

# POST-STATISM

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ON THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AS SOCIAL SCAM  
AND THE SOCIAL SCIENTISTS AS SOCIAL  
SCOUNDRELS

GIAN PIERO DE BELLIS



Post-Statism (2023)

Polyarchy - Panarchy - Statism - State - War - Territorialism - Aterritorialism -  
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# PRESENTATION

The scientific approach

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"The natural sciences have developed an enormous activity and have accumulated an ever-growing mass of material. Philosophy, however, has remained just as alien to them as they remain to philosophy."

(Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*)

## The scientific approach

The human being is, basically, a curious observer and analyser of everything that surrounds and takes place around him. From careful observations and critical reflections emerge (tentative) explanations about the nature and origin of phenomena.

In the ancient past the philosopher, i.e. the lover (*filos*) of knowledge as wisdom (*sofia*), was interested in the total reality. Aristotle could very well ponder and write about the material and mental world in which the human being lived and by which each person was affected.

In the course of time, the Catholic Church, after reaching a position of supremacy in the Western world, absorbed and integrated into its views and teachings the writings of Aristotle and, for centuries, they were assumed to be the final word when it came to describing and explaining reality.

This was the situation up to the XV and XVI centuries when Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo undermined the Aristotelian cosmological construction.

Copernicus (1473 - 1543) : *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* (1543)

Kepler (1571 - 1630) : *Astronomia Nova* (1609)

Galileo (1564 - 1642) : *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo* (1632)

This was made possible also through:

- more precise observations due to the invention of new devices like the telescope;

- more fruitful experimentations conducted according to new rigorous methods.

The Catholic hierarchy believed that freedom of observation and experimentation could result in compromising the doctrine of the Church and especially its power of sanctioning what was true and what was false.

This fear of losing its hold over people's minds was the main

reason behind the trial of Galileo and the forced recantation of his theory.

The dominant power of the time (the Catholic Church) had thus decided in favour of traditional fallacious myths instead of leading the way towards the discovery of new scientific truths.

In doing so it condemned itself to a long process of intellectual decadence resulting, in due course, in the decline of its moral authority and material power.

Approximately at the same turn of time (the end of the XVI and the beginning of the XVII century), in a different more liberal society, i.e. one where the power of the Church was not so pervasive and invasive, Francis Bacon (1561-1626) could freely carry on his experiments. Subsequently, signs of the further development of the freedom of investigation emerged: the Royal Society for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge was founded (London 1660), Isaac Newton published the *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1687) and the ideas and methods of modern science eventually started to be accepted in ever wider circles.

Starting from the XVII century then, scientists liberated themselves from the strictures represented not by their religious convictions or by the belief in God (shared by Galilei, Descartes, Pascal, Newton, Leibniz, and many others) but by the control exercised by the Church hierarchy on the free investigation of reality.

In doing so, not only did they displace obsolete imposed views but deepened and widened the knowledge of matter and embarked on a journey in which the development of knowledge became almost a self-sustained self-propelled occurrence.

The scientific method, free from the blocking interferences of any external power and animated by the inner drive of the scientists as knowledge seekers, brought about a constant flow of impressive discoveries.

## **The ensuing reality**

Throughout the XVII and XVIII centuries the knowledge of nature and its practical application, as in the form of technological devices, proceeded apace, especially in England, leading to the emergence of what would be called the Industrial Revolution.

This was made possible by the freedom of initiative and experimentation resulting from the lack of intrusion into earthly activities of the religious power (the Church), by then openly submitted, in some countries of North and Central Europe, to the power of secular rulers. The new rising power (the central state) not only did not oppose scientific and technological development but was interested in it for reasons of military strength and economic superiority.

However, the situation in the so-called social or human sciences was going to be very different. The cosmopolitan outlook of Humanism and Renaissance (XIV-XVI centuries) revived by the Enlightenment (late XVII and XVIII centuries) was bound to be less and less serviceable to the new power interested in territorialism (territorial sovereignty) and nationalism (cultural homogeneity).

For this reason, while the sciences of nature and of matter gained from the progressive decline of the power of the Catholic Church, the same cannot be said for the social and human sciences in relation to the rising power of the Nation State.

The emancipation and development of the physical sciences contrasts, then, with the subjection and underdevelopment of the social sciences through a process that can be characterized by three aspects:

- the scientific split
- the scientific gulf
- the scientific clash.

## **The scientific split**

The deepening and widening of knowledge brought in its wake the formation and consolidation of different areas of research. This was

almost a spontaneous result of a process of development of knowledge never seen before, but it was artificially reinforced and taken to senseless extremes by the parallel formation of an institutional apparatus of schools and centres of learning where each one was jealous of his field of study and wanted to affirm its autonomy and dignity as a separate and specific discipline.

The result was that, in some cases, a so-called scientist was involved in an investigation at the end of which he knew more and more about less and less until, somebody added in a sarcastic note, he might know everything about nothing.

"During the last one hundred years [mid XIX - mid XX centuries] the tendency has been for each science to hold the others at a safe distance, browsing on its own selected pastures and learning more and more about less and less. Although this is undoubtedly due in part to the vast accumulation of factual knowledge which this period has seen, it also represents a definite attitude whose effects have been stultifying."

(Ralph Linton, *The Scope and Aims of Anthropology*, in, *The Science of Man in the World Crisis*, edited by Ralph Linton, 1950)

In the sciences of life and matter (i.e. biology, physics, chemistry, engineering, etc.) the split into different fields of study has been reversed since the middle of the XX century with intersections and cross-fertilization between various domains of research. During the 1950's and 1960's the proponents of Cybernetics (Norbert Wiener) and General System Theory (Ludwig von Bertalanffy) stimulated the adoption of integrated approaches to the study of problems.

The same cannot be said within the so-called social sciences (sociology, psychology, economics, etc.) and especially in relation to the intercourse between the social sciences and the sciences of matter. In this case the split (separation) has grown to such a point that it seems appropriate to call it a gulf (divarication).

## The scientific gulf

In 1956 Charles P. Snow, a physicist and novelist, delivered a lecture at Cambridge University (U.K.) bearing the revelatory title *The Two Cultures*. In his speech he highlighted the fact that a huge

"gulf of mutual incomprehension - sometimes hostility and dislike, but most of all lack of understanding" had grown between "literary intellectuals at one pole [and] at the other scientists, and as the most representative, the physical scientists."

(Charles P. Snow, *The Two Cultures*, 1956)

Not only were they unable to communicate with each other but they were also unwilling to do so, behaving almost as if they were not on speaking terms with each other.

Even the fact that they were and still are referred to using different terms is highly revealing of the existing gulf: intellectuals for the literati and those involved with humanities, scientists for those investigating physical, technical and biological phenomena.

At the beginning of the XXI century the gulf is still there and in fact, having existed for such a long span, it has grown to such an extent that it is now part of the accepted scenery of modern life. Its permanence is even more extraordinary given the fact that we are now immersed in a technological world as a result of the innumerable discoveries of the scientists but, at the same time, we keep using (or are constrained to use) methods and tools of social analysis and organization more appropriate to a feudal past.

"Scientific knowledge and technical mastery of nature daily win new and unprecedented victories. But in man's practical and social life the defeat of rational thought seems to be complete and irrevocable. In this domain modern man is supposed to forget everything he has learned in the development of his intellectual life. He is admonished to go back to the first rudimentary stages of human culture."

(Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, 1946)

Albeit most are unwilling to recognize or unable to realize it, the gulf has now become a clash whose nature and consequences need to be not only examined but also taken seriously into consideration.

### **The scientific clash**

What we are witnessing and experiencing now, at the beginning of the new millennium, is not a clash of civilizations but a clash of cultures within civilization; more precisely, a clash between technological progress and material affluence on one side and social stagnation and moral decadence on the other.

This is the result of the impressive progress in scientific and technological culture that has not been matched by a similar advancement in the humanities. On the contrary, the so-called human and social sciences are bogged down in debates that belong to bygone ages (feudalism, mercantilism, absolutism) that would appear absurd to anyone if it were not for the fact that our personal and social reality is still characterized by so many traits which belong to those ages.

The problem arises because a mainly feudal social present and a generally failing social pseudo-science exist side by side with a futuristic technological reality and a dynamic physical science.

The consequence is that we are in the schizophrenic position of being, at the same time, technological supermen and social pygmies.

We are technological supermen or, more precisely, technologically empowered human beings, because we dwell on the shoulders of giants, i.e. all preceding scientists and technologists whose widely available discoveries we use.

We are social pygmies (with reference to the social sciences and social practices) because we are under the spell or the heels of many despotic little storytellers, epigones of past masters (Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Freud, Jung, etc.) whose ideas those epigones have, quite often, distorted and dulled into simplistic formulas that we keep repeating slavishly and boringly.

In other words, the technological empowerment of individuals, especially visible nowadays in the mastery of information and

communication that characterizes contemporary human beings, is not accompanied by an intellectual enlightenment that should be, at least, stimulated by the successors of those who enlightened us in the past, namely the philosophers and the humanists (presently, the social scientists).

The dissociation and disequilibrium between personal empowerment (high) and personal enlightenment (low), is then likely to result in unhealthy, even lethal combinations as, for instance:

- empowerment and estrangement: individuals becoming extremely apathetic up to the point of letting Big Brother control and guide them (to the gas chambers, to the refugee camps, to the welfare office or to other places of physical and moral death);

- empowerment and enragement: individuals becoming extremely violent up to the point of using the full force of technology to destroy everything and everyone on the way to their (legitimate or lunatic) aspirations.

The situation is very serious because those who should know better (the social scientists) are unwilling or unable to see the problem and to present possible solutions. The likely reason is because, in doing so, the social scientists would expose their own faulty (to say the least) conceptions and practices.

### **The problem stated**

The scientific split-gulf-clash is not the result of differences intrinsic to the fields of investigation qualified as social sciences and physical sciences.

Science, that is organized knowledge about reality, is not a contradictory experience delimited by fences and signposts, where what is true in one field is false in another and vice-versa.

As a matter of fact, the unity of reality, however rich and multifarious a reality might be, makes the unity of science-knowledge one of the basic tenets for anybody involved in exploring the world in a methodical and rigorous way.

"Neither the plain man nor the scientific inquirer is aware, as he engages in his reflective activity, of any transition from one sphere of existence to another. He knows no two fixed worlds - reality on one side and mere subjective ideas on the other; he is aware of no gulf to cross. He assumes uninterrupted, free, and fluid passage from ordinary experience and abstract thinking, from thought to fact, from things to theories and back again. Observation passes into development of hypothesis; deductive methods pass into use in description of the particular; inference passes into action, all with no sense of difficulty save those found in the particular task in question. The fundamental assumption is *continuity*.

This does not mean that fact is confused with idea, or observed datum with voluntary hypothesis, theory with doing, any more than a traveler confuses land with water when he journeys from one to the other. It simply means that each is placed and used with reference to service rendered the other, and with reference to the future use of the other."

(John Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic*, 1916)

"All the sciences, and not just the sciences but all the efforts of intellectual kinds, are an endeavour to see the connections of the hierarchies, to connect beauty to history, to connect history to man's psychology, man's psychology to the working of the brain, the brain to the neural impulse, the neural impulse to the chemistry, and so forth, up and down, both ways."

(Richard P. Feynman, *The Character of Physical Law*, 1965)

Moreover, the scientific process has common features whenever and wherever it is undertaken, regardless of what aspect is under investigation.

The common features of the scientific process are:

- it starts from a problem;
- it uses a mix of methods and tools of investigation all geared, in the final theoretical instance, to the production of clear statements and consistent arguments;

- it produces incremental knowledge (based on past knowledge, i.e. on previous consolidated true beliefs) subject, in different ways, to the common requirements of moral honesty and factual justification on the part of the scientist (replicability, verifiability, falsifiability, consistency with other true beliefs);

- it aims at, and quite often it leads to, the solution of problems.

"Science does not begin with facts, with hypotheses, or even with a method, but with a specific problem. Social science is no exception to this rule."

(F. S. C. Northrop, *The Logic of the Sciences and the Humanities*, 1947)

"There are not such things as pure and applied science - there are only science and the applications of science."

(Louis Pasteur, 1822-1895)

However, the so-called social scientists fail in many respects to conform to the requirements of scientific investigation, advancing all sorts of justifications, the most common of which is the supposed intractability of human problems, which, according to them, sets the sciences of humanity apart from, if not above the physical sciences.

Those who support this position seem not only to ignore the complexity that confronts a biologist in presence of an ecosystem, a meteorologist trying to understand climate changes or a geologist dealing with earthquake occurrences. In so doing, the social scientists seem also to belittle the human being, portraying him as a whimsical and unpredictable individual. At the same time, they put themselves on a pedestal as high calibre intellectuals accomplishing the "sublime" mission of discussing (unfortunately to no avail) the complexity of the human experience (without, it must be added, ever reaching an agreement, let alone a solution to some basic problems).

In fact, the task of the social scientists should be that of searching for problems and testing solutions through voluntarily undertaken social experiments of which they might be not only the promoters

but also the protagonists, in the same way as every scientist conducts experiments (or analyses natural occurrences) and assesses results.

Falling short of this, the so-called social scientists should rather be portrayed as the last sorcerers, absorbed, as most of them are, by the incessant repetition of magic formulas (mantras) that have no connection whatsoever with actual reality.

Unfortunately, and here is where the problem lies, these sorcerers still claim and obtain, cunningly or aggressively, the attention of the people because they are in tune with the current power and, for this reason, are the only official (obsessive and ubiquitous) storytellers, in the same way as the Catholic Church was, once, the only existent or admissible voice.

We need then to examine this situation, i.e. the reality of the social sciences and of the social scientists, because, only the unmasking of their world made of myths and superstitions can possibly lead us to the free development of knowledge, everywhere and for all human beings who aspire to it.

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## SOCIAL SCIENCES & SOCIAL SCIENTISTS IN THE STATIST AGE

The damning origins  
The devious outlook  
The duplicitous role  
The despicable results  
The disastrous present  
The desirable future  
References



"Much of our 'social science' still belongs to the Middle Ages."  
(Karl Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, 1945)

## The damning origins

The social sciences, in some of their disciplines, in the way they are practised, in the topics of research tackled, and in the solutions put forward, are a direct result of the rising to dominance of the state and a response to the state's ideological, administrative and fiscal demands.

For instance, the formation of national states impelled the business of record-keeping far beyond what was, up to then, a simple recording of births and deaths made by the parishes. The addition of other records like, in particular, economic data (trade, income, etc.), led to the establishment of the discipline of "statistics". The name "statistics" derives, very likely, from "status" as personal situation or as political organization (the state).

In England, John Graunt, who is considered one of the founders of demography (the quantitative study of populations) introduced, with William Petty and other fellows of the Royal Society, the term "Political Arithmetick" referring to reasoning by figures about the art of governing. For "political arithmetick" we can read statistics or political economy; both fields and related tools of investigation became more and more subsumed under the ideological wing of the state and were used for state purposes (administration, taxation, income distribution, etc.). Not surprisingly, one of the major tracts of William Petty bears the title *A Treatise of Taxes and Contributions* (1662).

Another discipline whose origin and diffusion owes a lot to the existence and growth of the state is anthropology.

The imperialistic drive of the state-ruling elites in England and France, which resulted in the formation of two huge empires during the second half of the XIX century, stimulated much research into far away lands and people. Intellectual curiosity about exotic places and cultures that promoted scientific investigations by some travellers, was more and more replaced by the need to get reliable data for ruling the new subjects. Anthropologists paid by the state were sent abroad to collect those data in order to assist the administrative machine of the new imperial power.

Even historical research and the writing of history received an impulse from state rulers eager to put historians at the service of nation-building, manufacturing ancient national identities where only different local cultures (traditions, idioms, etc.) actually existed.

The genetic connection between the state and some social science disciplines would not represent a problem and certainly would not be qualified as damning if the links had been limited to the initial stimulus given by the state to those disciplines and, especially, if the state had not extended its reach to the social sciences as a whole, willing to put all the disciplines at its own disposal and under its direct tutelage.

### **The devious outlook**

Up to the XVIII century, the lovers of knowledge (Leibniz, Voltaire, Goethe, Edward Gibbon, Adam Smith, etc.) were cosmopolitan individuals with a cosmopolitan outlook. With the formation of national states, the social scientists narrowed their field of vision and their connections, becoming more and more:

- state influenced-certified. Since at least Napoleon, with the institution of the Imperial University, the state has intervened in the training of the professional elites in order to fill administrative roles with a personnel instructed directly by the state. With the expansion of state schooling, the state came to control every branch of learning, deciding and supervising what should be learned.

This is especially true for the social scientists (lawyers, economists, sociologists, psychologists, etc.) because most of them will become state personnel or will work according to directives formulated by the state. Moreover, in many cases they are entitled to practice their professional skills only after being certified by the state (state exams, state registered list of practitioners, state authorization).

Quite different is the situation for the physical scientists, who, even when their research is financed and used by the state, are more likely to work outside the state, to be in touch with international learned associations and to be subject to universal standards of excellence (even during the years of training and learning).

- nationally based-oriented. Social scientists, being mainly employed by the national state, even when they work abroad as economists, are prone to develop a national outlook that is also the consequence of a nationally-based state education.

"One may say broadly that all the animals that have been carefully observed have behaved so as to confirm the philosophy in which the observer believed before his observations began. Nay, more, they have all displayed the national characteristics of the observer. Animals studied by Americans rush about frantically, with an incredible display of hustle and pep, and at last achieve the desired result by chance. Animals observed by Germans sit still and think, and at last evolve the solution out of their inner consciousness."

(Bertrand Russell, *An Outline of Philosophy*, 1927)

So, while the practitioners of the physical sciences, on the whole, base their analysis and results on empirical data and are generally motivated by the search for solutions to universal problems, social science intellectuals rely, in large number, on ideologies that do not require empirical confirmation, and are ultimately driven by the exigencies of the local (i.e. national) power.

When the state power has tried to influence the course of research and to manipulate the results also in areas outside the social sciences (as, for instance, in the Lysenko affair in the Soviet Union) practical disaster inside the country (e.g. bad harvesting if not famine) and academic opprobrium from the international scientific community have followed in due course.

*La science n'a pas de patrie* [Science has no fatherland]

(Louis Pasteur - Statement made during the inaugural speech at the opening of the Pasteur Institute, Paris 1888)

The devious outlook of the social scientists is clearly evident from the fact that, still today, we accept as a matter of fact the existence, for example, of French philosophy while it would be laughable to refer to

French physics or French chemistry, not because there are no physicists or chemists in France but because they are assumed to be part not only of the world of science but also of a world science, engaged in research projects that transcend territorial, linguistic and cultural borders.

### **The duplicitous role**

The role played by a person in society is mainly determined by the training he receives and by the demands of the situation, in this case the activities a person is asked and is willing to perform.

For the large majority of social scientists, both training and employment are under the sign of the state. The statist age has increased enormously the number of social scientists and social workers (economists, psychologists, sociologists, etc.) by giving them a regular income.

The social scientists are almost universally:

- trained by the state (formation)
- certified by the state (validation)
- paid by the state (occupation).

"In 1962 the U.S. federal government spent \$118 million in support of social science research. In 1963, \$139 million was spent. In 1964, \$200 million was spent. In the space of three years, then, federal expenditures alone increased by about seventy percent - and this, starting from a comparatively high absolute level."

"Even in small countries such as Sweden and Belgium, government expenditures have increased greatly; in Belgium, for example, from 2.9 million dollars in 1961 to 4.8 million dollars in 1964."

"... it suffices to emphasize the gross features of the new situation: namely, that there has occurred a world-wide and unprecedented growth in social science funding, based largely on vast new resources supplied by government."

(Alvin W. Gouldner, *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, 1970)

It is then of no surprise to anyone that social scientists feel, on the whole, a sense of allegiance towards the state, which is seen as an indispensable institution for civil life and a superior form of social organization.

Some of them might be against a specific government or advocate a total transformation of society but, whatever their attitudes and convictions, the state is generally regarded by them as the unquestioned engine of change and the pillar underpinning any society (present and future). No state is tantamount, for many of them, to no society.

This allegiance towards the state, resulting from a cultural and material dependence, is clearly in conflict with the primary task of any scientist, which is the search for and advancement of knowledge. This requires the absence of any subordination to an external power because it would act, theoretically or practically, as a stumbling block.

In this specific case, the intellectual (formation) and material (occupation) dependence of the social scientists on the state (or on state financed institutions) is a gigantic obstacle on the road to knowledge.

If biologists and physicists were formed, certified and paid by a Church for conducting their research, we would be very suspicious about the results produced by them in terms of knowledge (i.e. universally true and valid beliefs). This does not mean that the scientists are not bound by ethical (or even religious) principles but only that the principles should be openly manifest and compatible with the scientific quest and, most of all, that they should not be shaped or imposed from the outside by any intruding power.

In 1960 Loren Baritz wrote a book *The Servants of Power* castigating the role of social scientists paid by industrialists for conducting research in factories. To my knowledge nothing of that sort has been written in recent times about the role of the social scientists as servants of the state.

Most of them are in the service of Mammon (money) and of Leviathan (power) and are not at all interested in exploring reality but only in repeating conventional ideas and passing down obsolete

formulas. We are more likely to find original views on society in novelists (Franz Kafka, George Orwell, Aldous Huxley, Albert Camus and many others), in non academic thinkers (from Karl Marx, Frédéric Bastiat, Pëtr Kropotkin to Arthur Koestler, Bruno Rizzi, Ivan Illich) and in scholars from other fields (Norbert Wiener, E. F. Schumacher, Matt Ridley) than in many social tracts from professional sociologists.

