nature do.

Your group becomes, in fact, a hunter-gatherer tribe, completely unaware of any of the precepts of civilization – language, science, reason, morality. Your initial state is one of astonishing joy, wonder, health, well-being, self-sufficiency, peace, security, community, learning, alertness, awareness, cooperation, imagination, love and respect for Nature, and, to the extent needed, creativity – all the elements of natural systems. You will instinctively hunt together and gather and share food, and you will recognize in each other specialized talents for doing one thing or another, and learn from your expert peers. There will be a 'pecking order' of sorts, based on consensus of, and respect for, those whose talents are most valuable – keen senses, physical strength, creativity – but the tribe will be egalitarian. There will be no hoarding or inequitable distribution of food or other resources. Since there is no scarcity, sharing will be according to need. Sex will be consensual and non-exclusive. You will respect and flee from predators, and be alert for them and protect your young from them, but you will not fear them.

The hunter-gatherer is in all of us. For 99% of human history we were almost exclusively hunter-gatherers. Living in our technology-dependent world does not mean that we have totally severed our hunter-gather roots – the skills and intelligence learned from all those millennia of survival. One does not erase the souls of one's ancestors. Even if we no longer actively use those skills for daily survival, the untapped intelligence remains within us. Could it be that we could recapture the things we have forgotten and need to relearn today?

That is how Nature works. Each creature strives to live and to bring more of their kind into the world not because they fear death, but because life is wonderful. When you see tiny birds scrounging at your bird-feeder or shivering in a tree in winter, don't feel sorry for them. They are not helpless and struggling and cowed. They shiver because instinctively they know it keeps their body temperature up. They have amazing (at least to us, who lack them) instinctive survival talents – they need a lot of food in winter to keep warm, and they find it easily, enjoyably, and if they can't, they simply hibernate. Although lots of birds are eaten by predators, few freeze or starve to death – famine is a modern human invention, due to our huge numbers and loss of natural adaptability. If you see a dead bird, it almost certainly might have succumbed to one of three human-caused injuries: Collision with a window, or an automobile, or a domestic cat that no longer needed or wanted to eat what it killed.

Our ignorance of Nature, combined with our collective arrogance (because of our unquestioned 'evolutionary success'), leads us to believe that we are the only emotional and intelligent creatures on the planet. But just as economists and historians are tearing apart our myths about prehistoric man, scientists are systematically deconstructing the anthropocentric myths of our modern emotional and intellectual uniqueness and superiority. Although our incompetence at deciphering animal language and communication has so far made it conveniently impossible to prove conclusively, there is very compelling evidence that many animals exhibit extraordinary intelligence.

In fact given some new evidence that emotion is principally a response to sensory stimulus, and knowledge that some animals have greater sensitivity to many sensory stimuli than humans, it's quite possible that many animals lead much richer emotional lives than we do, that they are more 'sensitive' in every sense of the word than we are, that they 'feel' more, and more deeply, than we could ever hope to. Why then don't they articulate this, so that we understand? Perhaps they do – maybe we are just so numb to all language other than our limited and clumsy modern/mechanical ones that we don't 'hear' them. Or perhaps it's just that they don't have to – maybe we developed 'sophisticated' abstract language not because we were uniquely able to, but because it was necessary to convey precise instructions about man-made processes (like computers) in our strange new unnatural hierarchical culture, whereas other animals always survived just fine without such artificial constructs. How sophisticated a language do you need to say 'danger', 'food', 'yes', 'no', and 'I love you', and ultimately what else is really important to say?

Modern humans now need Nature's language and Nature's technology to live comfortable lives. But most other animals know a better way to live, and don't need sophisticated language or technology to do so.

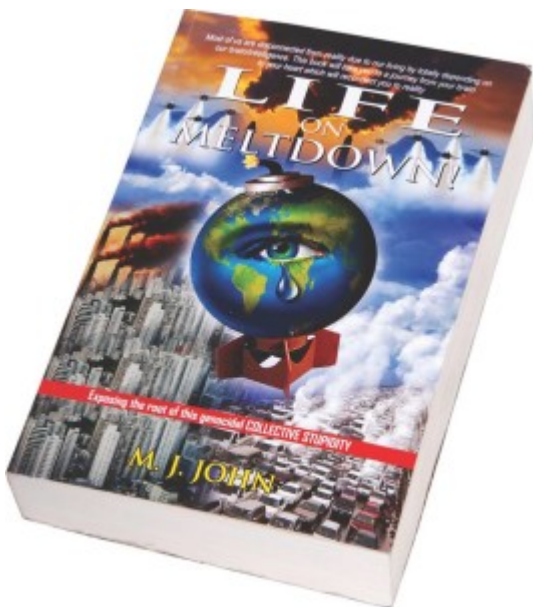
The Free-Thinker: A true free-thinker can interpret his/her surrounding circumstances without prejudice. He understands the fact that there are good and bad in all ideologies, and some are better than the other, but none is complete or perfect. Ideologies came from human imaginations, and they all have inherent limitations. If someone can realize this simple truth, he/she will become a free-thinker in no time. Therefore, the criterion for becoming a free-thinker should be: the ability to think outside the box.

Man can live only by his true consciousness. But we'll never get to a higher understanding of consciousness if we remain "experts"- limited to our tiny alcoves of knowledge. To really function as intelligent members of a race that has been advertised as "advanced," we must expand not just the depth of our knowledge but the breadth of our understanding.

Free-thinkers depend on solid arguments for their thoughts, even though they may go against the established norm or ideological belief. This may require a special mental quality/power. The most essential ingredient of a free-thinker is to admit that all ideologies have limitations. Free-thinkers should be able to criticize their own ideology or belief-system. Once someone is capable of doing so, his/her mind will be free like a bird. The goal is to set our mind free by burning our ideological barriers.

The challenge which modern society faces today involves the creation of a new worldview that will enable us to rediscover our connections with the natural world. From the days that reach back to Rousseau, our need for a truly human and ecological civilization has never been greater if we are to rescue our planet and ourselves.

If we, decisively and collectively, once and for all, succeed in breaking out of the cynical circular thinking that preserves the undemocratic socio-economic power structure of the 21st century's global village, this will produce an unprecedentedly profound revolution in human condition, and lead us directly to the next giant step forward in the evolution of human consciousness.



Note: This essay has been taken from the book, LIFE ON MELTDOWN

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