

IS HUMAN NATURE UNCHANGEABLE?

What do we mean? And why is it so important?

I. What do we mean? *Appl to cause an offence.*

a. Tone: Will you never remember to scald the tea pot before putting in the tea?

No. Not the individual but the average is mean.

b. Tone: Will people insist on being considerate, selfless, thinking of everybody else before they think of themselves?

No. The implication is almost certainly the opposite:

c. Tone: Will man remain always <sup>selfish & unrelaxed</sup> as he is? If so we must put up with our most inadequate institutions, <sup>that are industrial dev-</sup> for they are fitted to <sup>Similar</sup> our ~~most inadequate~~ nature.

Luther argued that the State and government were necessary on account of our murderous natures.

quote:

Similar argument is basic as a defence of <sup>war</sup> capitalism, i.e., an economic system based on profit motive.  
based on the

quote: Human nature being what it is, no other system would

(Pacifism)

*J. Keating  
J.H. Sabine*

(Sumner, Keller) work.

Adam Smith:  
'propensity'

II. Why is it important?

Because the conviction that our unchangeable natures are the real obstacles of reform is the most defeatist argument that can be adduced in favour of things as they are.

*John*

Two answers possible:

a. The system is based on human beings as they are (and partly they ~~are as they are~~ as a result of the system. But that does not mean that human beings are not going to change.

Owen (but also Godwin and the French perfectibilists like Condorcet) argued that way. Shelley would have agreed with them.

Main factor: The terrible distortion of the common people as a result of the Industrial Revolution, in its early stages

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Owen indeed argued that human nature is ~~entirely~~ malleable. that he would undertake to change it into almost anything. He was deeply struck by the fact environment fashions man, and makes him good or bad accordingly.

milieu theory . The responsibility of society for the criminal ; the social determination of average morality. etc. etc.

b. The system is bad because it is contrary to human ~~anna~~ nature, and that human nature is in fact different . This argument never got much farther than sentimental and wishful thinking , and was roughly handled both by theory and by business.

c. A third answer is possible, viz., that human nature does not appreciably change , and that it very much depends upon our institutions ~~that~~ on ~~which~~ traits a premium is put and which traits are suppressed.

Actually, it may be even true that in a great number of people , let us say 10,000 we have a definite number of aptitude and even inclinations, and that different institutions will make a different type 'successful'

This is our own view. And it is rather reassuring, but puts on us the responsibility for working for a change in our institutions.

Let us look into the assertion that men must find their food before they can turn to philosophy, and therefore man is naturally selfish. At least he is so in economic life, i.e. in activities directed towards the satisfaction of material wants. The principle of gain, to expect remuneration for labour, to ~~ann~~ barter and exchange with a view to profit, is natural to man. Man is a trading animal; society is a society of traders; markets are natural results ; a market society is the aim of all development.

1. Actually all human society must have an economic system, i.e. production and distribution of goods must be carried on. Work must be done, and the crop must be distributed ...

2. But we do not find that the fear of individual want is the compelling motive .

- a. In primitive society -- absence of sentimentalism- no individual is ever in fear of going without food as long as the community does not lack food. Kaffirs, ( Mrs Millin. )  
Indian village community  
Kwakiutl  
Hungarian community  
 General rule.

b. This principle maintained in ancient societies.

c. Vives in 1531 takes the question before the Sorbonne.

d. The 18th century , Townsend in 1786. goats and dogs. Discovery Hunger a greater master than the magistrate...

3. The Trobriand society

a. The canoe crew.

Who builds the canoe ?	master
mans	crew
shares the catch?	rules

The duties of the master  
 The various places in the boat  
 The shares--accordingly

b. The matrilineal family

The brothers and the maternal uncles  
 The husband providing his sisters  
 and his sisters children .

Patrilocal

after  
 consequently, ~~husband~~ harvest time  
 the husband's gardeners go and take  
 the yams to their sisters village  
 and stack it there.

*Tula* *mivaki* white arm shells  
*Selava* red monkeyfish

Institutions which safeguard the process:  
 ceremonial display (twice)  
 Motive : reciprocity -- one group behaving towards an  
 other groups as that ~~own~~ to this one-

qualities. ( patries) moities.  
 location  
 tribe (clans)  
 family ( exogamous).

{ Ruthless : 3  
 { *huta*  
 Selfishness & unselfishness