### **The despicable results**

Social scientists and what they produce are characterized by three important deficiencies:

1. lack of recollection (foggy memory of the past).

The social scientist, as we will see more specifically later, has no proper recollection of the past because he sees it, mainly if not exclusively, through the ideological lenses of some previous scholars, whose views are not only accepted uncritically, but are reduced and circulated to the level of catchphrases. This leads to a colossal misrepresentation of past reality at the service of present power.

2. lack of perception (false picture of the present).

The intellectual laziness of the social scientist, in sharp contrast with the boldness of the physicists and the technologists, keeps him within the traditional views of society, elaborated centuries ago, even when they do not apply to current reality. This causes a total misinterpretation of actual reality and the inability to grasp what is really happening (e.g. to be taken aback, most of them, by the collapse of the Soviet Union).

3. lack of direction (farcical proposals for the future).

Research bias and self-censorship make the social scientist capable only of repeating the past but useless when it comes to advancing creative solutions for the present and the future. The social scientist nowadays is simply a conveyer of myths and fairy tales; he is certainly not a problem dealer, i.e. somebody finding problems and prospecting solutions. This being the case, the mis-treatment of reality is more on a theoretical than on a practical level,

exactly like the Church in the past which was blocking the advancement of knowledge through the stale repetition of traditional false beliefs. Nevertheless, the lack of good theoretical insights has nefarious effects on the solution of practical matters.

Given this situation, it is appropriate to say that the results produced by the social scientists are:

- hardly social. Social scientists do not assist in finding solutions for social problems but, in many cases, exacerbate them with palliatives, diversions or delays. Social scientists, in general, do not have the courage to challenge the traditional ideas on which their professional status is based or to defy the consolidated interests of the state from which many of them receive the salary and the funds for their research activity.

- not at all scientific. Social scientists are not worried about putting forward contradictory statements or unsubstantiated arguments, whose supposed strength relies precisely in their un-verifiability and so un-falsifiability. What is important for the social scientists is only the apparent plausibility and popular acceptability of statements and arguments (at least within their national group). If the same criteria dominated in the physical and mathematical sciences we would never had the theory of relativity, quantum mechanics and non-Euclidean geometry. And so, the progress of science would have stopped long ago and with it the very reason for the furtherance of any scientific activity.

### **The disastrous present**

The actual situation of the so-called social sciences is disastrous.

The contemporary human being lives in a split cultural reality characterized by science (the shared knowledge about the empirical world) and pseudo-science (the fashionable popular nonsense of the ideological world). The former is leading him towards the blue skies of technological improvement and personal empowerment; the latter is precipitating him more and more into the gutter of prejudices and superstitions.

Most of these prejudices and superstitions that affect the social scientist originate, as already pointed out, from his subservient association with state power. The state has increased the number of social scientists (economists, psychologists, sociologists, etc.) giving them employment through the expansion of economic planning and social welfare. In exchange the state has demanded and duly obtained that social scientists recognize the state's pre-eminent role and that they be supportive of the state pervasive intervention in society.

This has been very easily achieved because, in the age of statism, the ideological and material interests of state rulers and social scientists have come to coincide.

"The much greater success of Keynes's General Theory [with respect to Hayek's *Prices and Production*, 1931] ... owed ... to the fact that its argument implemented some of the strongest political preferences of a large number of modern economists. Politically, Hayek's swam against the stream."

(Joseph A. Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis*, 1954)

The development of the social sciences that has brought us to this disastrous present has been characterized, at least during the XX century, by what can be called:

- Chinese whispers. Social science theory has tried to advance mainly through a communicative process in the fashion of Chinese whispers, where the information from a previous scholar is so superficially and sloppily examined that it is processed in a truncated and distorted form, ready to be interpreted by the recipient according to his political and cultural preferences and then sent, manipulated and twisted appropriately, to the next recipient, to undergo the same process; the result is that what comes out at the end might be the exact opposite of what went in at the start. So the "survival of the fittest" (Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin) becomes the survival of the strongest; "the whole is not identical to the sum of its parts" (Emile Durkheim) becomes the whole is greater (bigger, superior) than the sum of its parts; and "property is theft" (Pierre-Joseph Proud-

hon) is, against the intention of its author, improperly assumed to apply to any type of property however acquired, a part from the fact that the same author declared also that "property is freedom". All this explains very well why the social sciences do not build and grow incrementally on the successful intuitions of previous thinkers but remain in a condition characterized by a morass of confused and contradictory statements.

"It probably will surprise many who know nothing of Proudhon save his declaration that 'property is robbery' to learn that he was perhaps the most vigorous hater of Communism that ever lived on this planet. But the apparent inconsistency vanishes when you read his book and find that by property he means simply legally privileged wealth or the power of usury, and not at all the possession by the laborer of his products. Of such possession he was a staunch defender."

(Benjamin Tucker, *Liberty*, November 19, 1887, in *Instead of a Book, Communism*, p. 391, 1897)

- Black magic. The social scientist's practice is generally limited to tabulating statistical data mainly provided by the state, or to interviewing samples of a population in very artificial settings and ways. Because of the un-reliability of (most) statistical data and the insouciance of (most) interviewers, this is like interrogating the stars about the state of a patient and doing it while reciting magic formulas. No wonder that, as far as social problems are concerned, social scientists are no more trustworthy than witch doctors or astrologers (and some political leaders preferred the advice of the latter to that of the former). Moreover, witch doctors and astrologers can be more direct and precise about what to do than social scientists, who use magical words with obscure meanings in order to impress minds, to confuse ideas and to give the impression, like in a Nostradamus prophecy, that they are always right, provided that the interpretation is right.

The situation of the social sciences in terms of the contribution by social scientists to the advancement of knowledge is so miserable and

gloomy that there is no way out other than through a conceptual and practical revolution, of which we can only list some basic requirements.

### **The desirable future**

What might be hoped for and strived for in order that the so-called social sciences become part of the scientific endeavour is:

- de-politicization: independence from state power (as from any superimposed external power) in every respect (state ideology, state funding, state imprimatur, etc.).
- de-nationalization: independence from narrow-minded nationalistic outlooks (as from any theoretical and empirical restriction based on territory, race or similar factors).
- de-fragmentation: independence from jealous professorial barons intent on defending their own pasture (as if the search for knowledge had fences and border posts restricting access to different areas of investigation).

"Natural science will in time incorporate into itself the science of human beings, just as the science of human beings will incorporate into itself natural science: there will be one science."

(Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*)

To ask for a change in the social sciences is tantamount to demanding a radical transformation of the social scientists, with the cessation of some attitudes and practices that have made their present role totally hopeless and useless if not even detrimental to human betterment (moral, cultural, social, etc.).

For social scientists what is required is nothing less than:

- The end of social scientists as state-priests (pillars of the state power as high commissioners and petty bureaucrats);
- The end of social scientists as state-propagandists (story-tellers for the state power as academics and social commentators);
- The end of social scientists as state-puppets (servants of state

power as pampered intellectuals, separate from reality and from real people).

"To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust. It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically but practically."

(Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854)

"Marx contrasted the proletarian revolution with all those previously recorded in history; he conceived this future revolution as one that would make "the entire superstructure of classes which compose official society" disappear (Communist Manifesto). Such a phenomenon requires the disappearance of the intellectuals and, above all, of their strongholds, namely the State and political parties. From a Marxist viewpoint, the revolution is made by the producers who, accustomed to the working practices of large-scale industry, limit the role of intellectuals to that of clerks entrusted only with the bare minimum of tasks. Everybody knows, indeed, that a plan is regarded as all the more efficiently executed the smaller the number of administrative staff involved."

(Georges Sorel, *The Decomposition of Marxism*, 1908)

Only after a momentous renovation can the social pseudo-sciences and the social pseudo-scientists move from being ideologies-ideologues intent on misrepresenting ideas and manipulating people to becoming real science and real scientists promoting knowledge.

To contribute to this aim it is necessary to highlight the myths concocted and scattered by many social scientists which have infested the social sciences and the social scene and which have constituted incapacitating straightjackets and absurd superstitions to the detriment of the comprehension of reality and the free development of knowledge.

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## STRAITJACKETS & SUPERSTITIONS OF THE STATIST AGE

The unsavoury agents of social life  
The unwarranted equations of social discourse  
The shaky foundations of social theory  
The capital myths of social doctrine  
The super myth of the social present: the state  
Without straitjackets and beyond superstitions  
References



"There is no nonsense so arrant that it cannot be made the creed of the vast majority by adequate governmental action."

(Bertrand Russell, *An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish*, 1943)

## **The unsavoury agents of social life**

**U**nder the denomination of social agents, operating within the category of the social sciences, we include, in a broad sense, a series of active participants (major and minor) of social life, including the 'mass-men' with their attitudes and convictions about mass-society.

The attitudes and convictions produced at the centre (by the professional social scientists) and taken up at the periphery (by the 'mass-men') tend, generally, to assume as a natural occurrence the conservation and perpetuation of existing ways of life and social relations, apart from purely incremental quantitative changes (i.e. more of the same).

Even a superficial update in the vocabulary and armoury of the social scientists cannot hide the fact that they (and their mass audience) still hold ideas that, far away from being eternal pillars of human wisdom and social enlightenment, simply belong to a feudal past. The core of these ideas lies in the conviction of the absolute necessity of power (control) and obedience (subordination) as the source and guide of (almost) any social relation.

On the basis of these ideas many agents of social life have made their material fortune (or what they think is a successful life) and many others have engendered their voluntary servitude (or what they think is the unavoidable destiny in life).

Let us examine very briefly some of these unsavoury agents of social life.

### **The Byzantine lawyer**

The complexity (e.g., variety) of human intercourse has been further complicated (i.e., confused) by the existence of hundreds of thousands of laws and legal dispositions that presume to rule any and every aspect of people's lives. The lawyer is the main agent presiding over this morass of legal immorality (lack of "mores"). This is the historical result of communities being expropriated of their capability/responsibility of self-regulation through moral customs ("mores") emerging from extensive interactions and rational reflections on the

outcomes of those interactions. In our times, the norms are the packaged product of powerful lobbies assisted by paid professionals, all vying for the favour of the rulers (the law makers). The Byzantine lawyers, as the core members or the servile appendages of the ruling elite, are the shopkeepers in this bazaar of trafficking in articles of law for power and patronage.

### **The dismal economist**

Economics has been called, for apparently very different reasons, the "dismal science" (Thomas Carlyle, 1849), but it would have been more appropriate to use that adjective to qualify economists, that is as dismal scientists. Most of them are nothing more than the priests of Mammon (money) and the servant of Leviathan (state power). In order to become popular and successful they threw overboard many bold and effective ideas (e.g., Gresham's warnings on the monopolistic issue of means of payment, or Adam Smith views on free trade) and adopted concepts and practices in tune with the wishes of their state masters (e.g., central banking and state monopoly on currencies, trade protectionism). The phenomenal growth in their number, their ubiquitous presence (in national and international organizations) and the incredibly poor, if not disastrous, results achieved by following their advice in full, should warn everybody that, even if intellectual prostitution pays (up to a point and for a while), the long-term consequences are catastrophic for the mind and for the soul (not to mention the pockets) of the common person. Wherever the standard of living has improved, we should cheer scientists, technologists, entrepreneurs and workers, but boo the economists.

### **The charlatan psychologist**

Following the secularization of individual life and the popularization of psychoanalysis amongst the masses, the psychologist has taken the role that was once played by the confessor within a Church. In modern times the function of the psychologist has become even more manipulative than that of the priest of bygone ages. The first step in the manipulative process is to make the individual accept reality (any reality) or, in other words, to accommodate reality into his own life and to adjust to it. However, it is not sufficient to accept a

reality dominated by Big Brother. The task of the psychologically adjusted human being is to love Big Brother and to be grateful for what Big Brother does for him. To this end the mass of psychologists operate as best they can for an increasing number of people, employing a full repertory of psychological and pharmacological tools. In most cases this happens courtesy of the Big Brother itself (operating under the deceitful label of Ministry of Health), of which many psychologists are faithful servants and silent agents.

### **The platitudinous journalist**

The journalist is the undisputed king of mass indoctrination. It should not be taken as disrespectful of the profession to remind that Mussolini and Goebbels are amongst those who practiced the trade and who taught many useful tricks, the first of which being that a large dose of nationalism (jingoism) and national pride is a sure recipe for success and wide (national) readership. The basic dish of most journalists is a soup made of highly conventional stereotypes associated with explanations that might be totally false but must be absolutely plausible, all seasoned with some sensationalist pepper. The journalists are those who try to present the same old story as an absolute novelty and when a real novelty appears on the scene, they fail to notice it, or they treat it as the same old story. The gullible readers trust without questioning the journalists' mix of conventionalism and sensationalism and spread it through social intercourse, making the soup more and more acceptable in direct relation to the number of people who (are ready and willing to) taste and digest it. And so, the chain of mass gullibility extends and grows, sometimes artfully steered by state power (through spin doctors), or directly propped up by it (through state subsidies to daily papers, like in Italy).

### **The manipulative teacher**

The platitudinous jingoistic journalist is likely to succeed especially because the manipulation of the reader started in his infancy, via state schools. The state schoolteacher is the first professional ring of a chain of superstitions that, in due course, will tighten the brain of the human being in a sort of a mental straitjacket. The naive teacher

is convinced that he/she is involved in the noble mission of transmitting knowledge; in reality, he is just instilling conformism to obsolete ideas and practices that are functional to the same power (the state) who controls and administers education through the manipulative teacher. Accepting this imbroglio, the teacher puts himself in a position of serious breach of trust insofar as he gives to young pupils the impression that he is presenting universal knowledge while he is only or mainly transmitting notions selected and accepted by the nation state. In this way he undermines/compromises the development of critical and creative faculties in individuals who are not able yet to judge by themselves the worth of what they are learning or not yet quite capable of embarking on alternative learning experiences.

"... modern schoolteachers, divinely inspired and sanctioned by the State ... will necessarily become, some without realizing it, some fully aware of it, the propagandists of the doctrine of the sacrifice of the people to the power of the State and to the advantage of its privileged strata."

(Mikhail Bakunin, *Dieu et l'état*, 1882)

*What did you learn in school today  
 Dear little boy of mine?  
 What did you learn in school today  
 Dear little boy of mine?  
 I learned our government must be strong  
 It's always right and never wrong  
 Our leaders are the finest men  
 That's why we elect them again and again  
 And that's what I learned in school today,  
 That's what I learned in school.  
 (Tom Paxton, What Did You Learn in School Today?  
 1963)*

### **The obtuse bureaucrat**

The mass society of our age can be characterized as a state-domi-

nated society whose central figure is the obtuse bureaucrat, officiously performing the task of preserving and applying rules, no matter how idiotic and irrational they are. Bureaucrats and bureaucratic mentality can be found (in constant increase) in every aspect of social life of the last one hundred years or more, and in many social figures (i.e., the bureaucratic party member, the bureaucratic trade-unionist, the bureaucratic social worker, the bureaucratic manager, etc.). The rise to dominance of the state is, in actual fact, the rise to dominance everywhere of petty and powerful bureaucrats. They are the expression and the propagators of a way of thinking and behaving that has infected all social life and has downgraded the human being to the level of a dependent and duped mass-moron.

"... from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the workers of Central and Western Europe had rapidly developed their own organizations, parties, trade unions, produced their own leaders and, above all, their own bureaucracy - men with iron wills and wooden heads."

(Arthur Koestler, *The Yogi and the Commissar*, 1945)

### **The mass-moron**

The cause and effect of the existence of all those unsavoury agents of social life is the formation and consolidation of the mass-moron. In the last centuries the common human being has fallen out of the frying pan of Church tutelage and into the roasting fire of State dominance, remaining an eternal under-age, immature child, afraid of taking autonomous decisions and full responsibility for his actions. In too many cases he has consented (consciously or unconsciously) being a pawn in the hands of the unsavoury agents of social life previously listed and, in that role, he has become a supine believer/transmitter of social myths and so a component of the social sciences factory of mystifications.

"... the "mass-man" sees in the State an anonymous power, and, since he himself feels anonymous like a crowd - he thinks that the State is

part of him. Suppose that in the public life of a country a difficulty, a conflict or a problem arises: the "mass-man" will be inclined to demand that the State intervenes, that the State takes over directly the task of solving it, using its gigantic and mighty means.

This is the major danger that menaces civilization: the statification of life, the interventionism of the State, the absorption by the State of all social spontaneity; in other words, the erasure of the historical spontaneity that, after all, supports, feeds and propels human destinies."

(José Ortega Y Gasset, *La Rebelión de las Masas*, 1937)

### **The unwarranted equations of social discourse**

The agents of social life have been able to carry on with their idiotic views and insipid behaviour also because, in the course of time, a series of absurd assumptions have been made or have been accepted by them, thus becoming basic axioms of social discourse.

They are the articles of faith of the statist ideology, elaborated and supported by the social scientists, held and believed more strongly than the precepts of any religious catechism, because they have enjoyed a more massive and intensive propaganda and so have been even more deeply and unconsciously internalized.

These basic axioms or unquestioned convictions are here called the unwarranted equations of social discourse because they attribute some specific (unwarranted) meaning to a series of terms in order to demean them in a way that is congenial (intellectually and practically) to the ruling elite (i.e. state power).

The main unwarranted equations are the following ones.

#### **Self-interest = selfishness**

The main trait characterizing the way society is organised and ruled by the state power is the fear of individuality and the fight against the individual. The dominant trend of social life under statism has been the push toward massification and the concomitant pull away from, and fight against, individualization.

There is a reason for it. The uniformity achieved through massifi-

cation could better justify the existence of a general interest, above and against the interests, qualified as particular or private, of individuals.

Once reality has been portrayed in such a way, the ruling elite (any ruling elite, be it the Church hierarchy in the past or the state rulers in the present) can present itself as the defender and the protector of the general interest (presumed as always good) against the personal interest (presumed as always deleterious).

Why on earth the members of the ruling elite (chosen by destiny or elected by the people) should be the only ones exempt from the alleged moral disease of looking at their own interest in preference to caring for everybody else's interest, is something that has almost never been examined and explained by any social scientist, especially in recent times.

However, putting that question aside, even a cursory analysis of the matter should persuade us that most individual interests are not at all in opposition to each other, otherwise most forms of social intercourse, like cultural and economic exchanges, would not take place.

Moreover, if a recommendable common interest exists (i.e., an interest shared by everybody) it consists precisely in the freedom of everybody to advance their personal interests. This formulation/solution of the matter logically excludes anything that conflicts with (blocks/damages) the universal individual freedom of looking after one's personal interests.

As a matter of fact, to care (and be able to care) for one's own interests represents one of the recurrent ethical principles, from Aristotle to Spinoza and down to Erich Fromm.

"The more each person strives and is able to seek his own profit, that is to say, to preserve his being, the more virtue does he possess; on the other hand, in so far as each person neglects his own profit, that is to say, neglects to preserve his own being, is he impotent"

(Spinoza, *Ethics*, 1677, IV, Prop. 20)

In short, to have equated the activity of individuals promoting their self-interest with viciousness and insensitivity to the interest of other people is one of the most sly and wicked postulations ever made by the social scientists.

The logical and practical consequence of this equation is even more reproachable, because it leads, as a forgone general conclusion and not as a matter of inquiry, to the intrinsic irreconcilability between different interests and so the permanent unavoidable opposition between human beings.

All these assumptions are at the basis of the ideology of *homo homini lupus* and the supreme justifications for the existence of a monopolistic totalitarian power like the state. If a social scientist wants to keep spreading fear and suspicion he has to do nothing more than uphold these stereotyped views, without any qualification that would severely restrict their validity and applicability.

#### **Personality = identity**

The continuous loss of individuality, promoted by some social scientists as a sign of modernization, and the rise of uniformity within a mass society, have resulted in the widespread use by the same social scientists of the term 'identity' in place of the classic concept of 'personality'.

If we consider the etymological root of the word identity (*idem* = the same or, *identitas* = sameness) it is quite evident that it should have never been applied to any human being, whose personality should not only be considered as unique but in continuous evolution.

Nevertheless, the social scientists not only have not raised any critical objection to the equation personality = identity, but have openly accepted and even praised it.

This is all more absurd with reference to the personality of an individual because it is like stating that:

- the individual is identical to himself (a meaningless statement)
- the individual is unchanging over time (a false statement).

What this unwarranted equation highlights is, then, the abandonment of the true concept of personality as individuality and of personality development as individualization. Their place has then

been taken, in the discourses of the social scientists, by identity (the homogenized being) and identification (the supervised being).

In actual fact these two words (identity and identification) are more in tune with expressions like national identity (i.e. the adoption/imposition of the same cultural myths and modes) and identity cards (i.e. the introduction/imposition of restrictions to the freedom of movement) than with a scientific discourse concerning the distinctive evolving traits of the human being.

The social scientists, by using extensively the word 'identity' instead of the more appropriate term 'personality', reveal clearly not only their adhesion/submission to the ideology of statism, but also how they see the human being and which role they assign to him or her, namely that of an interchangeable cog in a machine or an abstract symbol in an equation, to be manipulated as it seems convenient to the state alchemists of the mass society.

#### **Equity = equality**

In a mass society made of (supposedly) identical human beings, equity, that is fairness of behaviour towards each other, is considered equivalent to equality.

Clearly this would be the case, and equality would be indeed like equity (and so the most desirable solution), provided that we really dealt with identical (or highly similar) people, in identical (or highly similar) circumstances; for instance, workers singles and in the same age group, performing exactly the same tasks, producing exactly the same output and receiving exactly the same pay.

However, this is an absurd and idiotic assumption, far away from reality, if applied on a large scale, because not only are we all different in many respects related to sex, age, physical strength, interests, needs, dispositions, and so on, but we live and operate in different and changing conditions that demand for different ways, forms and levels of intervention, satisfaction, compensation or whatever else.

"There is nothing more unfair than sharing things out in equal parts amongst human beings who are not equal."

(The children of the school of Barbiana, Tuscany, 1967)

What the advocates of social equality really want to implement, even if they would be the firsts to deny it, is a sort of "barracks communism" where each one receives the same ration and must feel content just for the fact that no one has been treated differently.

This is the usual idiotic attitude of prehistoric social scientists for whom common egalitarian starvation should be preferable to unequally filled bellies.

Moreover, it must be said that the supposed equalitarian distribution of resources advocated by so-called progressive social scientists has the funny habit of magically transforming itself, rather sooner than later, in such a way that the declaration "all beings are equal" has to be supplemented by the gloss "but some beings are more equal than others."

In the end, the real equality that the social scientists support and convey to the common people is the fact that all of them must be equally subject to and, we should add, equally defenceless in front of, state power.

#### **Anarchy = disorder**

Anarchy means essentially the opposition to a domineering power and the absence of a monopolistic centre of direction, legislating for everybody on everything. It certainly does not mean what the state oriented social scientists want us to believe, that is the rejection of any authority and the disrespect for any rule.

In fact the anarchist recognizes and willingly accepts the authority of those rich in knowledge and wisdom and is willing to follow voluntarily their advice.

"I bow before the authority of special men because it is imposed on me by my own reason. I am conscious of my own inability to grasp, in all its detail, and positive developments, any very large portion of human knowledge. The greatest intelligence would not be equal to a comprehension of the whole. Thence results, for science as well as for industry, the necessity of the division and association of labour. I receive and I give - such is human life. Each directs and is directed in his turn. Therefore, there is no fixed and constant authority, but a

continual exchange of mutual, temporary, and, above all, voluntary authority and subordination."

(Mikhail Bakunin, *Dieu et l'état*, 1882)

What the anarchist does not accept is the imposition on everybody of rules manufactured by a clique of arrogant and ignorant people, for their own convenience, and so simply because they happen to be in power thanks to illusory promises, dishonest favours and corruptive bribes.

The image of anarchy as the reign of disorder and brutality is a convenient one, made up by state propagandists who depict in sensational and over-censorious terms a small number of acts of violent rebellion committed in the past by some anarchists against a few rulers and, on the basis of them, condemn the whole conception and the whole movement.

The reality is that anarchy, far from being a condition of general disorder, is a very advanced process of dynamical order, brought about by individuals who have reached a high level of humanity.

"Even the theoretical anarchist, whose philosophy commits him to the idea that state or government control is an unmitigated evil, believes that with the abolition of the political state other forms of social control would operate: indeed, his opposition to governmental regulation springs from his belief that other and to him more normal modes of control would operate with abolition of the state."

(John Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 1938)

To be proficient in the practice of anarchy requires possessing the humility and the awareness to recognize the need for a constant apprenticeship in the art of living.

In common parlance it should be appropriate to talk of ascending towards anarchy (i.e. to an ever more accomplished order via self-rule) and descending into state tyranny (i.e. to fall under the dominance of one tyrant, of many tyrants or even of a majority acting as tyrant like in a representative majoritarian democracy).

**Well-Being = well-fare**

In the age of statistics and state-provided services, social scientists represent the well-being of individuals through the use of figures in national accounts.

How well individuals fare is indicated, according to social scientists, by whether the numbers show a growth in the quantifiable indexes (production, employment, income, services, etc.).

The use of mathematical symbols gives an aura of unquestionable objectivity and precision to this entire exercise of collection, elaboration and presentation of data.

Unfortunately, the content and quality of the statistical indexes are not subjected to critical analysis by most social scientists, happy to repeat procedures of data manipulation that have been performed by previous scholars and are eagerly accepted in academic and political circles.

For almost all the people belonging to those circles, economic growth is always good. It follows that the increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) becomes the overall aim that guides the socio-economic life of everybody and the surest indicator of personal well-being.

Well-being is equated to well-fare, that is to how well one fares over time in terms of increase in production and consumption, irrespective of what is produced/consumed and how much is already produced/consumed, and assessing all of this in relation to the effective needs.

That this equation (personal well-being = material well-fare) is not at all appropriate, especially when most people in a community have already reached a fully satisfactory standard of living (level of production and consumption), had already been pointed out by John Stuart Mill with reference to England in the middle of the XIX century.

"I cannot [therefore] regard the stationary state of capital and wealth with the unaffected aversion so generally manifested towards it by political economists of the old school."

"It is scarcely necessary to remark that a stationary condition of capital and population implies no stationary state of human improvement. There would be as much scope as ever for all kinds of mental culture, and moral and social progress; so much room for improving the Art of Living, and much more likelihood of its being improved, when minds ceased to be engrossed by the art of getting on."

(John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, 1848)

We should add that the increase in the figure of the GDP not only is no longer, in advanced economies, a sign of well-being, but it is the exact opposite: an indication of an excessive exploitation and a criminal squandering of resources, like the sickening overfeeding and overeating of obese people.

Moreover, the mechanism of the welfare state that has been set up and has spread out on the basis of a continuous increase in material production, is impoverishing the cultural and moral essence of too many human beings, trapping them in an unhealthy dependency that is the very opposite of personal well-being.

### **Morality = legality**

In the mass society made of 'mass-men', what is acceptable behaviour is something defined by paid experts (jurists, psychologists, economists, etc.), voted for by paid lawmakers and sanctioned by paid magistrates.

Under statism, law-making is a big business affecting big businesses, worthy of the expenditure of big money and big efforts by big lobbies. It should then not come as a surprise that this huge apparatus employed for influencing, producing and implementing rules of conduct valid for everybody within a specific territory has relegated morality (i.e., the mores of the people and their slow formation and deep internalization) to the cellar replacing it with legality (i.e., the laws of the state and their opportunistic production and shallow acceptance).

More and more social scientists and political commentators approve or disapprove of something (e.g., immigration, work, trade,

etc.) based on whether it is legal or illegal (i.e., controlled and sanctioned by the state) without paying any attention to factors of morality or immorality. If it is legal, it is, by definition, right and good. In a world that has experienced laws promoting slavery, racial extermination, religious discrimination, exploitation and displacement of minorities, imperialism and warmongering, besides many other criminal state exploits, this attitude is sickening.

The existence of laws regulating every aspect of life is considered so important by contemporary intellectuals and academics that they lobby their MPs for the introduction of this or that piece of legislation, as if moral behaviour could be built automatically and artificially on the basis of some articles of law.

If that were true, the Constitution introduced in the Soviet Union under Stalin, reputed to be one of the most advanced and progressive ever adopted, would have disposed, sooner or later, of any injustice and atrocity.

And yet, in spite of a plethora of national and international laws, injustices and atrocities not only mounted to impressive height under Stalin's Constitution, but still take place nowadays everywhere, mostly under and through the apparatus of the states and their "wondrous" laws (read, for confirmation of this fact, any report by Amnesty International).

It is only when state rulers pass a certain limit, committing repeated crimes against humanity (genocides, mass deportations, tortures) that many human beings realize that state legality is not at all a replacement for human morality but it might even be its most devious obstacle and enemy.

In any case, even in presence of the grossest immorality, some legal expert or political adviser will find an escape route or a distracting trick, justifying every depraved action with some legal cavil or hiding it behind the usual cloud of legal jargon.

*Summum ius, summa iniuria*

"The application of the supreme law can represent the implementation of the greatest injustice."

(Cicero, *De Officiis* I-10-33, 44 B.C.)

### **Society = state**

The pinnacle of the unwarranted equations is reached by the social scientists with the identification of society with the state.

The conviction of their identity is instilled at an early age in children's minds through state schooling and is stressed over and over again, during the entire course of people's lives, by every teacher, lecturer, journalist, until it becomes a forgone mental association, unquestioned and unquestionable.

This equation of identity is historically untenable because the state is a relatively quite recent entity, appearing on the scene during the last few centuries, while societies exist from time immemorial, everywhere people came into contact with each other and interacted repeatedly.

To this objection some social scientists reply (1) that for state they mean any power of regulating social life, and (2) that no social organization can exist without it. The current regulating power is the state (or the international system of states). Every human being is part of a society in so far as he/she is a state subject. And so, it follows according to this reasoning, that state and society are one and the same phenomenon.

The argument holds if we accept some hidden premises leading to quite unpleasant conclusions for many fully developed human beings, such as:

- the absolute and eternal necessity of an external power of regulation (the bureaucratic state).
- the concentration of the power of regulation in one single domineering entity (the central state).
- the automatic ascription of every individual under one specific regulating power (the territorial state).

None of these premises is valid universally and unequivocally. Increasingly, they do not even represent current empirical reality.

To highlight only one fact, the existence of virtual communities in hyperspace is already smashing to pieces the presumption, by the

social scientists, of assigning every human being to a social box and every box to a territorial state power.

"Society is merely the name for a number of individuals connected by interaction."

(Georg Simmel, *Grundfragen der Soziologie*, 1917)

So, not only is the identification of the society with the state more untenable than ever, but also the identification of a human being with one (and only one) specific society and culture is improper and crumbling fast.

Nevertheless, for reasons due mainly to his ideological formation and economic dependency, almost every social scientist must keep upholding the equation society = state. Only in this way can he assuage his conscience, making himself believe that he is a decent progressive individual at the service of his fellow human beings, i.e. of society, while he is, in fact, the intellectual prisoner of the current power or, in other words, the paid servant and puppet of the state.

### **The shaky foundations of social theory**

Social scientists, especially those who are keen on repeating ideas elaborated in the past more than testing and superseding them whenever no longer suitable or found wanting, have the habit of relying almost exclusively on popularisers and second-hand sources.

The likely results of this practice are a continual simplification of past formulations up to the point of distortion or utter stultification.

Because this type of social scientist exists in very large numbers, current social theory is on very shaky foundations, and the social practice that should feed social theory is generally non-existent.

The most common blunders of popular social scientists are the following:

#### **Plausibilism**

Social scientists, especially those who are keen on courting popu-

larity, are strongly attracted to plausible explanations and plausible solutions.

Given the fact that the carrying out of a series of demanding or radical experiments is not current and widespread practice in the social sciences, the social scientists are most likely to fall back on past accepted theories still widely popular.

Unfortunately for them, social life presents, besides some unchanging basic aspects, also a stream of new problems that require new solutions.

Sometimes these solutions are not so easy to grasp but emerge from what is called "counterintuitive logic," that is from ideas and practices contrary to what plausibility and common sense would indicate.

A similar approach to solving a problem can be found in the medical sciences when the protection from a virus is achieved not by totally isolating a person from it but by inoculating the individual with very small doses of the germ.

Another serious drawback of plausibilism is that some very credible solutions advocated by the social scientists quite often originate "unintended consequences" that compound the problem instead of solving it. This is quite evident, for instance, in most monetary aid for development which, far from promoting development, makes dependency on aid (and so non-development) even more acute and persistent.

### **Stereotypism**

Once introduced and accepted for a long while and by a large number of people, plausible explanations and plausible solutions are not likely to be questioned even in the face of poor or negative results. They become deeply consolidated and internalized attitudes.

To doubt them would involve recognizing that the familiar assumptions on which those explanations and solutions are based might be wrong. This would require a change of paradigm which, for most academics, is a move too disconcerting, laborious and painful to accept.

For this reason they try, at all costs, to uphold those assumptions

that, in due course, become stereotypes (i.e. cherished frozen images and categories) in the theoretical and practical armoury of the social scientists.

That armoury has by now become full of familiar concepts (e.g. left-right, public-private, capitalism-socialism, etc.) which, very often, have lost their scientific (i.e. cognitive) value but are, nevertheless, still used extensively and protractedly.

Naturally, wide recurrent use makes those terms even more familiar and popular and this blocks not only any questioning about their actual validity but also as to whether the attributed meaning is the same for different people, or even if they have any meaning left in depicting different realities.

"If you use ready-made phrases, you not only don't have to hunt about for words; you also don't have to bother with the rhythms of your sentences since these phrases are generally so arranged as to be more or less euphonious."

"When one watches some tired hack on the platform mechanically repeating the familiar phrases - bestial atrocities, iron heel, bloodstained tyranny, free peoples of the world, stand shoulder to shoulder - one often has a curious feeling that one is not watching a live human being but some kind of a dummy: a feeling which suddenly becomes stronger at moments when the light catches the speaker's spectacles and turns them into blank discs which seem to have no eyes behind them."

(George Orwell, *Politics and the English Language*, 1946)

### **Mechanicism**

Simplistic representations and explanations of reality demand a simple (preferably single) cause behind most social facts.

This spares the social scientist from engaging in what is called field work but is, actually, nothing other than the carrying out of a series of observations and experiments that should be part and parcel of every serious researcher and research project.

Instead, the mechanical mind of the social scientist, similar to the

infantile mind, builds up causal relations without verifying properly if we are simply in the presence of purely recurrent correlations.

Another forgone assumption of the mechanical mind concerns the undue acceptance of one predominant cause supposed to (inevitably) determine the final outcome.

For the social scientists it would be too distressing to envisage a multilayer open system of causes and effects that act one on top of the other, each one becoming cause and effect in its turn.

To acknowledge the existence of such a complex reality would be tragic for the role and function of the social scientist. It would practically mean admitting that there are no simple top-down mechanical solutions that he can put forward, to be implemented by operating pulleys and levers according to detailed instructions, in order to infallibly achieve the desired result.

### **Economism**

The common recommendation or preoccupation of the mechanical mind when confronted with any political or social problem is always to highlight the economic motive, presumed to drive, inexorably, the behaviour of all social actors.

This is like giving the classical advice *cherchez la femme* to every detective on the scene of any type of crime.

The economic explanation of social facts, which characterizes many social scientists as a conditioned reflex, is erroneously thought to be part of the Marxian way of interpreting history, but is, in fact, a gross misunderstanding of his views. For Marx, the material driving force shaping social relations in the course of history is technology and not economics or economic greed.

The interpretation and explanation of every historical occurrence in terms of economic forces or economic calculus reduces everything and everybody to the level of shopkeepers or calculating machines.

It is true that the intellectual capabilities of many historical actors (politicians, generals, high bureaucrats, etc.) are not superior to that of a dull shop assistant or greedy cashier but this does not mean that their decisions are based only on strict economic calculation of gains and losses. Ideological myths, religious faiths, considerations of

power and prestige, desire for adventure and fear of risks, these are more likely motivators than any economic calculus, whose data, at the start of a process of decision-making, are quite often uncertain, at best.

Nevertheless, the economic explanation, being the simplest and the most understandable in a world deemed to be characterized by scarcity and greed, is still pre-eminent even if it doesn't fit the facts (as in the case of many political decisions concerning wars and imperialistic adventures).

But this is a very minor inconvenience considering that fitting the facts is not a strong point of many theoretical explanations by social scientists.

### **Dialecticism**

The use of dialecticism by many social scientists could appear as an antidote to mechanicism.

The fact is that the dialectic adopted is not the Socratic one of trying to reach the truth by carefully examining and debating competing positions. It is the Hegelian one of thesis-antithesis-synthesis employed in the most banal and artificial way.

In the passage from Socrates to Hegel, open and honest dialogue as a tool for seeking the truth has been replaced by closed dogmatic polarizations leading to the imposition, in the final stance, of one preconceived view.

Furthermore, dialectics has been used to convey all sorts of pseudo-intellectual acrobatics (i.e. pure and plain nonsense).

Examples of this are the statements that competition breeds monopolies (and so competition has been restricted or even abolished and national monopolies have promptly emerged) or that the concentration of all power in the hands of the state rulers is the necessary step towards universal emancipation, implying that from total enslavement should arise full liberation.

All this has nothing to do with "counterintuitive logic." In dialectical terms it is called the negation of the negation, but it should be vulgarly better qualified as the crop of the crap.

"For us, the 'dialectical method' is either a mess of platitudes, a way of doubletalk, a pretentious obscurantism - or all three."

(Charles Wright Mills, *The Marxists*, 1962)

### **Sensationalism**

The grey world of the social scientists made up of platitudes and stereotypes is also peppered by sensationalism, generally in the form of conspiracy theories or the syndrome of the hidden agency.

Sensationalism is more the work of journalists than of academics but, from time to time, there appear essays with sensational titles (like *The End of History* or *The Clash of Civilizations*) that are presented as sensational historical contributions, meant precisely to create sensation.

Furthermore, some social scientists support, openly or implicitly, the conviction, stimulated and strengthened by popular press and TV, that we are all dominated by almost invincible powers far bigger than us (the big multinationals, the secret service, etc.) doing and undoing our lives according to their plans and under the shrouds of mystery.

Sensationalism is a way of explaining facts that relies on and leads to a miserable mixture of (self) protective and (self) justificatory attitudes. The general result of sensationalism is:

- to humble and belittle the human being, pitying or patronizing him.

- to heighten and magnify the importance of power, attributing to it incredible strength or capabilities, for good or bad.

This popular conviction is a very persistent one. It withstands unscathed clear counter-examples like the bashing and humbling of international organizations (e.g. the WTO) and multinational corporations (e.g. McDonald's) by groups of protesters and boycotters; or the falling of the Berlin wall and the dissolution of the supposedly mighty Soviet empire.

These are all historical occurrences that the sensationalist social scientists should have forecast if they were less preoccupied with confirming their preconceptions in support of current powers and

more intent on observing, with a perceptive critical mind, what is actually happening around them.

### **Hypostatism**

The most dangerous and, nevertheless, most common bungle committed by the social scientists is that of hypostatization, that is, to attribute materiality and personality to conceptual abstractions.

This shows how much contemporary social scientists are still influenced by tribal animism and the creed in transubstantiation, which might be acceptable or justifiable in the realm of spiritual faith but not in that of scientific inquiry, where hypostatize generate all sorts of vicious and absurd consequences

"The worst enemy of clear thinking is the propensity to hypostatize, i.e., to ascribe substance or real existence to mental constructs or concepts."

"Hypostatization is not merely an epistemological fallacy and not only misleads the search for knowledge. In the so-called social sciences it, more often than not, serves definite political aspirations in claiming for the collective as such a higher dignity than for the individual or even ascribing real existence only to the collective and denying the existence of the individual, calling it a mere abstraction."

(Ludwig von Mises, *The Ultimate Foundation of Economic Science*, 1962)

Treating mental constructs as if they were real/material entities is a fallacy that has become so entrenched and widespread in every social discourse that we do not even notice it anymore.

As a matter of fact we perpetuate and diffuse this fallacy, employing it extensively in our daily conversations because this is the way we have been taught at school from an early age. We talk about Britain, France and Italy as if they were real persons; we refer to society as if it existed above and beyond the relations between individuals; and we have created the category of the public interest as if

something of that sort could be conceivable on its own, totally different or even opposed to the interest of each and everyone.

The problem does not reside in using (consciously and appropriately) abstract concepts as generalizations of specific empirical realities or as symbols of psychological feelings, but in believing in the existence of mythical entities endowed with their own personality and an autonomous will to act (the nation will intervene, the market is greedy, the city is cruel, etc.).

"The following is the beginning of the preamble to the French Constitution of 1848:

'France has constituted itself a Republic for the purpose of raising all the citizens to an ever-increasing degree of morality, enlightenment, and well-being.'

Thus it is France, or an abstraction, which is to raise the French to morality, well-being, etc. Is it not by yielding to this strange delusion that we are led to expect everything from an energy not our own? Is it not giving out that there is, independently of the French, a virtuous, enlightened, and rich being, who can and will bestow upon them its benefits? Is not this supposing, and certainly very gratuitously, that there are between France and the French - between the simple, abridged, and abstract denomination of all the individualities, and these individualities themselves - relations as of father to son, tutor to pupil, professor to schoolboy?"

(Frédéric Bastiat, *The State*, 1848)

"We are continually confusing the label with the non-verbal object, and so giving a spurious validity to the word, as something alive and barking in its own right. When this tendency to identify expands from dogs to higher abstractions such as 'liberty,' 'justice,' 'the eternal,' and imputes living, breathing entity to them, almost nobody knows what anybody else means. If we are conscious of abstracting, well and good, we can handle these high terms as an expert tamer handles a lion. If we are not conscious of doing so, we are extremely

likely to get into difficulties." (Stuart Chase, *The Tyranny of Words*, 1938)

### **The capital myths of social doctrine**

The human being is a creative mythmaker, especially when he is unable to offer a rational explanation for the occurrence of a phenomenon.

This is, actually, an interesting and clever strategy because it removes uncertainties and doubts that might cause anxieties.

This strategy has been used, in the past, in the explanation of physical phenomena, by attributing to Gods or to some mysterious entities the power to generate events.

It has worked right up to the time when human beings have succeeded, through observation, experimentation and reflection, in providing more and more accurate and effective answers to a growing number of earthly occurrences.

However, there remains a cognitive area where myths, that is beliefs that have no foundation on facts, still persist and abound.

This area is the preserve of the so-called social sciences where the social scientists are either unwilling or unable to face reality and so take refuge in myths received by past generations and transmit them to future ones.

Let us examine some of the most common myths.

#### **Epos**

While preparing and consolidating the formation of the modern state, people (rulers and subjects) have produced epic sagas, that is fantastic narratives about their struggles for independence and emancipation.

To this end, facts have been embellished and objectives have been portrayed so that the establishment of every national state has appeared as an episode not only of a people's liberation (from a foreign or alien power) but also as part of the emancipation of the entire human race.

We have, then, the American myth of the founding fathers of the nation, those who wrote the Declaration of Independence (1776) stating solemnly "all men are created equal ... with certain unalienable Rights, ... among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." At the time when these words were penned, the man who contributed most to the drafting of the Declaration, Thomas Jefferson, was the proud owner of five thousand slaves in his estate at Monticello (Virginia).

As for the freedom of speech, trade, and so on, it didn't take many years for the new Federal State to start coercing individuals and interfering with their liberties.

Already in 1798, the Congress had introduced "sedition laws" that made it a crime to speak and write against the Government, the Congress or the President.

In 1821 a Congressional Report was already advocating the introduction of tariffs to protect the industrialists; and, since then, every so often, effective trade barriers have been put in place in the mythical land of free trade.

Other practices that, to a critical eye, should have, long since, deeply undermined the cherished myth of the American Revolution are:

- the introduction, inside the country, of the "spoils system" also known as "patronage system," meaning that the representatives elected to state office feel entitled to grab and distribute to their associates and supporters relevant quotas of the resources belonging to the community.

- the arrogation, towards the outside world, of an imperialistic attitude and posture, as soon as the ex-colony moved from being a political underdog to becoming a new bulldog on the world scene.

Notwithstanding these and other deeds, inconsistent with the original message, the mythology of a New World of Freedom and Happiness is, in some respects, still in the minds of many people, duly cultivated by every successive generation of Americans.

The same could be said about the myth of the French Revolution. This is heralded as the revolution that put an end to feudalism and

propelled the world into the contemporary era, dominated by enlightenment and rationalism.

The actual fact is that, after a few months of revolutionary struggle and moral fervour, the French Revolution became a struggle for state power between various illiberal groups in comparison with whom the absolutism of King Louis XVI can be considered as mild and ineffective paternalism.

The French Revolution, whatever the state-oriented historians might say, does not mark the passage from feudalism to the bourgeois society but the transformation of feudalism into statism, that is to a centralized and bureaucratically organized feudalism on a larger scale (macro-feudalism), under the insignia of the "despotism of liberty" (Maximilien Robespierre, *Sur les principes de morale politique qui doivent guider la Convention*, 5 février 1794).

With Robespierre, Saint Just and, later on, their successor Napoleon Bonaparte, people experienced not much "bourgeois" liberty but plenty of state despotism.

"The modern radical is a Centralist, Statist and rabid Jacobin."

(Pëtr Kropotkin, *The State. Its historic role*, 1897)

Another powerful epic myth was that of the Russian Revolution, the so-called socialist revolution that was meant to build the New Man and the New Society, overcoming any exploitation and inequality. Nothing of that sort ever started to materialize in Russia after the Revolution.

Nevertheless, adventurous journalists (like John Reed) and a cohort of armchair social scientists and hopeful social activists eagerly spread the myth of the Proletarian Revolution and of its prophets.

It goes without saying that, from the outset, the myth had no theoretical basis in Marx ideas nor did it reflect what was happening in reality.

As for its prophets and leaders, Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin and his successors, they were much more authoritarian and effective in their

murderous activities (over 60 million people killed under state communist rulers during the 1917-1987 period) that the weak Nicholas II or any previous autocrat had ever been, Ivan the Terrible included.

We could continue with other myths related to the struggles for freedom and independence that have led to the establishment of new states, and we would discover the same pattern: the struggle soon lost any idealistic afflatus for individual emancipation and became a crude fight for state power resulting in millions of deaths, like for instance, between 65 and 75 million people killed under Comrade Mao in state communist China.

And yet, thanks to the writings of national historians, and other social scientists siding with the new power, Chairman Mao continued, in spite of all betrayals and atrocities, to be celebrated as a luminous example of a revolutionary figure, at the service of his people, fighting for liberty and progress.

### **Heroes**

As part of the epos (epic myths) made up and promoted by national social scientists, national heroes have been manufactured or entire groups of people have become heroes endowed with super-human qualities and attributed with or destined for glorious missions.

With reference to national heroes, it is appropriate to remark that they are considered so only because their side has eventually won; because of that, their violent actions have received celebration instead of reprobation. If things had turned out differently they would have been forgotten or even cursed.

In fact, the person that one side considers a martyr or a freedom fighter is likely to be seen, by the other side, as a dangerous trouble-maker or even a terrorist.

During the XX century, especially under the influence of Marx, many social scientists (historians, sociologists, etc.) have been very keen on attributing the qualities of heroes to entire groups considered as homogeneous social classes (bourgeoisie, proletariat).

For example, according to Marx and Engels, a group of people called "the bourgeoisie" acted as a prodigious class which "accom-

plished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals." (Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, 1848).

In their view, this extraordinary class would be superseded by another class, the proletariat, assigned to an even higher mission and destined for even higher accomplishments.

However, if we stick to historical facts we discover that, already in the Middle Ages, the bourgeoisie (that is the productive class living in the towns or burghs) had ceased to be such a marvellous progressive class and was mainly preoccupied with introducing restrictions to the freedom of production (e.g. limiting the opening of new workshops) and trade (e.g. controlling the access of goods from the countryside).

With reference to the progressive role that the industrial bourgeoisie (the economically productive class) is alleged, by many historians, to have played in the French Revolution, it is sufficient to say that most of the members of the Third Estate (578 in all) were either landowners holding venal offices or people from liberal professions (of whom 180 were lawyers). Even Robespierre, through his full name, Maximilien-François-Marie-Isidore de Robespierre, betrays his family origin from the local gentry of Arras and with his profession of lawyer reveals the origin of his legalistic and formalistic mentality.

These were the real actors and the real beneficiaries of the revolution, not a revolution of the bourgeoisie but of the bureaucracy led by lawyers. It was they who did climb the ladder of power of the new state as rulers and high officers, at the centre (Paris) and in the periphery (Departments).

The bourgeoisie was not even the engine of the Industrial Revolution in England, unless we include under that label people and inventors from every walk of life such as Arkwright the barber (utilization of the water-frame in the cotton industry), Watt the watchmaker (invention of the steam-engine) and a multitude of rural labourers that contributed, with their energy and creativity, to the setting up of many industries and to the implementation of many mechanical improvements.

An important role was also played by the large landowners who

introduced in their estates all sorts of technical innovations and contributed, with the increase in rural production, to the Agricultural Revolution that preceded and promoted the Industrial Revolution. And, last but not least, we have the artisans and holders of small parcels of land who would constitute, in due course, the bulk of the industrialists in England.

In short, in each case we find real people from various stations in life and not much trace of a mythical group or of a mythical class.

A similar argument could be put forward concerning the proletariat, a powerful mythical invention, for the most part, of a creative mind (Marx) and of his industrialist friend (Engels).

To dismiss the concept of proletariat does not mean to cancel the existence of millions of industrial workers but only to stress the fact that, by using that concept, we accept putting under the same label individuals who came from different cultural backgrounds, had different personal experiences and were likely to follow different paths in life (e.g. remaining forever in the same working position or emerging as specialized technicians or even becoming small and large entrepreneurs).

In actual fact, many who could have been the proletariat's best representatives (if it had existed as a fixed class) soon changed their status to become scientists (Faraday), writers (D. H. Lawrence), industrialists and bankers (Carnegie), in other words anything but proletarians.

Moreover, others who remained within the range of the so-called proletariat (i.e. industrial manual workers) became more and more intent on blocking any technological improvement that might compromise their economic position (even if it might improve the conditions of many others) rather than fulfilling their supposedly revolutionary progressive mission.

"The American Trade Unions are more than anything else the collective expression of the particularistic interests of the skilled workers and so their crushing demanded by the industrialists has a

'progressive' aspect." (Antonio Gramsci, *Americanism and Fordism*, 1929-1935)

For these reasons it is difficult to accept, as a valid cognitive tool, the belief in the existence of a homogeneous class called proletariat. It is also unwise, from the point of view of the individual, to assign to any indistinct category (or class) of producers the mission of transforming society for the best (ourselves included). And finally, it is an historical blunder to confer this task to a group of people many of whom are even worried about changing their way of working for fear of losing their job or being downgraded in their profession, replaced by a machine or by more productive/progressive methods.

This blunder of colossal dimensions could also be a convenient deliberate deception, considering that most advocates of the proletariat were not themselves proletarians, but kept using the concept, which made them appear socially progressive, mainly in order to fulfil their aspirations to political power and prestige.

### **Saints**

Invented heroes are complemented by made-up saints.

Saints are those who do no wrong, suffer deprivations and injustices not of their own making, and so their behaviour cannot be put under severe scrutiny or even criticized because this would be tantamount to cynicism or utter blasphemy. To the hearts and minds of the social scientists, who have replaced catholic and protestant priests as the new moral voice, the poor and the downtrodden have become the new saints, for whom they feel obliged to be the advocates and spokespersons.

The poor are mainly those living in underdeveloped countries that used to be called, generally and for simplicity's sake, the Third World.

The downtrodden are mainly those living in developed countries who did not succeed professionally and personally, are poorly educated, often out of work and living on state benefits.

The fact that the social scientists align themselves, for the most part, on the side of the weakest individuals of world societies is

certainly not to be criticized, even from a scientific point of view. Science is the activity of finding and solving problems, and the existence of people living in appalling social environments or subject to harsh living conditions should certainly attract the interest and motivate the intervention of the social scientists.

But the way this is currently done is wholly unscientific.

The people of the Third World, for instance, are treated as a homogeneous mass, without clear differentiation between conditions and cultures, and between rulers and ruled. All of them are assumed to have been, some time in the past, exploited and expropriated of their resources by the First World (Europe). This is presented as the main reason for the wealth of the North and the poverty of the South of the world.

This picture does not allow for even a hint of critical analysis or tentative explanation of why certain populations have allowed themselves to be so easily conquered and subjected. As for the causal link between the wealth of the North and the poverty of the South, it completely overlooks the fact that some of the most prosperous peoples of Europe either never had colonies (e.g. the Swiss, the Scandinavians) or lost their colonies very soon (the Germans).

The same simplistic and biased approach is applied also to the long post-independence period when, especially in Africa, indigenous state corruption replaced exogenous state imposition.

"It is manifestly not European domination which created poverty, technical backwardness, over-population, or habits of despotism in Asia and Africa - it is these rather which made possible European rule overseas; and it is not the departure of European rulers - after so brief a dominion - which will change the nature of these territories, transform their poverty into wealth, or suddenly create probity in judges, moderation and public spirit in statesmen, or honesty in public servants."

(Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 1960)

A lack of critical analysis has led most social scientists, in partic-

ular economists, to advance appalling proposals for the promotion of a dynamic of development, namely external economic aid and internal state planning, as if development could ever be an externally sponsored and state concocted affair.

These nonsensical proposals of contemporary social scientists are on the same level as some idiotic views put forward by previous social scientists, namely:

- that imperialism was driven mainly, if not exclusively, by economic motives; in reality, many financiers lost money in the colonies after being asked by the politicians to invest there in the name of a mythical national interest.

- that the industrial capitalists were making huge profits by exporting capital from Europe and exploiting cheap labour in the colonies; in reality, practically none of them set up industries in the colonies except in the case of goods that had to be extracted locally (i.e., mining).

- that the imperialistic drive of the capitalists was aimed at finding new markets for their industrial goods; in reality, the purchasing power of local people in the colonies was practically nil and so was their role as consumers of industrial products.

- that the gains obtained by a commerce based on unequal terms of exchange have been fabulous; in reality, the trade between the First and the Third World was almost inexistent or very limited, and is comparatively small even nowadays.

"In fact, the French financiers were forced to invest in Morocco much against their will, in order to prepare the way for French political control. They knew they would lose their money, and they did. But Morocco became a French protectorate."

"... there was little correspondence between the areas of capitalist investment and political annexation."

"Their [i.e., the imperialists'] measuring-stick was Power, not Profit. When they disputed over tropical African territory or scrambled for railway concessions in China, their aim was to strengthen their respective empires, not to benefit the financiers of the City.

Hobson showed that Imperialism did not pay the nation. With longer experience, we can even say that it does not pay the investors."

(A. J. P. Taylor, *Economic Imperialism*, 1952)

"... it would seem that nations still obey their passions far more readily than their interests. Their interests serve them, at most, as rationalizations for their passions; they put forward their interests in order to be able to give reasons for satisfying their passions."

(Sigmund Freud, *Thoughts for the Times on War and Death*, 1915)

But now the chickens have come home to roost because many well-fed social scientists in the so-called civilized West, in presence of a push towards economic liberalization and a consequent growth in world commerce in which the people of the Third World are beginning to take part, accuse them of economic dumping and ask for state protection and the introduction of trade barriers.

The poor are no longer saints once they start emerging from their conditions of subsidised poverty and passive expectation of a bowl of rice or a cheque from the rich or from the department of social security.

All this reveals the basically dishonest attitude of many social scientists who declare themselves advocates and supporters of the poor and downtrodden as long as they remain in their place, i.e. poor and downtrodden.

The behaviour of the social scientists towards those people is, then, one of disgusting paternalism. It has worked so far with devastating consequences in moral terms because, unfortunately, it has succeeded in keeping most of the presumed "saints" in a condition of weakness, making them the perfect morons, continuously asking and waiting for help and assistance.

But things are changing, and the prospect that the "saints" might one day, very soon, emancipate themselves is a gloomy one for many economists working in the Third World, for many social workers operating in the First World and for all the social scientists who have

made their fortunes lecturing and writing popular books about the poor and the downtrodden.

### **Demons**

The social scientists, while raising some groups of people to the position of saints (the good) have also relegated others to the role of demons (the bad). The fact that we could all be good or bad in different circumstances and roles is not even taken into consideration by the mechanical and simplistic mind of the social scientists.

Given the importance that social scientists attribute to the economic factor, and given that they are, essentially, intellectuals with a national culture and a national audience, it is quite easy to guess who are the targets of their condemnations, the demons to which they impute all wrongdoing.

We could divide the pretended demons into two stereotyped categories:

- The doers. Under this category we put all the entrepreneurs/innovators, especially those who, being successful, have reached a position of considerable wealth, without political favouritism and economic protectionism. It seems to be a quasi-congenital attitude of the social scientists, especially those in the teaching profession, to be envious of those who have succeeded in practical economic endeavours, showing uncommon resilience and the capability of taking risks that any person who prefers talking rather than doing would find intolerable. To these intellectuals rightly applies the sarcastic remark of Bernard Shaw "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches." (*Maxims for Revolutionists*, 1903). To which we might add that the teaching imparted by those who cannot, contains, very often, a large dose of contempt or an air of superiority towards those who can. At the top of the list of doers as demons we find the multinationals. To the eyes of the national intellectuals, they combine the vulgarity of their aim, economic profit, with the original sin of being foreign, that is not nationally rooted. The multinationals seem to have, in a certain respect, taken on the disparaged role that was attributed in the past to the Jews as cosmopolitan entities that do not fit in the brave world of mass societies dominated by nation states. Having said so, big compa-

nies should be analyzed and criticized with respect to their practices not for the simple fact of being multinationals.

- The aliens. After the tragedy of the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel to which many Jews migrated, it became unacceptable, at least in the West, to depict the Jews as demons. The focus moved to other categories considered aliens to the so-called Western society. During the period of the Cold War the demons were the communists or the capitalists according to which state power the intellectuals were obedient to. Many intellectuals built their fortunes proclaiming their allegiance to one or other camp, until the evaporation and disappearance of the so-called communist states. More recently, intellectuals have replaced the Cold War with the Clash of Civilizations and have invented a new demon in the form of the Muslim world, packaging under the same label and attributing the same views to more than 1 billion people. This is the umpteenth example of the totally unscientific grossness and intellectual dishonesty of the social scientists in employing misleading categories.

The perpetuation of the demon-myth performs for the state the same function that it did when the Church was the supreme power: to instil fear in order to obtain submission. The foreboding words of the Church hierarchy: "*Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*" [Outside the Church there is no Salvation] have become, according to the sinister preaching of the social scientists of the statist era: "Outside the State there is no Security."

### **Dogmas**

The French Revolution put on its banners the motto *Liberté - Egalité - Fraternité*, which has been taken up, at least in principle, as guiding values of social life by most civilized people.

In the course of time and in direct relation to the ever growing access to positions of state power of new social figures such as lawyers and petty intellectuals, that motto seems to have been replaced by a new one based on the principles of *Unité - Identité - Sécurité*.

These principles have become the new dogmas of the popular intellectuals, eagerly supported and spread by popular journalists and accepted without objection by the mass-man.

Let us examine briefly the content of these new guiding dogmas.

Unity = perpetuation of the status quo = the compact herd

One of the main fears of the social scientists is the break-up of national unity. Balkanization is a relatively recent term invented by historians with the aim of scaring people about an uncertain and hostile future, in which the political geography of the world is characterized by the existence of many small units. For the most ambitious of the social scientists this might represent the end of grand designs, grand plans and especially grand opportunities for employment and earning.

Unity is favoured by the social scientists also because it might require their (paid) assistance in the integration (read: manipulation) of minorities into the common stream of conventional (national) thinking and behaving.

The dogma of Unity, for which all the minorities have paid a very dear price, leads to the second dogma.

Identity = conformity to the status quo = the undifferentiated herd

As previously pointed out, the social scientists are very fond of the word "identity," which has totally replaced the term "personality." According to the Webster dictionary, the first definition of identity (1a) is: "a sameness of essential or generic character in different examples or instances." The attribution to individuals of the word identity by the social scientists reveals their conception of the human being as a purely mass phenomenon (a serial object or a statistical figure) who remains the same throughout his life, after the initial period of state school indoctrination. To change and to differentiate might result in the introduction of elements of uncertainty and risk, and this could compromise the achievement of the third dogma.

Security = protection of the status quo = the sheltered herd

For the mass morons moulded by the ideas and visions promoted by the mass social scientists, a state of security is considered of paramount importance. We are not discounting the value of relative personal security but only stressing that it should not be pursued in opposition to other values (freedom, justice, creativity, etc.). Moreover, what is

puzzling, if not disturbing, in this search for security is the fact that, according to the views propagated by the political and social scientists, not only should it come from outside the control of the single individual but, incredibly, from the organization that, through wars, has done more than any other in the course of history to compromise security and destroy the lives and resources of millions of people. For those who, manipulated by the sirens of the social scientists, have not yet grasped which organization we are referring to, it is necessary to name it: the state

"The psychic task which a person can and must set for himself, is not to feel secure, but to be able to tolerate insecurity without panic and undue fear."

"Life, in its mental and spiritual aspects, is by necessity insecure and uncertain. There is certainty only about the fact that we are born and that we shall die."

"Free man is by necessity insecure; thinking man by necessity uncertain."

(Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society*, 1956)

### Suspicious

Before the consolidation of the national central state, with its eyes everywhere and its hands in every pocket, there existed a wealth of associations and friendly societies that composed what is generally known as civil society.

The state has succeeded in disbanding most of them, taking over their roles and functions. Now there is only, on one side, the atomized and homogenized individual and, on the other side, the mighty state. The equality so celebrated by contemporary social scientists is nothing other than the equal helplessness and defencelessness of every common human being in the face of the state.

This generalized condition of personal impotence is fertile ground for the breeding of all sorts of suspicions between one individual and another.

The dictum *homo homini lupus* has eventually become, if not a

reality, at least a constant warning and preoccupation in the minds of many people in the era of statism.

The warning has been subtly articulated by the social scientists and spread, either openly or furtively, in various ways, according to their ideological inclinations. In their books and newspapers articles they generally convey to the people the following messages:

- Beware of each other but trust only the state authority
- Beware of a foreign state authority but trust only your national state authority
- Beware of some would-be national state authority (i.e., the opposition) that wants to replace the current government but trust only your legitimate national state authority (i.e., the government) or vice versa.

All this appears to be as the abominable turning upside down, by the social scientists, of a two-thousand-year-old teaching of Christ: *Who is not against us is with us*. This is a rational universal principle arising out of love and acceptance of everybody.

The political and social scientists, especially those (and there are many) who abide by the defence of the so-called national interest and are suspicious of any change of position or move for the better on the part of other people, have put forward a revised version of that principle: *Who is not with us is against us*. This is an appalling slogan based on conformism and violence towards everybody not on our side, or anybody who is unwilling to celebrate how 'grand' (i.e. bullish) and 'good' (i.e. arrogant) we are.

The spread of suspicions about everybody's intentions that is typical of power (as opposed to the trust that emanates from personal moral authority or authoritative knowledge) is softened and made acceptable by the spread of illusions about the reality of power and of the social realm in which individuals act and interact.

### **Illusions**

The social scientists, unable to understand and represent reality in its true essence and dynamics, are equally unable to advance proposals that are other than illusory solutions.

They play the role of illusionists, repeating magic words and

magic formulas that belong to the past and were intended for bygone realities.

And yet, most contemporary social scientists keep relying on those mantras without making the slightest mental effort to analyse their present meaning and ascertain their effective usability (besides benumbing the mind as propaganda).

For instance, democracy means, literally, power of the people, but the fact of being allowed, every four or five years, to decide who will be the future masters (and not succeeding even in that unless the voter is on the side of the majority) is something that no true political scientist, in full possession of his rational capabilities, should characterize as power of the people.

And certainly not in the present century, with all the technological advances that we witness and enjoy, which are putting in the hands of the individual much more power (of information, communication, movement) than any deceitful political rite.

"The democratic doctrine is a productive source of ideology to which the mind willingly turns in order to give a veil of tolerance and apparent consentaneity to the harshest institutions of state coercion, which derives from the will to power of the strong over the masses."

(Enrico Leone, *Theory of Politics*, 1931)

"All voting is a sort of gaming, like checkers or backgammon, with a slight moral tinge to it, a playing with right and wrong, with moral questions; and betting naturally accompanies it. The character of the voters is not staked. I cast my vote, perchance, as I think right; but I am not vitally concerned that that right should prevail. I am willing to leave it to the majority. Its obligation, therefore, never exceeds that of expediency. Even voting for the right is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority."

(Henry David Thoreau, *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*, 1849)

In order to justify the holding of this illusion, many social scientists and, following on from them, many ordinary people, repeat the famous statement of Winston Churchill: "It has been said that Democracy is the worst form of government except all those others that have been tried from time to time." (Speech in the House of Commons, November 1947) Unfortunately, Churchill didn't add "so far" at the end of his sentence; by doing so, he would have spared us a lot of idiotic myths about democracy.

However, if the social scientists had examined the statement carefully, they would have noticed that, what Churchill says is that democracy is

- a. only one of the many forms of government so far invented
- b. a bad form of government
- c. acceptable just because the other forms were even worse.

So, to hear the social scientists reiterating the same maxim after more than 70 years after it was originally formulated should be a matter of deep concern for all creative and progressive individuals.

In fact, it means that in the past people were clever enough to introduce improved forms of social organization but now we are totally incapable or incapacitated from doing so because, according to our present democratic rulers and their intellectual servants, we have reached, with democracy, the pinnacle of achievement.

This is not only a very preposterous idea but also a very depressing one, considering the gross shortcomings of representative democracy.

"Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man?"

(Henry David Thoreau, *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*, 1848)

With reference to other illusory realities like capitalism and the free market, any honest social scientists should have remarked long ago that, even in the heyday of so-called industrial capitalism, the free market was more an ideal than a reality. The ideal was eventu-

ally crushed and production and trade fell under the control of the state.

To keep branding as "capitalism" and "free market" an economic system so extensively directed (i.e. distorted and messed up) by the state is not only ludicrous but intellectually disgraceful because it spreads illusion and confusion under the cloak of authoritative discourse.

If by capitalism the social scientists intend to refer to an economic system where people strive to make money by producing and trading, this is something that has always existed, long before the word capitalism was invented.

This would be a very idiotic use of the term "capitalism" and should bring scorn on any social scientist that would use it in such a stupid way.

However, most social scientists are famous for using words with ambiguous or intentionally obfuscated meaning in order to make people believe in a certain reality characterized by certain features that, on closer examination, are only manufactured illusions.

"The words democracy, socialism, freedom, patriotic, realistic, justice, have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another." "Words of this kind are often used in a consciously dishonest way."

"Other words used in variable meanings, in most cases more or less dishonestly, are: class, totalitarian, science, progressive, reactionary, bourgeois, equality."

(George Orwell, *Politics and the English Language*, 1946)

One of the biggest illusions manufactured by the social scientists is related to the use of funds compulsorily collected by the state through taxation.

The social scientists have spread the myth that paying taxes is a moral duty, through which we contribute to the advancement of the general well-being. This is, by the way, a very convenient myth for many of them because, out of taxation they get their salary.

In actual fact, historically, taxation was introduced in order to pay for wars. The receipt of funds from the public proved to be such a good move for the political rulers that taxes have remained even in time of peace and now they are used for feeding a large bureaucracy, supporting and silencing a large *lumpenproletariat* (the recipients of state welfare) and buying the favours of large chunks of public opinion through the allocation of funds. All this, as well as still financing wars, even if they are now called interventions for exporting democracy.

In short, the resources raised through compulsory taxation are generally used for repressive, parasitic or manipulative purposes inside and outside the country.

And taxation must be compulsory not because, otherwise, people would not contribute to the common good (they do it extensively through all sorts of charitable organizations and events); but because no one, in his right mind, would give money to an institution like the state with such an appalling record for squandering resources or for using them in such destructive ways.

In general, the illusions concocted by the social scientists relate, directly or indirectly, to the role and function of the state. The main objective of too many social scientists is to embellish the role of the state and to protect the institution from criticism, inventing all sorts of justifications and scapegoats.

That is why all the myths previously highlighted converge and lead straight to the super-myth of every popular social discourse: the myth of the state.

### **The super myth of the social present: the state**

The social scientists, be they of the so-called conservative or of the so-called progressive type, are all united by a common super-myth: the myth of the state.

The state is assumed by (almost) all social scientists to be the indispensable/irreplaceable engine of all social life.

In fact, contemporary social scientists assign to the state an even

bigger role than the one attributed to it in the past by the idealistic philosophers with their conception of the ethical state.

For the social scientists the state is not only the grumpy Big Brother (the rude but ever necessary protector and provider of discipline and security) but also the succouring Mother, the benevolent Father, the counselling Uncle, the inspiring Aunt, the forgiving Priest.

In other words, consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, the state has become for the social scientists what the Church was for its flock of believers: the earthly representative of Almighty God.

In the mythology of the social scientists the state is:

- Benevolent (the state rulers are better).

The state will not and cannot do harm to its subjects. May be a government fails and brings occasional distress to some people but the state, as the form in which the supreme general will is represented, is seen as an entity which is intrinsically good and right and inclined to act rightly for the good of its people.

- Provident (the state rulers do better).

The benevolent state, like a considerate shepherd, looks after the needs of its flock, which otherwise would be left to the inclemency of the weather (physical nature) or to the brutality of the people (human nature). In the mythical world built by some social scientists, no proper social life existed before the state came to regulate it. In earlier times it was just *bellum omnium contra omnes* (the war of everybody against everybody else). But then the state appeared, and it was peace on earth, or so the myth goes. A myth so powerfully held and propagated that the mythmakers can even admit the existence of exceptions (nasty states and world wars) without questioning at all the general validity of it.

- Omniscient (the state rulers know better).

In order to be fully benevolent and all-provident the state not only has to be in command of a wealth of resources, but also must be endowed with omniscience to achieve the appropriate satisfaction of every need of every person. Nothing less will do. Believing in the omniscience of the state, social scientists assign to professionals

within the state (that is to themselves) very important and powerful positions such as planning and development economists, social administrators, psychological counsellors, legal experts and so on and so forth. Unfortunately, the basic unpredictability and intractability of the human beast compromises, so they say, many of their efforts and designs. For this reason, the social scientist should not be considered responsible for what happens or does not happen in any project. Unsuccessful results are to be swept under the carpet or are presented as temporary difficulties to be dealt with through the injection of more funds and more social scientists engaged for ever bigger and more resolute interventions.

In brief, according to the super-myth fabricated by the state social servants, we should accept, without doubts or questions, a series of assumptions, each one more absurd than the other:

- that individuals are selfish, but politicians are selfless.
- that state rulers and their associates act not in their own interest but for the highest interests of the highest number of individuals.
- that state professionals are magically endowed with superior knowledge and a superior capacity for taking the best decisions for the majority if not for all.
- that the common person is unable to look after his own real interests except once in every so many years when he is summoned to the poll to elect his new masters.

"I am told that it is for my good that I am governed; now, since I give my money in order to be governed, it follows that it is for my good that I give my money, and this is possible, but it deserves, at least, to be verified.

Moreover, by the way, considering that no one can be more familiar than myself with the means to make myself happy, I find that it is strange, incomprehensible, unnatural, un-human, to dedicate oneself to the happiness of people one doesn't even know; and I declare that I have not the honour of being known by the people who govern me.

It is then right to say, from my point of view, that they are really

very kind, and, frankly, a bit indiscreet, to take the trouble to look after my happiness, especially when it is by no means proved that I am not capable of pursuing and achieving it by myself."

(Anselme Belleguarrigue, *Au fait! Au fait! Interprétation de l'idée démocratique*, Introduction, 1848)

Certainly, not every social scientist joined in the formation of the super-myth. The fact remains that the (false) conviction that without the state there would be only disorder and misery, exists in too many minds and it is very likely that it has been originated and spread by people (historians, journalists, political scientists, teachers, etc.) in a position of power and authority. Otherwise, we should start believing in the existence of mysterious inner voices responsible for shaping the ideas of individuals and the fate of peoples.

### **Without straitjackets and beyond superstitions**

The social scientists, for the most part at the service of the state and acting as the priests of a state religion (statism), have ossified and permeated the life of individuals and their social relations with all sorts of straitjackets and superstitions. In order to make these acceptable they have been coated with progressive words and compassionate visions.

"... while society is getting impatient to win Freedom, the famous men who put themselves at its head, imbued with the principles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, think only of subjecting mankind to the philanthropic despotism of their own social inventions. They desire to make mankind docilely bear, in Rousseau's phrase, the yoke of public happiness, such as they have imagined it."

(Frédéric Bastiat, *The Law*, 1850)

The state rulers, supported by the propaganda and the interventions of the social scientists, have set up what can be called a heinous

system of **Philanthropic Despotism**, made up of three interconnected components:

- Mischievous pietism. The state rulers, with the help of the social scientists, have presented to a gullible audience a huge fresco of human viciousness and helplessness resulting from the basic weaknesses of human nature. Once this portrayal of reality is accepted, the social scientists, in association with state rulers, introduce themselves as the benign and progressive exception, capable of merciful compassion coupled with the necessary sternness. The supine acceptance of this belittling of human nature, rescued only by the benevolent and provident state, has resulted in the generally favourable reception, promoted and applauded by social scientists, of the welfare state.

- Corruptive paternalism. The state rulers have destroyed or absorbed all self-help associations and friendly societies formed by individuals and communities in the course of history and in their place have put, in a monopolistic position, the welfare state. The by now evident aim of the welfare state is not to help people to become independent, but to instil in them a sense of allegiance and to establish a condition of permanent subordination towards the state. In fact, the so-called social security is the surest path to personal psychological insecurity and continuous dependency, through loss of self-esteem and the capability for self-help.

- Murderous perfectism. For those who do not want the imposed aid and guidance of the state, that is for the so-called unruly elements (free thinkers, anarchists, cosmopolitans, eccentrics, self-reliant human beings, etc.) the state rulers (especially the "progressive" ones so much praised by "progressive" social scientists) have all sorts of ready-made solutions in the form of prisons, brain conditioning, mental hospitals, concentration camps, labour camps, expulsion, ethnic cleansing right up to mass extermination. Certainly, these are not the names given to those practices because it would be highly inconvenient and inappropriate. Moreover, the emphasis is put only on the proclaimed aim, that is the perfection of a crooked humanity on the road to a shining future, and not on the means that are 'unfortunately' necessary, in so many cases, for such a noble mission.

"In our time political speech and writing are largely the defence of the indefensible." "Thus political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness. Defenceless villages are bombarded from the air, the inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine-gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets: this is called pacification. Millions of peasants are robbed of their farms and sent trudging along the roads with no more than they can carry: this is called transfer of population or rectification of frontiers. People are imprisoned for years without trial, or shot in the back of the neck or sent to die of scurvy in Arctic lumber camps: this is called elimination of unreliable elements."

(George Orwell, *Politics and the English Language*, 1946)

*I just want you to know that, when we talk about war, we're really talking about peace.*

President George W. Bush Speaks to HUD Employees on National Homeownership Month, 18th June 2002

*Make the war more peaceful.*

Statement made on 20th March 2003 by George W. Bush, the 43rd president of the USA, a graduate of Yale University (bachelor's degree in history) and the recipient of a Master in Business Administration from Harvard Business School.

*Our enemies are innovative and resourceful, and so are we. They never stop thinking about new ways to harm our country and our people, and neither do we.*

Statement made by George W. Bush, the 43rd president of the USA, in a 2004 discourse at the signing of the \$427 billion defence-spending bill.

Given this appalling situation, exiting the obscurantism (strait-jackets) imposed by the state and overcoming the nonsense (superstitions) spread by the social scientists is the necessary pre-condition for

the furtherance of what are the essential aspects of human life: freedom, development, knowledge. To do so we need to re-examine, without the distorted lenses of statism used by state compliant social scientists, the meaning of those very concepts of freedom, development, knowledge, and their reality, beyond and without the existence of state bullies and state servants.

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## ESCAPING OBSCURANTISM & OVERCOMING NONSENSE

Escaping obscurantism

Overcoming nonsense

Re-examining some basic concepts/practices

Freedom

Development

Knowledge

References



"To demand that human beings should abandon illusions about their condition is to demand that a condition that needs illusions should itself be abandoned."

(Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, 1843)

## Escaping obscurantism

**O**n the basis of what has been presented so far, it is clear that we have reached a point in the development of knowledge regarding the so-called social sciences where we are faced with incredible obstacles that impede all cognitive development. We are stuck in a marsh of obscurantism and nonsense from which only a clear memory and an honest analysis of past history could show us a way out.

As already pointed out repeatedly, only when the suffocating hold of the previous almighty power (the Catholic Church) was loosened and eventually broken, could the sciences of matter undergo a total regeneration that has produced a continuous and diffuse growth in knowledge, which has never stopped ever since.

Exiting *churchism*, with its bigotry and inanity in matters of science, was the way to advance knowledge. A failure to do so would have meant to have remained at the stage of traditional pre-scientific and pre-industrial societies, under the grip of priests and the spell of magicians and alchemists.

We are now faced with the same problem, but with regard to a different domain of knowledge (the social sciences) and a different master (the state).

We need a new Copernicus (and new Kepler, Galileo, Newton and many others) in several different places, capable of revolutionizing the social sciences and whose creative leaps beyond the current power (the nation state or the super state) might be the prelude for escaping statism and promoting, at long last, the development of social research to the level of science.

Leaving behind *statism*, with its idiocies and follies in matters of social science, is the indispensable condition for the abandonment of obscurantism and the end of all sorts of superstitions. This also means escaping from the grip of the new priests (social workers) and the spell of the new preachers (social scientists) with all their falsely progressive and wickedly appealing nonsense.

## Overcoming nonsense

In the past, one effective way to reduce the power of the Church has been to cut down to size the influence of its peripheral agents, the local priests.

The Reformation, in its removal of the clergy's the monopoly in the interpretation and discussion of the Holy texts, was a first step towards the re-centring of attention on the individual human being, in his responsibilities and agency.

The French Revolution too, at least in its truly innovative and liberating early phase, represented a passage towards independence from feudal and church constraints, fighting for the implementation of ideas formulated during the Enlightenment.

Unfortunately, both the Reformation and the Revolution, while freeing individuals from one absolutist power, were, in different respects, instrumental in subjecting human beings to a new totalitarian power: the state.

For this reason, in order to overcome any nonsense we need a continuous rational and moral vigilance that warns us from giving support to any new power (presently, the state) and any new priest (presently, the power-hungry and servile-prone intellectuals).

In particular, overcoming current nonsense means doing without the social scientists as state servants. In this position they act/ behave as:

- Social swindlers. They are the charlatans and cheaters of the statist age. As charlatans they have the impudence of presenting themselves as the experts capable of managing and solving any social problem and social ill. Failing to live up to the expectations of their own making, for the simple reason that no one can solve from the outside and, worst of all, from the top, really big issues arising from human beings' interactions, they either cheat on data or accuse unruly individualism and social anarchy (considered by them as unforgivable sin and evil), for their blunders in prediction and intervention. Without the nefarious work of these really anti-social swindlers, the process of liberation and empowerment of human

beings would be much more advanced; but, in that case, the belief in the need for professional social scientists would also be greatly reduced.

- Social scoundrels. They are the buccaneers and social climbers of the statist age. Some social scientists (especially those with qualifications in law and economics) have reached high positions of power within the state (or state-based international organizations). From those positions they spread their fake ideology, the more fake the more they want to appear as the sincere advocates of freedom or the compassionate champions of the weak. These are the worst of all, the "progressive" reactionaries, with a human mask hiding a devious brain and deadly plans for carrying on with their exploitative practices and manipulative worldviews. They could be very well defined as the rascal barons of statism, on a par with the past robber barons of national "capitalism".

- Social simpletons. They are the dim and dullard champions of the statist ideology. Not all social scientists are so perversely shrewd and callously exploitative as the swindlers and scoundrels. Some are very naïve, like children born in the age of computers and internet who are positively sure that computers and internet have always existed. In the same way these social simpletons are oblivious of reality before the state, ignore any reality behind the state and cannot even conceive another reality beyond the state. They are the new idiots of the new global village, the wiseacres of contemporary life, speaking on everything with the same unfounded self-assurance as a quack in a village fair.

### **Re-examining some basic concepts/practices**

If we want to gain, for the social sciences, the role and status of science tout court (i.e. structured knowledge), the social scientists as state servants have to disappear under a heap of outside scorn and inner shame about their own futility.

This would make it possible to go beyond the social sciences as state sewage farms where all the unpalatable and smelly results of

past and present state activity are treated, recycled and purified, to be re-presented to the public in an embellished form and pushed once more down everybody's throat.

In place of this chicanery we should put, as overall general aim, the Free Development of Knowledge.

Considering that the state, i.e. the state's ideology (statism) and the state's ideologists and propagandists (the social scientists as state servants) are the main obstacle to the Free Development of Knowledge and, more generally, to the flourishing of Freedom, Development and Knowledge, a small contribution in the right direction might be constituted by re-examining in a new light, not vitiated by statist obscurantism and ideological nonsense, these very basic concepts and practices:

- Freedom
- Development
- Knowledge.

## **Freedom**

"Freedom is independence of the compulsory will of another; and in so far as it can co-exist with the freedom of all according to a universal law, it is the one sole, original inborn right belonging to every human being in virtue of his humanity."

(Immanuel Kant, *The Science of Right*, 1796)

## **Idiocies on freedom**

The manifestation and affirmation of freedom is related to the process of individuation of human beings, that is the formation of unique personalities capable of operating and managing on their own and, at the same time, interested in relating to the world (natural and human environment) in a neither submissive nor exploitative way.

Freedom is, then, a practical autonomous acquisition made in the

process of personality development, leading to the emergence of human beings as mature functioning individuals.

This rational and logically sound image of freedom as autonomy of the individual was thrown into the dustbin by the superficial and contradictory lucubration of a young man courting popularity: Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

To him we owe the 'brilliant' idea that the freedom of the individual consists in conforming to a phantom "general will". In the absence of voluntary conformity the person should be "forced to be free".

This bizarre idea was taken on board by the ideologues of the French Revolution (Robespierre, Saint-Just), systematized by philosophers (Hegel, Bosanquet) and, since then, has been spread so deeply and widely by intellectuals as to become part and parcel of popular convictions.

From an early age people have been taught to think that forcing people to be free is a very progressive and highly moral choice, much more acceptable than leaving them free to take their own decisions, which might turn out to be highly debatable or even distressing, like opting for voluntary servitude for themselves (clearly, without involving anybody else).

To an independent and freedom-loving person, to be forced to be free or to choose voluntary servitude are both unpalatable and inconceivable propositions.

However, while the former, although promising freedom, undoubtedly brings slavery (the forced acceptance of a supposed freedom according to the view of an external power), the latter (voluntary servitude) lets the person really decide in total liberty and does not interfere with his free choices even if they result in the voluntary abdication of freedom (which, for most, is unlikely to be permanent).

Paradoxically, it is in the individual voluntary servitude and not in the general compulsory freedom that we find the actuation of liberty.

In fact, freedom can never be implemented through external

impositions being, by definition, the process and practice of personal autonomous choices.

It includes, then, the free decision to let other people decide for us, for instance freely submitting to a highly respected authority (as in a religious congregation with the vows of obedience to the abbot). At the same time, it categorically and logically excludes any compulsion, even if imposed for our, or somebody else's, supposed good.

The idea that freedom might be delivered by the hand of force, against the wishes or the choices of the individual, is then one of the biggest idiocies that ever appeared on the face of the earth.

Unfortunately it is still widely held nowadays by self-proclaimed liberators whose declared mission is to bring freedom everywhere, as in Napoleonic times.

Bayonets have been replaced by bombs but the task of introducing "freedom" by force is undertaken in no less fervent manner.

*Liberté, que de crimes on commet en ton nom!*

Freedom, how many crimes are committed in thy name!  
(Marie-Jeanne Phlipon, known as Madame Roland, executed by the  
French state during the Revolution, 1793)

"We are not fighting for freedom, we are freeing ourselves. Today we need to win back a freedom deemed fundamental, the freedom of the individual. We will not do it through trials and petitions, neither through symbolic strikes, we will not do it by extracting promises from parliamentary candidates in the electoral process, candidates to incapacity. We will do it by opposing the aggression of the bourgeois State.

We will learn the lesson of these events: Freedom is not granted, it is taken"

(Action Committee, May 1968, Paris)

### **Fallacies on freedom**

In the era of the welfare state and of the 'mass-men' under the tutorage and tutelage of the state, a new conception concerning

freedom has been promoted in universities and spread by the media: the idea that, in the contemporary world, "freedom from" replaces "freedom to" as representing the true essence of real freedom.

The advocates of this "freedom from" start their argument by making a list of personal and social evils (poverty, ignorance, violence, insecurity, exploitation, etc.) and declare, quite plausibly and convincingly at first sight, that real freedom consists in being free from those evils.

Those intellectuals who take this position certainly have an easy ride and an easy hold on the general public because it is quite difficult for anyone to be against such a decent, honourable and appealing stance.

Moreover, after years and years of state indoctrination and the enjoyment of pretty good comfort, many people have come to consider the "freedom from economic insecurity" as much more valuable than the freedom of undertaking risky projects that could lead, in the worst case scenario, to the unpleasant freedom of losing everything.

However, if we embark on a more careful examination of the argument, the so appealing and convincing "freedom from" reveals itself for what it truly is: a total fallacy that has nothing to do with freedom and whose aims and outcomes should be listed under many different labels (e.g. knowledge, wealth, security, etc.) but certainly not liberty.

In other words, freedom from ignorance means having knowledge, freedom from hunger means having enough food, freedom from insecurity means living in a safe environment or feeling self confident, and so on. None of those so-called "freedoms from" can be equated with freedom or can mean the enjoyment of freedom, unless we want to confuse the issue and deceive people.

Antonio Gramsci and Nelson Mandela spent twenty years or more in prison even though they were both free from ignorance (being quite cultivated individuals) or, maybe, precisely because of it.

And, by the way, not many are freer from hunger than the life-convict who knows that, every day, at exactly the same hour, he will

be fed by the prison staff, or the seriously ill or injured person who, laying immobile in a hospital bed, is automatically fed by a machine and could be kept alive and well nourished for years.

As for security, who is freer from the hazards and the risks of life than a mentally ill person put in a room with padded walls or rigidly confined in his movements by a straightjacket?

So, the highly celebrated "freedom from" is just a fallacious con, played by the "progressive" social scientists working hand in glove with state rulers in order to induce people to believe that, despite being on a leash, they are actually free, simply because they are well-fed.

"To be fully aware of difficulties and to accept them is a distinctive mark of human life, making it different from that of domestic animals such as hens, sheep, armchair journalists, parrots, and the like."

(Ignazio Silone, *The school of dictators*, 1938)

"Michelangelo, implementing the precepts of psychology, should have followed his father's request and gone in the wool trade, thus sparing himself lifelong anguish although leaving the Sistine Chapel unadorned."

(Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *General System Theory*, 1968)

Once rid of this fallacy, it is possible to treat the question of freedom in rational (and not just emotional) terms. We realize then that the so-called "freedom from" presupposes (i.e. is based on) the "freedom to". In other words, "freedom from" should be the result of "freedom to", that is the freedom, for each and every human being, to act autonomously and voluntarily in such a way as to lead to his physical and psychological well-being, if he wants that and in the manners he so chooses.

"The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way." (John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, 1859)

We can talk of freedom in connection with knowledge, security, prosperity and so on, only when these are the result of the free activity of the individual (i.e. freedom to act in pursuit of knowledge, security, prosperity). Otherwise, to say that somebody is free from ignorance, insecurity, indigence, should be taken only as a form of speech; in fact, in all those cases the use of the adjective 'free' is not relevant or appropriate to a discourse on freedom. In the same vein, we might talk of somebody being free from digestive problems, referring to his metabolism and to the state of his bowels and certainly not to his personal condition with respect to liberty.

In any case, the moronic position of "freedom from" advocated even by well-intentioned scholars, is totally absurd if the liberation from evils is not the achievement of free human beings in a condition of "freedom to" act, move, experiment. In other words, if it is not the result of freedom.

#### **Ambiguities on freedom**

The social scientists have used the word freedom in a very cavalier manner, either wrongly opposing it to or falsely associating it with other concepts and practices.

As to wrong oppositions we have, for instance:

- Freedom vs. Equality

Even quite recently, political scientists have written essays in which they portrayed the political struggle of the last centuries as a fight between freedom (advocated by the upper strata) and equality (advocated by the lower strata). Quite apart from the fact that this view is not factually true in many cases and so cannot be scientifically accepted as a general interpretation of history, it is necessary to stress that there is no intrinsic opposition between freedom and equality if both concepts are taken in their proper meaning. What this amounts to, is that freedom is certainly not trampling upon each other, and equality is positively not being identical to each other.

"Positive freedom as the realization of the self implies the full affirmation of the uniqueness of the individual."

"The uniqueness of the self in no way contradicts the principle of

equality. The thesis that men are born equal implies that they all share the same fundamental human qualities, that they share the basic fate of human beings, that they all have the same inalienable claim on freedom and happiness. It furthermore means that their relationship is one of solidarity, not one of domination-submission. What the concept of equality does not mean is that all men are alike."

(Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*, 1941)

- Freedom vs. Security

In recent times social scientists, sometimes instigated by politicians, have stirred up again the familiar contraposition between freedom and security. We are told "authoritatively" that in order to be guaranteed security we have to accept a curtailment of everybody's freedom. As a matter of fact, the restriction does not involve the state rulers who are given (or rather have taken) a free hand in disposing of everybody else's freedom. And this does not bode well, not only for freedom but also for the security of the common person, as historical events have shown over and over again.

"Those that would give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

(Benjamin Franklin, 1759)

As to false associations we have, for instance:

- Freedom and Democracy

Since at least the time of Tocqueville, the social scientists have been warned about the tyrannical side of representative majoritarian democracy. Nevertheless, most of them, totally oblivious of its authoritarian and despotic aspects, keep talking of how wonderful democracy is and keep upholding the false association of democracy with liberty. Historical evidence does not support this association and in fact the practice of democracy through the electoral process has been the source of monstrous cases of suppression of liberty (e.g. the ascent to power of the National Socialist Party in Germany in 1933

being the one who received the biggest share of popular votes). However, even if we consider those occurrences as only extreme negative instances of a generally positive mechanism (i.e. the democratic process), it is necessary to remark that to equate freedom with the possibility of choosing masters (called people's representatives) every so many years, reduces the concept of freedom to a very depressing and demeaning reality.

"What is, then, a majority taken together other than a person who has opinions and, very often, interests opposite to those of another person whom we call the minority? Now, if you acknowledge that a person who has all the power at his disposal can misuse it against his opponents, why do you not acknowledge the same for a majority? Have people, by getting together, changed nature? Have they become more patient in the face of obstacles as they have become stronger? Personally, I find this difficult to believe; and unfettered power, which I refuse to give to a single one of my fellow human beings, I would never give to several of them together."

(Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, vol. I, 1835)

#### - Freedom and Morality

Those who associate freedom with morality do a disservice (intentionally or unintentionally) to the advocates of freedom because they overload the concept with ethical aspects that are not (intrinsically and necessarily) part of it. In fact, freedom is not an end value, being only a potency to act that could lead us, on the one hand, to commit actions we might regret or, on the other hand, to vegetate in a state of passive inaction. So, if we associate freedom with morality we might end up condemning freedom because it has resulted in wrongdoings or in moral failures. Freedom is not, then, an absolute value but only an absolute pre-condition for the possible attainment of values through personal decisions. It is the decisions that are morally objectionable or acceptable, not the freedom to take decisions concerning personal matters. In fact, it is only through freedom that values can or cannot be aimed at/attained by the indi-

vidual. And so, without freedom, the very idea of aiming at/attaining values is meaningless and the very essence of humanity is put under threat.

"Who seeks in liberty something other than itself is born to be a slave."

(Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the Revolution*, 1856)

"Freedom is the opportunity to act, not action itself."

"If, although I enjoy the right to walk through open doors, I prefer not to do so, but to sit still and vegetate, I am not thereby rendered less free."

(Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, 1969)

### **Freedom as idea and practice**

Having cleared the word "freedom" of some idiocies, fallacies and ambiguities produced and diffused by social scientists in their function of state ideologists, let us try to characterize in a clear way what freedom amounts to in conceptual and practical terms.

This will be done by simply pointing out some of the (main) aspects of freedom, i.e. what is and what is not freedom.

- Freedom as being left alone (being independent).

A basic trait of freedom, but one that often gets overlooked, is being left alone, undisturbed by anyone, whenever a person so desires. When, in 1846, Thoreau retired into the wood to build his cabin, to live in direct contact with nature and be totally self-sufficient, the taxman came to visit him and he was arrested for his refusal to pay a specific levy. He did not want to be part of a society whose government approved of slavery and was engaged in an imperialistic war against Mexico. But he wasn't free to be left in peace, on his own. Since then the intrusions of the state into the lives of individuals have multiplied to the point that, if we (rightly) include this condition ("being left alone") as characterizing a free person, not many people on earth will qualify as such. Nowadays Big Brother is everywhere and where there is Big Brother there are

no free human beings but only little children subject to him and bullied by him.

"Freedom consists both politically, economically and even religiously in being left alone."

(F. S. C. Northrop, *The Logic of the Sciences and the Humanities*, 1947)

- Freedom as behaving as one wishes (being different).

The free independent individual is likely to be a person who desires to develop his unique qualities in an original way. This means, as a general principle, living and letting people live in their own way, according to their wishes and plans. For instance, practically all the great artists, including Leonardo, were itinerant people, moving from place to place according to their inclinations and desires of exploration. If the first creative person in human history had been stopped from entering the next village because he spoke with a different accent or behaved in a different way, we would still be living in caves, eating raw meat and be, more or less, all the same, namely uncivilised brutes. This has not happened because the ingenuity and tenacity of some human beings has always found a way out of restrictions and confinements. However, the formation of the nation states, with their state schools and state laws, has represented the biggest attempt to make all people, living within certain (artificial) borders, identical to one another (national identity) and inimical to outsiders (hostility towards so-called "foreigners"). Needless to say, imposed identity is starkly opposed to the freedom to be different and is just another subtle form of suppression of liberty.

- Freedom as acting in novel ways (being enterprising).

Freedom is or might prove/turn out to be a risky business, especially when people start experimenting with new ways of living. The entire existence of the individual could be shaken up (for good or bad) by those experiments. Moreover, the lives of many people could be upset by the free circulation of new ideas (for instance, in the past, the philosophy of the Enlightenment) and the free adoption of new

technological devices (for instance the printing press). That is why any state power insists so much on the concepts of security, protection, border controls, regulation of everything in order to avoid changes (especially those coming from the outside) that could compromise its hold on people. Clearly the state rulers do not like very much the freedom of enterprising people; for this reason they depict in terrifying terms the insecurity associated with what they call an "excess" of liberty, and present with various embellishments the safety of conformity. Unfortunately, those who want to get rid of the risky aspects of freedom are not in favour of a sweet and reassuring version of it, but only of a kind of idiotic and demeaning servility.

"A being only considers himself independent when he stands on his own feet; and he only stands on his own feet when he owes his existence to himself. A man who lives by the grace of another regards himself as a dependent being."

(Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*)

The social scientists, almost all of them ardently preaching and actively promoting social regulation, social integration, social protection (note: in their vocabulary, social = state), have made a mockery of the very idea and practice of freedom. In other words, they have discarded the true essence of personal freedom in favour of state fiefdom. Considering that freedom is the essential pre-condition for development, it is interesting to see what the social scientists have made of this concept too.

## Development

### Idiocies on development

Development is a powerful concept that applies to all sorts of realities of the living world, be it a person, a community, an ecosystem.

The common traits that are present in all these realities make for the richness and poly-functionality of the concept.

This inclusivity and vitality of the concept and practice of development is almost totally lost when social scientists talk about so-called social development.

Unless they are cognitive psychologists of the Piaget type, most social scientists automatically equate social development with economic development or, more precisely, economic growth expressed through a monetary increase in GNP (gross national product).

This mental attitude resulted in many of the false notions promoted by the social scientists, namely (a) the equation of individual = society = state (so channelling aid funds to the state is equivalent to giving them to the individuals); (b) the exclusive stress on economic realities (economism) as the surest basis and sign of development.

This gives rise to a host of idiocies on development, especially concerning its economic aspect, that need to be highlighted.

The focusing here only on some economic idiocies should not mislead anyone into thinking that, by treating only this aspect, development is exclusively (or even primarily) an economic affair. On the contrary, such a belief has shown itself to be totally erroneous and is here considered as the main blunder of most social scientists dealing with development.

This flawed position underpins, for instance, the idiotic conviction that the transfer of monetary resources to the (state rulers of) underdeveloped societies represents a necessary condition for starting a process of development.

But even a cursory historical survey reveals that this transfer of money as financial gifts or very cheap loans represents a gigantic block to development because it activates a dynamic of:

- Corruption at the top

Most financial aid that goes to state governments gets used for the bureaucracy, which is supposed to implement so-called development projects, which in practice very rarely materialize into something

useful. This is not surprising because, as long as development funds are channelled to the state bureaucracy, there is no short-term interest in promoting development while there is plenty of interest in blocking it so that the funds keep coming. This is the vicious circle of external compassion feeding internal corruption and leading to overall inaction.

- Inaction at the bottom

Even if some of that money trickles down to the bottom of the social pyramid the result is to keep the most energetic individuals who have not yet left the country (the potential local entrepreneurs) in a situation of contented dependency and dull passivity. This dependency through aid is useful to the ruling elites everywhere in the world because it blocks or postpones the emergence of new competitors to positions of political and economic power (new active entrepreneurs and leaders from the backward regions of the world).

In other words, with their ideas and practical attitudes towards development, social scientists really behave as the perfidious advocates of a paralysed world, the dispensers of dreams about development that have produced instead the nightmares of state criminality and mass servility.

### **Fallacies on development**

The idiocies that have been placed by social scientists at the foundation of many discourses on development are reinforced by the many fallacies that have been produced and piled one on top of the other. There are so many of them that it is almost impossible to list all of them. Let us examine briefly only the most absurd ones:

- The state as the engine of development

An organization can set up favourable conditions for development or pull down obstacles to development but cannot engender development, since development is a direct personal transformation/evolution of individuals achieved through their interaction with each other. Apart from that, it is necessary to stress that the state has, generally, acted as the spanner in the works, obstructing development whenever the people were going in a direction inimical to the authoritarian interests of the state rulers (as is the case in any real

development), that is whenever individuals were promoting their own personal emancipation.

- Protectionism as necessary condition for development

The idea that a closed system can start and continue developing is totally absurd in so far as development requires a variety/plurality of interactions between free entities across open environments. The care and nurture of an organism, idea or project, in view of its development, has nothing to do with pampering and shielding it or, worse, cutting it off from the outside world. In the latter case the likely outcome is a dependent weak entity, which is the very opposite of a developed strong one.

- The unequal terms of trade as the cause of underdevelopment

Besides considering international trade (especially imports) as deleterious for development and recommending protectionism, social scientists have addressed their criticism to the unequal terms of trade between the industrial and the underdeveloped worlds. They should rather have focused on the very low level of trade between the two areas, mostly as a result of state policies. Those policies are characterized by a considerable lack of freedom in the world commerce that has distorted all terms of trade and for decades kept low cost producers outside the reach of most consumers in many parts of the world.

- The multinationals as an obstacle to development

This is again a fallacy originating from the adherence to a closed system, supported by national state rulers in collusion with national monopolistic producers, both afraid of any external intervention. The aim is that of total control exercised from the top over every aspect of reality to the point of actually blocking any possible free development. This kind of control is not conducive to the establishment of businesses, and certainly not favourable to the setting of multinational companies. The fear of multinationals as negative factors for development is, then, often unwarranted, because almost none of them is present in very backward or rigid economic systems (unless they have bribed the national clique of state rulers, in which case they are given privileges by the national rulers and act, essentially, as

national firms).

- The vicious circle of poverty as the cause of underdevelopment

The expression 'vicious circle of poverty' means that people are poor because they are trapped in a chain of negative conditions which reinforce one another (e.g. poverty – malnutrition – bad health – lack of energy – low productivity – poverty), and from which there is no personal escape in the absence of an intervention from the top (state planning) or from the outside (economic aid). Historical evidence (and also current reality) does not lend support to such a bleak vision for the individual, otherwise the life of every human being would still be identical now to that of the first humans, given the absence, at that time, of state planning and external aid. Contrary to this view, the process of development has generally been started by people who pulled themselves up by their bootstraps, avoiding being crushed by the heavy boots of power, whoever it might have been (feudal master, invaders, church hierarchy, etc.).

- The accumulation of capital as the condition for development

Corollary to the previous fallacy is the notion that somebody needs to accumulate a lot of capital in order to start a process of economic development. This is not true at all if we take exemplary cases from the Industrial Revolution in England, where many workshops, later to become large industries, were started by small yeomen (Josuha Fielden, Jedediah Strutt, David Dale), ex-apprentices (William Radcliffe, Joshia Wedgwood) or humble workers (like Richard Arkwright, the barber) disposing of very small amounts of resources. *Laissez-faire* and *laisser-passer* are the pre-conditions for socio-economic development, not the quantity of gold kept in a coffer or money deposited in a bank account. Otherwise, Spain, from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, with all the gold coming from South America, would have been by far the most developed country in Europe, and not the most backward one as it really was. State rulers in backward systems have plenty of monetary funds (courtesy of the World Bank and the IMF) but not much inclination for the *laissez-faire* and *laisser-passer* of their subjects.

Some of these fallacies, that had a wide circulation and following

in the past, have simply been dropped because subsequent events have shown that they were only ideological constructs devoid of any empirical basis, mere pies in the sky put forward by creative social scientists to justify or satisfy their constituencies (employers) and audiences (readers) in the so-called developed and underdeveloped world. Nevertheless, some still keep circulating, albeit in a more moderate form. In some cases they have been supplanted (or supplemented) by numerous ambiguities, which is the normal reaction of social scientists when their ideological positions start to crumble.

### **Ambiguities on development**

The congenital inability of the state cliques to foster development has led some social scientists into a more liberal and less statist approach to the matter. But this shift is taking place with so many equivocal and crooked modes of thinking that, in the end, totally contradictory views are held side by side.

To give an example, some so-called progressive intellectuals who advocate freedom of trade and freedom of movement feel obliged to add that everything should be done with fairness. This very appealing request, i.e. to be fair, means in actual fact, that things must be kept under public control (read: state control) otherwise someone's position might be compromised. Since the appeal to fairness comes usually from intellectuals in rich countries, the "someone" they want to safeguard is the rich producer and the super-protected worker in the already developed countries, which have no intention of opening their pastures to newcomers.

And so, the ultra-reactionary self-proclaimed "progressive" intellectuals, assisted by the journalistic circus, have invented the idiotic threat of the "race to the bottom" that is supposed to result from unfair practices of economic development (e.g. low wages, inexistent health protection in the workplace, excessive work ethic, etc.). They wilfully ignore that these have been the initial conditions of every worker at the beginning of any process of economic growth leading to development. As for the unfairness of this dynamic, certainly development as "climbing from the bottom" was, is and always will be "unfair" towards any existing position of supremacy and privilege.

The outcry of the social scientists against this dynamic is quite understandable, considering that the very status of the social scientists is put at risk by a universal process of social development. Especially in the so-called developed world, the social scientists are starting to realize that their interventions are more and more futile, if not downright detrimental, because most people left free and unimpeded to develop are very well able to do so.

Once this becomes a real commonsense belief, we will see the downsizing of the cultural power and prestige of those social scientists and the arrogant state rulers of whom they are the supporting agents and servile mouthpieces.

This is a dreadful prospect for them and for their masters. That is why the social scientists talk about development, write books about development, receive funds for running development projects, but, as far as actually letting people free to develop, that is a totally different matter.

This is something so important to them that they certainly cannot leave it to the people directly concerned. In the process of developing, people left to themselves might introduce all sorts of inequalities, instabilities, imbalances and, perhaps, after all, if really unimpeded and unexploited from above, they might even succeed in developing themselves, exposing, in so doing, the uselessness of the social scientists.

This would be the final straw for the development economists and social workers, sidestepped and finally dismissed as worthless professionals. For this reason, social scientists who are totally unprepared and unable to initiate social experiments, adhere to a tacit advice: better to talk than to act, or, better to act by corrupting individuals through state aid than to let people act autonomously with a view to their development, outside and beyond the state.

#### **Development as idea and practice**

Once we clear away all idiocies, fallacies and ambiguities concerning the idea and practice of development, we are ready to focus on its true nature.

Here we highlight briefly three intrinsic and basic aspects of development:

- Development as a multi-faceted process (moral-mental-material)

Development involves and affects the entire spectrum of reality (moral-mental-material) through a series of interrelated transformations (new relations, re-organization, differentiation, accretion, etc.).

"Under the general notion of [biological] development four kinds of processes have been concealed:

- Tactical Displacements. Movements of embryonic parts relatively to one another.

- Internal Organization. The passage from the original unitary condition of the embryo into a mosaic of partial regions in some degree independent of each other.

- Histological Differentiation. The passage of the individual cells from an original state of uniform appearance into the various states of morphological and functional specification.

- Growth. The enlargement and multiplication of cells."

(Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *Modern Theories of Development*, 1933)

To focus only on one aspect to the detriment of the others is absurd, but this is what has happened because of the fragmentation of the social sciences.

Moreover, in each subject area (anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics, etc.) the social scientist, expert in that specific field, wants to appear as the one who leads the way, to be followed by other social scientists and especially, by all the social actors, namely all the individuals concerned by his theories and schemes. And this is an absurdity with reference to another of the intrinsic/basic characteristics of development.

Development as an autonomous process (self motivated-initiated-directed)

"By 'development' [therefore] we shall understand only such changes in economic life as are not forced upon it from without but arise from its own initiative from within."

"... economic development is not a phenomenon to be explained economically ...."

"... the explanation of the development must be sought outside the group of facts which are described by economic theory."

(Joseph A. Schumpeter, *The Theory of Economic Development*, 1912)

If there is something that should be extremely clear about development it is the fact that no one can be developed from the outside. Development is a truly autonomous process that must necessarily be performed by those who aspire to it. That does not mean that outside stimuli and contributions are not relevant to development. As a matter of fact they are indispensable (only open systems evolve and develop) but in so far as they are freely accepted and internalized by the developing entity.

The social scientists should then disappear as the directors of fake development in order to leave plenty of room for real development. The only role they might play is to uncover the obstacles and unmask those who put obstacles in the way of development (e.g. vested interests, authoritarian attitudes, obsolete practices, etc.). In other words, the social scientists can contribute to generating a universal climate favourable to the emergence of an indispensable requisite for development, i.e. freedom.

- Development as a free process (undertaking risks and enjoying rewards)

Freedom per se does not necessarily lead to development, but without freedom there is no way for development to take place. We might achieve economic growth (up to a point) through the use of slaves, but economic growth is a different phenomenon from development, whatever the belief of some social scientists.

Clearly, the exercise of freedom as a means to development has more risks and more uncertain rewards than a quiet life under the protective eye of a benevolent master. That is why we should not

confuse development with security, any more than we should confuse security with liberty.

Uncertainties, tensions, and hardships are part and parcel of many processes of development. But, when voluntarily accepted and skilfully overcome, they are an intrinsic component of the beauty of life evolving.

"A celebrated traveller ... arrived one day in the midst of a tribe of savages, where a child had just been born. A crowd of soothsayers, magicians, and quacks armed with rings, hooks, and cords surrounded it. One said: "This child will never smell the aroma of a peace-pipe unless I stretch his nostrils." Another said: "He will never be able to hear unless I draw his ear-lobes down to his shoulders." A third said: "He will never see the sunshine unless I slant his eyes." Another said: "He will never stand upright unless I bend his legs." A fifth said: "He will never learn to think unless I flatten his skull."

"Go away," cried the traveller. "What God does is well done. Do not claim to know more than He. God has given organs to this frail creature; let them develop and grow strong by exercise, trial and error, experience, and liberty."

God has given to men all that is necessary for them to accomplish their destinies. He has provided a social form as well as a human form. And these social organs are so constituted that they will develop harmoniously in the clean air of liberty. Away, then, with quacks and organizers! Away with their rings, chains, hooks, and pincers! Away with their artificial systems! Away with the whims of governmental administrators, their social projects, their bureaucracy, their centralization, their tariffs, their universities, their state religions, their free credit, their bank monopolies, their regulations, their restrictions, their pious moralization and their equalization by taxation!

And after the legislators and do-gooders have futilely inflicted so many systems upon society, may we finally end where we should have begun: May we reject all systems, and try liberty; for liberty is

an act of faith in God and His works." (Frédéric Bastiat, *The Law*, 1850)

## Knowledge

### Idiocies on knowledge

The most absurd aspect of the current way of dealing with knowledge, an aspect already pointed out repeatedly, is the compartmentalization of it.

What has happened is that it has been deemed appropriate to overcome the individual limitations in understanding reality, fully and deeply, by attributing to various tribes of scientists superior or exclusive rights over a specific study area.

However, facts and ideas are not so simply located and delimited, with nice borders marking the passage from one field of knowledge to the other.

In fact, the most interesting ideas and the most ingenious inventions have very often come through cross-fertilization and the overcoming of boundaries; or from outsiders new to the problem and from researchers coming from other fields of investigation.

The ugly result of the current fragmented and pretended knowledge in the social sciences is the cacophony of voices originating from the formation of opposing parties and tendencies, more interested in prevailing over each other than in contributing to the advancement of knowledge.

This is like the existence of many incompatible technical standards in rail carriages or in videotape recording, leading to all sorts of difficulties; and if, at the end a dominant player emerges, it might be the canniest or the one with the most clout but, perhaps, not the best or the most acceptable.

The beauty and fertility of knowledge reside, instead, in variety within unity, i.e. when multiple findings of a research project fit into each other, coming from different investigations or different approaches or even different (but not opposing) views of reality.

In fact, different conceptions can complement each other and

both be acceptable, unless they are at odds with and contradict each other, while at the same time claiming both to be part of human knowledge.

And this is the real idiocy that marks many outcomes of the so-called social sciences and many activities of the so-called social scientists.

### **Fallacies on Knowledge**

The splitting up of knowledge has produced a big contraposition between the sciences of matter and the social sciences, which represents the biggest fallacy concerning knowledge.

The sciences of matter are considered exact sciences, characterized by certitude (for example, in forecasting the future states of matter), while the social sciences are thought to be marked by a high degree of incertitude, given the complexity and fickleness of the reality under investigation (individuals, groups).

This is not at all true.

It is a mental construction that has more to do with human ignorance (and human-manufactured justifications for that ignorance) than with intrinsic reality.

This mental construction was used in the past also with reference to the sciences of matter. In fact, when human beings were unable to explain some physical phenomena, their manifestation was attributed to a whimsical God or to the bad dispositions of the Gods or to the existence of magic substances and magic powers. It was only when knowledge of matter advanced through rigorous experiments that all these explanations proved to be nonsense and were put aside.

The same should happen with the social sciences once individuals succeed in introducing more rigorous ways of dealing with facts and concepts. Only then will the fantastic gibberish that surrounds us all be disposed of.

We will then understand that the sharp contraposition between the supposed exactitude of the science of matter and the supposed incertitude of the social sciences is only a big fallacy.

In fact, there are some events affecting matter that are highly unpredictable (like, for instance, earthquakes and seaquakes) and

there are some affecting the behaviour of humans that are highly predictable (for instance, the higher flow of customers at the start of a Harrods' sale in London).

In short, certainties and uncertainties or, rather, more probable-less probable outcomes are variously distributed according to the type of problem and are not neatly decided a priori according to pre-conceived areas of investigation.

### **Ambiguities on knowledge**

Ambiguities on knowledge are very likely to originate from the subservience of knowledge to power.

Francis Bacon stated that "Knowledge is Power" and no one could have been in a better position to make that statement, he being, at one and the same time, a scientist and a statesman.

The truth of this statement can be seen in the process of ascendancy of the state over the church, attributable, amongst other causes, to the fact that the state rulers were more inclined, and able, than the church hierarchy to use scientific knowledge, in the form of technological devices, as a tool for power.

The use of technological knowledge by the state rulers meant, in the course of history, that an increasing number of scientists were paid full time just for research into and development of more and more destructive weapons, for the power and prestige of the state.

But not all scientific knowledge is functional to power, in the sense that it can be monopolized (like heavy bombs and super bombers) by a ruling elite for ruling purposes. Small devices have been invented that increase the power of the individual, especially in terms of information and communication. With the help of these devices, new social beliefs can arise and circulate. They might be as or even more powerful than weapons are, and the ruling elite is unable to stop their spreading taking root, unless it controls the production of all social beliefs and the use of all information channels.

And this is something that the state rulers have strived for incessantly, either managing knowledge or decreeing what is knowledge.

The statement "Knowledge is Power" put forward by the philoso-

phers of empiricism must then be complemented by a further statement that clarifies it according to the views of the philosophers of statism: "Power certifies Knowledge".

When power certifies what is knowledge, the nature of 'knowledge beliefs' could assume two different, sometimes opposed and sometimes complementary, forms:

- a monolithic unchanging block of dogmas and prejudices, manufactured and spread by a centre which is in control of the production and circulation of ideas;

- a series of different and incompatible opinions, manufactured and circulated by different power centres, vying with each other for supremacy.

Clearly, in neither of these cases is there any substantial knowledge, in the sense of true beliefs useful for human cognitive progress. Unfortunately, this mixture of ossified nonsense spread by the centre and conflicting nonsense put out by the different schools of thought represents the ambiguous state of "knowledge" in the social sciences under statism.

"In science there are no half truths. There are no truths which are true on one side and cease to be true on the other. The scheme of the universe exhibits a wonderful simplicity, as wonderful as its infallible logic. Its law is the same everywhere; only the applications vary. All beings, from the noblest to the lowest, from the human being to the living plant, right down to the mineral, show close similarities in structure, development and composition; and striking analogies link the moral and material worlds. Life is all one, matter is all one; only its manifestations vary. The combinations are innumerable, the singularities infinite; yet the general scheme of things embraces them all.

The feebleness of our understanding and the rottenness of our education are alone responsible for the confusion of systems and inconsistency of ideas. Of two conflicting opinions there is one true and one false, unless both are false; they cannot both be true. A

scientifically demonstrated truth cannot be true here and false elsewhere. (Paul-Émile de Puydt, *Panarchy*, 1860)

### **Knowledge as idea and practice**

*Fatti non foste a viver come bruti  
ma per seguir virtute e canoscenza.  
(Dante, La Divina Commedia, 1308-1320)*  
*You were not made to live as brutes  
but to follow virtue and knowledge  
(Dante, The Divine Comedy, 1308-1320)*

Idiocies, fallacies and ambiguities have reduced knowledge in the social sciences to fashionable opinions whose only requirement is to be functional to the ruling elite and plausible to gullible people.

In order to go beyond all this trash it is necessary to qualify knowledge as idea and practice and to highlight how knowledge emerges:

- Knowledge starts from the perception of a problem for which a (theoretically) possible solution exists and is striven for.
- Knowledge involves and relies on all the capacities of the human being (observation, intuition, reflection, action, etc.) in order to find a solution.
- Knowledge leads to the finding of the solution(s).

In the process of dealing with problems, human beings produce knowledge structures (theories, empirical generalizations, hypotheses) that will assist them in furthering the development of knowledge (that is, in finding further solutions to further problems).

These building structures should respond, as far as possible and depending on the problem under examination, to certain criteria that are the measuring standards of any human effort and enterprise, namely:

- beauty (elegance of solution)
- parsimony (economy of entities, e.g. in explaining phenomena)
- accuracy (correspondence of statements with factual reality)
- validity (consistency amongst statements in an argument)
- generality (breadth of application)
- testability (subject to verification and so to falsifiability)
- fertility (useful for leading to further theoretical and practical discoveries).

In science there are no theses and antitheses struggling for predominance but only relevant hypotheses subject to verification and never accepted as absolute truth. Nowadays scientists, when quite confident of a certain belief, talk of highly corroborated hypothesis. There are no longer laws to which eternal certainty is attributed.

The lack of certainty does not mean that one statement is equivalent to another. It means that all statements have to conform to the criteria previously highlighted in order to qualify as knowledge beliefs and they maintain that qualification only if they continue to conform to those criteria. Given the fact that nobody knows the future, the most sensible position is to be cautious about giving to any scientific statement concerning future events an eternal (and so unsustainable) patent of truth.

The analysis so far conducted on freedom, development and knowledge was intended to expose some nonsense with which statism (i.e. state rulers and their intellectual servants) has manipulated and obfuscated those realities. The general aim is to exit obscurantism and overcome nonsense, which, via the social scientists, has made many human lives short and nasty and many others long and meaningless.

In further pursuit of that aim, it is now necessary to present some principles and tools for going beyond statism (and so, beyond obscurantism and nonsense).

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## PRINCIPLES & TOOLS FOR POST- STATISM

Consistency

Equilibration

Open nexus-fluxus

Cognitive multiplication

Requisite variety

The demands of the case

Challenge

The general framework

References



**T**he passage from statism to post-statism requires positing strong conceptual and empirical foundations upon which individuals could rely in order to understand reality and its multi-faceted aspects and various relations.

The materials for building those foundations are not necessarily new because many principles and tools developed in the past can and should be recovered and put to use.

What is necessary is to discard the glittering junk still widely employed by the social scientists and to retrieve those stones that have been dismissed or neglected and make them the pillars of new attitudes and actions in order to get free from contemporary moral and mental asphyxia.

Here we present briefly some of the more relevant theoretical principles and practical tools.

## **Consistency**

Consistency is a *sine qua non* of any rational argument and conduct.

In fact, something qualifies as a sound argument because it is made of a series of consistent statements, i.e. consistent with each other (valid) and, first of all, consistent with the empirical evidence on which they are based (true).

The same applies to conduct that is made of a series of consistent acts, where the means do not contradict the ends and what is said/done today is not at capricious variance with what is said/done tomorrow.

The requirement of consistency derives from the fact that reality is made of continua whose entities needs to present a certain harmony, if something good and useful is aspired to.

Examples of continua requiring consistency are:

- the operational continuum : statements - deeds
- the instrumental continuum : means - ends
- the temporal continuum : short-term - long-term.

Consistency can be seen as a universal requirement that applies

everywhere and to everybody, irrespective of culture and location. Whenever and wherever we see it neglected or negated we should be aware that truth is obliterated and reality manipulated.

And yet, displays of inconsistency are the bread and butter of daily life. For instance, inconsistency is at work when anti-global intellectuals tour the globe spreading their message, railing against multinational companies on which they rely for publishing their books, and, to compound inconsistency with impudence, making into a registered logo the cover of a book against logos (Naomi Klein's *No Logo*, 1999).

The same remark applies to some so-called free-market intellectuals who want the state to intervene extensively in the economy in order to protect or even ameliorate the functioning of the free market (and are totally unaware of the idiotic inconsistency of their request).

Another example of inconsistency is the tragically laughable presumption of those who reserve to the state the licence to kill, expecting an end to any killing.

"The individual in any given nation has in this war a terrible opportunity to convince himself of what would occasionally strike him in peacetime, that the state has forbidden to the individual the practice of wrong-doing, not because it desires to abolish the practice of wrong-doing, but because it wants to monopolize it like salt and tobacco. The warring state permits itself every misdeed, every such act of violence, as would disgrace the individual. It practices not only the accepted stratagems of war, but also deliberate lying and deception against the enemy; and this, to a degree which appears to surpass the usage of former wars. The state exacts the utmost degree of obedience and sacrifice from its citizens, but at the same time treats them as children by maintaining an excess of secrecy, and a censorship upon news and expression of opinion which renders the spirits of those thus intellectually oppressed defenceless against every unfavourable turn of events and every sinister rumour. It absolves itself from the guarantees and treaties by which it was bound to other states, and makes unabashed confession of its

rapacity and lust for power, which the private individual is then called upon to sanction in the name of patriotism."

(Sigmund Freud, *Thoughts for the times on war and death*, 1915)

This is a supine acceptance of inconsistency doubled by total gullibility and by a large dose of idiocy on the part of those who believe in the state as the promoter and keeper of peace.

In general there is a certain amount of naivety or lack of perceptiveness/reflectiveness in any acceptance of inconsistency.

And, on the part of the professional manufacturers of inconsistencies, there is usually a high level of moral dishonesty or mental deficiency.

It is then appropriate to say that without consistency the human being is not only lacking rationality but also morality; and when the manifestations of inconsistency are chronic and vicious, no so-called human being can any longer be characterized as having the human qualities that are indispensable for social intercourse.

## **Equilibration**

The principle of consistency is supplemented and integrated by that of equilibration.

In some cases equilibration can be seen as the quantitative aspect of consistency (e.g. in input-output processes).

The term equilibration is used here to mean dynamic balance.

"Equilibration involves the idea of transformation within a system and the idea of self-regulation."

(Jean Piaget, *Structuralism*, 1968)

Other words that convey this meaning are "homeostasis" (Walter B. Cannon), "homeorhesis" (Conrad Waddington), "equipoise" (Siegfried Giedion).

"The homeostasis model, which is, of such importance in physiology, is an example of a cybernetic mechanism, and such mechanisms exist through the whole empirical world of the biologist and the social scientist."

(Kenneth Boulding, *General Systems Theory*, 1956)

The simple word equilibrium is not appropriate because it applies, in physics, to the static state of an unchanging system. One of the best examples of equilibrium is a dead embalmed body, kept totally insulated from the surrounding environment and on which the external environment does not exert any changing effect.

By contrast, what characterizes living systems is their evolution, which is made possible by the dynamic intercourse between the various entities and the environment.

This free interplay takes place within the requirement of dynamic balance. In nature the necessity of balance becomes very evident and cogent, especially in situations of crisis, when the depletion of a certain key resource, without regeneration or substitution, causes serious imbalances and leads to all sorts of limitations in the development of an organism, right up, in some cases, to its extinction.

Human beings are part of nature and constitute very active elements in the multiple relations within the natural world.

For this reason they should:

- consciously accept the principle of equilibration as a guide in all types of intercourse between entities;
- willingly apply the principle of equilibration through the mechanisms of feed-back and feed-forward in order to master changes.

The modifications of the system in view of achieving equilibration are possible because the system is an open one.

Closed systems, more or less insulated from the outside and restricted in their development, are those favoured by reactionary and despotic rulers with the assistance of servile social scientists. Both of these groups rail against presumed disequilibria caused by external factors not under their control, and extol their asphyxiating

political governance and intellectual guidance as the best protection from what they call disorder or anarchy.

In so doing they operate only for the protection of the status quo and so for a deadly equilibrium. They incubate future disasters under the pretence of protecting the people from current risks that, in many cases, are nothing else than the challenges of life evolving.

### **Open nexus-fluxus**

Essential requirements for the life and evolution of any system are free links (*nexus*) and free flows (*fluxus*), open in every possible direction as deemed necessary by the concerned entities.

It is an established notion of science (but, it seems, not yet or not universally, of the so-called social sciences) that change is possible only through ex-change and that, in order to operate, the process of organization requires the system be open otherwise it runs down until it reaches a static state equivalent to death.

"In a closed system there is a tendency for organization to change into disorganization, or for the amount of information available about the system to become smaller as time goes on."

(Milton A. Rothman, *The Laws of Physics*, 1963)

What is valid in the physical-natural world applies also to human beings, who are part of and play an active part in that world.

In fact, human beings can exist only by interacting with their external environments (physical, biological, social).

As for society, this is a concise abstract term for designating the concrete interactions between human beings. In other words, as already pointed out by Frédéric Bastiat, society is exchange, and so, the more limited or less free the exchanges, the more insecure and less developed are the human beings that generate society through their intercourse.

Clearly, a free open nexus-fluxus jeopardises all those who have built their fortunes on control and closed doors. They are bound to

yield to the newcomers, to those, among the current exploited and marginalized individuals, who are also the most energetic and vibrant, the new "animal spirits" facing the flaccidity and dumbness of the old rulers.

That is why the social scientists are terrified by open spaces and free movement of individuals and keep talking of "governance," an innocent term that hides their stubborn pretence to dominance.

Nevertheless, current technology favours the development and spreading of open nexus-fluxus. This makes possible the realization of another principle that is at the basis of the evolution towards more satisfactory forms of personal and social life: cognitive multiplication.

### **Cognitive multiplication**

The openness of the system facilitates the proliferation of the linking (nexus) and flowing (fluxus) of information amongst entities.

As a matter of fact, the value (usefulness) of a network is dependent on the number of links that make possible a certain number of flows. In other words, the power of a network is related to the level of connections that make possible a certain level of exchanges, in a spiral of increasing value and choice.

"The value of a network, defined as its utility to a population, is roughly proportional to the number of users squared." (Metcalfe's law)

In more general terms, the multiplicity of free exchanges leads to the emergence of creative combinations of ideas and productive associations of individuals.

It is a process similar to the flow of data between the synapses, that is between the points which connect the brain cells: the more synapses, the more fertile the brain. To that we can add that the freer the flow of data, the more the connections which get formed in the brain and so the more powerful the brain becomes, in a dynamic progression of personal cognitive multiplication.

At group and inter-group level, the cognitive multiplication arising from exchanges produces creative energy that is the lifeblood of human progress. The main features of human progress are personal freedom and individual empowerment.

That is why rulers, in order to block change (progress) try to hinder exchanges or to confine them within a controlled territory.

And this is also why all the obstacles (even those presented as civilizing regulations) to the free circulation of ideas, people and artefacts, represent brakes on cognitive multiplication. They are crimes against the development of human beings and so, crimes against humanity.

These crimes are committed daily by state-sponsored intellectuals advocating a national identity (or any type of identity) instead of striving for the coming into being of fully open and fully developed personalities. In doing so they show how little they care for the advancement of knowledge and how much they are afraid of being displaced by new ideas and new individuals coming from outside their closed national circle.

Cognitive multiplication, resulting from the working of powerful networks (personal-social) of multiple exchanges, originates from the existence of variety. This fact leads us to the next principle: requisite variety.

### **Requisite variety**

The point of departure for many evolving realities is represented by an undifferentiated/unsophisticated condition. It is like a primeval soup out of which distinct elements emerge in due course and the more they develop the more they bring forth variety.

If this is true, it is then appropriate to say that a developed community is one composed of a remarkable variety of human beings, with a great variety of inclinations, desires, projects, in other words features of existence and forms of expression.

The process of evolution/development appears to lead generally from one (element, aspect, function, etc.) to many, in other words

from identity and uniformity to individuation and differentiation. We could define this process as a dynamic towards variety springing from the freedom of transformation and combination of entities.

To deal with variety appropriately and effectively, while preserving it if and when is a positive reality, there is only one means, and that is the use of variety itself.

In other words, the mastery of variety requires mechanisms and procedures of operation that contain a variety of responses in harmony/relation with the variety of possible situations and combinations.

This is known as the Principle of Requisite Variety.

"If, for instance, a press photographer would deal with twenty subjects that are (for exposure and distance) distinct, then his camera must obviously be capable of at least twenty distinct settings if all the negatives are to be brought to a uniform density and sharpness."

(W. Ross Ashby, *An Introduction to Cybernetics*, 1956)

"The Law of Requisite Variety is the main tool in understanding the ways in which systems can be controlled. The Law is stated simply by W. Ross Ashby (1964) : 'only variety can destroy variety'. In other word, to control a system of given variety we must match it with a controlling system of requisite variety."

(George Chadwick, *A Systems View of Planning*, 1971)

From this principle it follows that a centralized mechanism of organization that relies only on a limited set of responses is appropriate, may be, for a small tribe of stone-age people or for some extraordinary cases, but is totally inappropriate in any other situation, and especially with reference to more or less advanced individuals and groups. If centralization is applied, it serves only to block development, even if, initially, it might promote growth, (as in the case of the former Soviet Union). Unfortunately, this is what we are still subjected to with our central governments, central banks, centralized administration of justice, ministry of national education

and so on. And this is why we are presently stuck in societies that have no future, their future being merely the replication of their past.

Requisite variety is linked to another principle: the demands of the case.

### **The demands of the case**

One of the most difficult pieces of advice to put into practice when dealing with a problem is to get rid of all conventional/stereotyped ideas and to examine the case from a totally new perspective.

This could sometimes mean that the facts of the case require us to test an implausible, and hitherto abandoned, idea. With reference to a group dealing with a problem, it could even mean re-arranging the distribution of tasks and giving the leading role to a person that was occupying, up to then, an obscure position which now becomes central in the new operative plan.

In other words, problem-solving processes might require a total revision of previous decisions and conventional rules, making it possible for a discarded stone to become the keystone and for the king of diamonds to end up being less important and valuable than the two of spades.

These can all be answers that arise from the demands of the case; and the fact that we decide not to ignore those demands can represent the difference between solving problems or spreading problems.

"I think it really is a matter of repersonalizing. We, persons, have relations with each other, but we should find them in and through the whole situation. We cannot have any sound relation with each other as long as we take them out of that setting which gives them their meaning and value. This divorcing of persons and the situation does a great deal of harm."

"From one point of view one might call the essence of scientific management the attempt to find the law of the situation. With scientific management the managers are as much under orders as the workers, for both obey the law of the situation. Our job is not how to

get people to obey orders, but how to devise methods by which we can best discover the order integral to a particular situation. When that is found, the employee can issue it to the employer, as well as employer to employee.."

"... authority [should be seen] as inherent in the situation, not as attached to an official position."

"... legitimate authority flows from co-ordination, not co-ordination from authority."

(Mary Parker Follett, *Dynamic Administration*, 1941)

Clearly all this is anathema to mainstream social discourse and social practice, in which, the roles are fixed and hierarchically organized from the beginning, starting from those in power (at the top) who commission some research, the experts (in the middle) who are paid to carry out the research and those (at the bottom) who are the object of the research. The fact that an analysis of the situation might reveal that the bottom, if given the chance, could solve the problem better than the experts hired by the top is not even taken into consideration and cannot be taken into consideration, otherwise frozen hierarchies and frozen roles would disappear at once and the so-called experts would find the earth crumbling under their feet.

Another possibility, totally ignored by the social scientists, would consist in devising and implementing situations that produce fruitful competition (emulation) and cooperation (synergy) out of which problems get solved as soon as they present themselves (or even before they fully emerge) by the persons who face them, without waiting every time for the outside experts. The demands of the case would become then opportunities for activating a learning process, continuous and widespread.

Such ideas are clearly wishful thinking in the context of the current theory and practice of the social scientists. In fact, if somebody is deriving an advantage (power, prestige, income) out of the existence of a problem and, moreover, if his entire life (training, occupation) revolves around that problem, he is not likely to be interested/involved either in promoting situations that facilitate self-help

solutions or in finding good permanent solutions. But this is exactly what the demands of the case ask for.

The principle of the demands of the case is linked to another basic one: challenge.

## **Challenge**

As previously pointed out, the social scientists are more inclined to narcotize people who are facing problems, promising top-down professional solutions, rather than let them take on the challenge and find the solution by themselves.

The failure to take on challenges, e.g. for fear of not being equal to them, or the impossibility of taking on challenges, owing to state barriers against some activities, are the sources of innumerable moral and material disasters in human history.

This paralysis of direct initiative fixes the individual into a frozen state of dependency on any external power, be it a vicious aggressor, a supposedly benevolent helper or any vagary of nature.

The human being, unimpeded by masters and sorcerers, is, generally, an enterprising individual, curious to learn and keen to act.

In the course of history he/she has taken on all sorts of challenges and even invented challenges in the form of games, adventures, expeditions, races, record breaking, and so on.

Taking on a challenge means competing with others or with oneself. From competition comes competence and it is in large measure through competition that human beings can become competent.

The challenge undertaken should be proportional to the skills mastered and the level of difficulties in the challenge should grow in relation to the mastery of skills. In this way the tension in dealing with a problem is matched by a creative release of tension, i.e. striving to reach an achievable goal or find a possible solution.

"We have ascertained that civilizations come to birth in environments that are unusually difficult and not unusually easy, and this

has led us on to inquire whether or not this is an instance of some social law which may be expressed in the formula: 'the greater the challenge, the greater the stimulus'."

(Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, 1946)

The crime of the social scientists consists in having decried challenges as disrupters of the social order (sometimes under the dirty words of "social Darwinism") and got rid of them, except in specific contexts where professional gamers vie with each other in front of paying spectators.

All the rest has been highly regulated, eliminating all possible social experimentation that could represent a challenge to the gurus of the dominant cult, the only ones authorized to do social experiments through planning and legislation.

Considering that personal and social progress originates from involvement in new and more demanding challenges (that have nothing to do with the manufacture by the state of fake goals to be pursued and false enemies to be fought), the lack of true challenges might be an ominous indicator of impending personal and social disasters.

### **The general framework**

The various theoretical principles and practical tools previously highlighted should be seen as interrelated working hypotheses to be used to the extent and in so far as they apply to reality in a productive and sensible way.

In science there are no beliefs in the form of dogmas whose validity is ascertained and accepted once for all.

What should now have become clear by examining the way knowledge advances is that the social sciences are persistently failing in the task of providing science, that is, producing new knowledge. This situation is likely to continue and get worse unless creative/energetic individuals succeed in disposing of three current failures of the social scientists. They are:

1. The wrong items
2. The absurd totems
3. The narrow views.

### 1. The wrong items (in the social agenda)

Social scientists have put in the agenda of the social sciences a series of wrong items, generally in the form of stark contrapositions.

If the successful identification of the problem (i.e. the topic/area on which to focus attention) can be said to represent a first important step towards its solution, putting wrong items in the social agenda is like compounding the problem, i.e. running away from solutions.

Wrong items in the social agenda are, for instance, the following polarities:

- nature-nurture

"This controversy [nature vs. nurture] constitutes a pseudo-problem because it is based on false premises. Whether the organism be microbe, corn plant, fruit fly, or man, all its characteristics are hereditary, and all are also determined by the environment."

(René Dubos, *Man Adapting*, 1980)

- body-mind

"The practice of speaking of distinct entities, body and mind, is so deeply embedded in our linguistic traditions that to many people it seems absurd to question its fundamental validity. But this problem, like many others, has complexities that are not apparent to common sense."

(J. Z. Young, *An Introduction to the Study of Man*, 1971)

- individual-society

"[...] It is above all necessary to avoid postulating 'society' once more as an abstraction confronting the individual. The individual is a

social being. The manifestation of his life - even when it does not appear directly in the form of a social manifestation, accomplished in association with other human beings - is therefore a manifestation and affirmation of social life."

(Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*)

- left-right

"Imagine what kind of science of zoology or crystallography we would have where everything were brought down to one dimension classifying all the objects only by their size or according to whether they were light or dark or smooth or rough. Actually, even that would be better, because at least these qualities do exist and do form a continuum, whereas nobody has succeeded in fixing the meaning of Left and Right and people are continually quarrelling about who is on the Left or Right of Whom."

(Stanislav Andreski, *Social Sciences as Sorcery*, 1972)

- parts-wholes

"Parts and wholes in an absolute sense do not exist in the domains of life."

(Arthur Koestler, in *Beyond Reductionism*, 1969)

- global-local

"Ours is a brand new world of allatonce-ness [all-at-once-ness]. 'Time' has ceased, 'space' has vanished. We now live in a global village ... a simultaneous happening." "The new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village."

(Marshall McLuhan & Quentin Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage*, 1967)

Other wrong items that have attracted plenty of unnecessary

attention and dissipated a lot of energy that might have been better employed are:

- The end of history: capitalism has won, communism has lost. End of story.

This is a ludicrous thesis in itself, considering that history never ends as long as the human adventure continues. It is even more ludicrous (a) because capitalism disappeared long ago, replaced by statism and (b) because the rulers of the Soviet Union never implemented communism (socialization of all instruments of production, end of all political and economic privileges and extinction of the state) but merely a backward form of statism. This thesis is on a par with Hegel's statement that, with the establishment of the Prussian state, we had reached the final stage of civilization.

- The clash of civilizations: we are good, they are bad. Full stop.

Social scientists and state rulers desperately need an enemy (for instance, the anarchists, the Jews, the communists, the Muslims, etc.) otherwise they would be out of a job. No wonder then that, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a lousy idea such as the clash of civilizations received so much attention and acclaim from the "intellectuals". It filled a deep political need and it doesn't really matter if it is utter trash, failing resoundingly in its predictions (like excluding the likelihood of a war between Russia and Ukraine because part of the same cultural paradigm).

- The race to the bottom: the rise of those at the bottom threatens to make everybody fall to the bottom of the pyramid.

This is the most vicious of all the lies spread by the social scientists and betrays the traditional behaviour of all the bullies of this world who, once they have reached a position of strength, want to safeguard it at all costs through protectionism (called 'fair trade') and monopolism (called 'anti-dumping measures').

Many social scientists are either directly responsible for these wrong items or have let their minds be filled up with them. They have then compiled paper after paper with disquisitions about these wrong items, with which they have, in their turn, impregnated the minds of many students and readers. Some of these disciples would

eventually become social scientists and continue the chain of meaningless/idiotic discussions presented as profound/enlightening debates.

## 2. The absurd totems (in the social agenda)

The wrong items, once accepted and perpetuated, have the tendency to become, quite often, absurd totems, unquestioned and unquestionable.

In general, the people whose main objective is power, embellish, with appealing statements of good intentions, the way they will use the power they covet so much. The intellectuals, as high priests of social life are fascinated by these catchy proclamation that promise solutions to every possible social ill. They are then ready to adopt and promote them the more they represent the absurd totems of social life,

For instance, 'democracy' is one of those totems and, probably with 'socialism', is the most seductive of all. Democracy is the common unquestioned belief of all mainstream social scientists. To openly admit being against democracy is still considered a blasphemous thought and act. It never occurs to the conventional social scientist that, in order to be in favour of the individual, of his autonomy and empowerment, we must necessarily be against the tyranny of the majority, which is what democracy actually is, once we go beyond the usual lip-service paid to safeguarding the rights of minorities.

"The outside world has not grasped the spiritual foundation of the National Socialist revolution and is still debating about democracy versus dictatorship, while the German revolution is democracy in the highest sense of the word. ... I am also one of the people and not a foreign intellectual or apostle of international revolution."

(Adolf Hitler, from a speech to the Reichstag, January 30, 1937)

So, in order to uphold the totems, the social scientists must make

them appear to be what, in reality, they are not (e.g. democracy as power of the people, socialism as a form of organization centring on society) and mere words must be presented as factual reality (e.g. pro-democracy discourses as democracy in action, pro-socialist discourses as socialism in action).

At that point the intellectuals would go to any length to portray the ensuing reality in such a way as to minimize or even obliterate any discrepancy with those words, which evoke a reality they hold dear (at least in the abstract).

However, simply stating that we intend to solve a problem does not point us even to the beginning of a solution; or to call a society socialist, liberal or democratic does not advance anyone along the road to well-being, freedom and personal empowerment.

Nevertheless, for the verbose intellectuals, appealing words and grandiose statements are all they need. There they find plenty of materials for exercising their arts, by elaborating and glossing those statements with the production of further documents, in a multiplication of papers that, quite often, is in inverse relation to the production of original ideas and certainly has no connection with or impact on actual reality.

All this is in total contrast with science, which has no totems either in the form of holy masters or in the form of sacred cow statements. On the contrary, the main feature of science is its continuous self-scrutiny in order to find possible discrepancies between statements and reality.

The absurd totems of the social scientists are both the source and the outcome of their narrow views.

### **3. The narrow views (in the social agenda)**

The narrow views of the social scientists derive from the way academics (and politicians) have organized official knowledge and its transmission. The academic division of science into two main camps (social sciences and physical sciences), subdivided in their turn into a

series of more or less delimited sub-areas, is the very negation of a scientific (i.e. cognitive) approach to reality.

As already pointed out, all these divisions have started to crumble in some areas and in some cases, but most academics will not give up easily their exclusive rights over some cognitive pastures, and so they usually support each other in upholding their feudal rights.

However, not everybody is on the bandwagon of jealous particularism.

The presentation of the General System Theory goes back at least to the middle of the 20th century (Ludwig von Bertalanffy, 1950), while the systemic approach can be traced to the beginning of science.

In the wake of the general system theory other interesting views have been put forward, like the concept of the Holon [from holos = whole] (Arthur Koestler, 1967) and the idea of Consilience or Unity of Knowledge (Edward O. Wilson, 1998).

"The organism is to be regarded as a multi-levelled hierarchy of semi-autonomous sub-wholes, branching into sub-wholes of a lower order, and so on. Sub-wholes on any level of the hierarchy are referred to as holons." (Arthur Koestler, in *Beyond Reductionism*, 1969)

"Disciplinary boundaries within the natural sciences are disappearing, to be replaced by shifting hybrid domains in which consilience is implicit. These domains reach across many levels of complexity, from chemical physics and physical chemistry to molecular genetics, chemical ecology, and ecological genetics. None of the new specialties is considered more than a focus of research."

"Given that human action comprises events of physical causation, why should the social sciences and humanities be impervious to consilience with the natural sciences?"

(Edward O. Wilson, *Consilience*, 1998)

From a systemic/holistic perspective, all reality is seen as a

continuum (of entities and events and features) characterized by variety within unity.

The narrow view of the social scientists cancels both variety and unity and replaces all with simplistic, stultifying polarities (left-right, public-private, individual-society, etc.) mainly invented for their convenience as topics of interminable and, we should add, inane debate.

Where all this (wrong items, absurd totems, narrow views) will lead, is something that should concern everybody because the likely outcome is, indeed, reducing humanities into inanities, i.e. totally pointless exercise. Science (i.e. structured knowledge) is too important to be left in the hands of professional scientists and, least of all, in those of so-called social scientists.

"The organization and the rule of the new society by socialist savants is the worst of all despotic governments!" (Mikhail Bakunin, *Dieu et l'état*, 1872)

We need now to present scenarios of possible futures and to do so it is necessary to start focusing on the main characteristics of human nature and social dynamics, because the future will be, as it has always been, the result of who we are, how we behave and how much we are aware of our true nature and actual behaviour.

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## SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE

Human Nature  
Social Dynamics  
Scenarios  
Decadence  
Collapse  
Regeneration  
The shape of things to come  
References



"Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past."

(George Orwell, *Nineteen-Eighty-Four*, 1949)

The attempt to explore the future by presenting possible scenarios requires not only a knowledge of the present, but also an understanding of human nature and of the social dynamics that are likely to follow from the multiple interrelations between human beings, the natural environment and technological artefacts.

### Human Nature

In the past the Church and in current times the State have repeatedly depicted the human being as a generally frail and often wicked creature, stressing especially (or even exclusively) his negative traits or ascribing to every human being (potentially or actually) the worst aspects of a disreputable minority.

This in order to present themselves and their organization (the Church and the State) as indispensable agents, elected by God or by the people, to put things right, dispensing salvation in heaven or security on earth.

According to the religious and secular priests of these two organizations the life of human beings, without the restrictive and disciplining presence of these institutions, would be characterized by fierce conflict between each and every one, by extreme selfishness and general disregard for any personal or collective well-being.

This because, always according to the views of the high ministers of social life, human nature unconstrained by a superior entity is:

- aggressive and violent
- egoistic and egotistic
- irresponsible and inconsiderate.

"... we must teach our children altruism, for we cannot expect it to be part of their biological nature."

(Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*, 1976)

However, even a superficial observation/analysis of historical data

is sufficient to show that these negative traits, far away from being intrinsic to or shared by the vast majority of people, are manifested especially, if not exclusively, by those in power or those seeking power.

"Our century will have truly been the century of the intellectual organization of political hatred."

"The current age is well and truly the age of politics."

(Julien Benda, *La Trahison des clercs*, 1927)

"In the state of nature which Hobbes imagined, violence was the only law, and life was 'nasty, brutish and short'. Though individuals never lived in this state of nature, the Great Powers of Europe have always done so."

(A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918*, 1954)

The daily experience of billions of people with their fellow human beings is far from being a violent (or semi-violent) exchange/interaction with aggressive, egoistic and inconsiderate individuals, unless we are in a totally unbalanced situation of powerlessness, best typified by many Individual-State relations.

This being so, what should emerge from a survey of personal experiences, devoid of myths and manipulations engendered by past and present storytellers, is that human nature - except when exemplified by a comparatively small minority of power hungry individuals - is characterized by traits very different from those generally presented and reiterated. The common human being is mainly:

- compliant and convivial
- helpful and caring
- empathic and compassionate

If this were not the case, large and complex societies would not have arisen, or would certainly have stopped functioning long ago, no matter how much disciplining and repressive power were exercised by the state or by any mythical and superior power.

However, the fact that those just listed are the most common traits of human nature, and so of most human beings (especially in highly differentiated realities), does not, by itself, make the situation any better, and certainly not problem-free.

As a matter of fact, those traits, unaccompanied by the universal spread of less natural and more consciously constructed personal attitudes (e.g. critical thinking and unconventional acting), might constitute the very source of problems.

Let us see why.

History shows that the large majority of people are not really interested in power over others (the multitude) but just want to carry on with their life and business in the most free and pleasurable way.

At the same time there is a persistent, relatively small, minority fixated on achieving power over the multitude.

In order to succeed in their objective, the individuals belonging to these power-hungry minorities have to perform an incredible feat of acrobatic reasoning that is remarkable both for its patent absurdity and concealed viciousness. Clearly, they are able and willing to do this as long as the large multitude of people whom they address do continue to be forgetful and simpleminded, as the case has been and still is.

Only in the presence of this naivety and absentmindedness can the person who wants to rule the masses succeed in convincing a majority of people that:

- first, they need protection because people left to themselves are, by nature, vicious and violent or, at least, totally and utterly selfish;

- second, that he, (i.e. the aspiring representative of the people), is an exception to this rule, being the good guy in town, heroically generous and primarily dedicated to promoting everybody's well-being, capable of solving every problem and especially keen on redressing every wrong;

- third, that the elector (i.e. the person whom he asks for support or, in other terms, for the vote) is not such a villain like the others (i.e. the members and supporters of the opposing party), who are always

intent on profiteering from everything and putting at risk the life and livelihood of honest people.

In reality:

- 1. There is no such pressing and overwhelming need for security and social protection because most people (outside the state entourage) are not aggressive, egotistic and inconsiderate, otherwise they would attack him (the hopeful ruler) and certainly would not entrust him with power (representation) and money (taxation);

- 2. There is not much hope that the elected person would be any better (or any different) than those who have elected him and so there is no rationale for giving him the power to make decisions for everybody on important matters;

- 3. There is no need, in particular, for professional protectors to whom monopolistic and unfettered power should be given, because this is the most likely situation that would make a scoundrel even out of an honest person.

"It is, indeed, quite difficult to conceive how individuals who have totally renounced the habit of taking autonomous decisions could succeed in selecting well those who are to lead them; and it is impossible to believe that a liberal, active and wise government could ever come out of the suffrage of a population of servants."

(Alexis de Tocqueville, *De la Démocratie en Amérique*, vol II, 1840)

"This is to think that men are so foolish that they take care to avoid what mischiefs may be done them by polecats or foxes, but are content, nay, think it safety, to be devoured by lions."

(John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Second Essay, 1690)

If people are generally aggressive and vicious, the social scientists should explain why somebody elected (and so endowed with power) should be less aggressive and vicious than the rest, especially considering that the elected person has been chosen by a

majority of supposedly aggressive and vicious people; on the other hand, if people, or the majority of them, are basically good and affable, the same social scientists should explain why they need a vast bureaucratic and policing apparatus of regulation, control and repression.

"Nor do I know, if men are like sheep, why they need any government; or if they are like wolves, how can they suffer it."  
 (Sir William Temple, *An essay upon the origin and nature of government*, 1751)

These are the mysteries of the immaculate castration performed by the state (through school manipulation and police oppression) with respect to the mental capacities and physical energies of the whole of the common people.

Whatever the case, with a master stroke of appalling shamelessness, the actual and the aspiring rulers, while harping on the vicious and dangerous aspects of unregulated human nature (implicitly meaning, unregulated by them), use the traits of human nature previously listed, i.e. compliant, caring, compassionate, etc. (which they pretend do not exist), to their own advantage.

And so, the very features that could make for a good civil society are employed to work for the setting up of an irresponsible totalitarian power, for the benefit of the ruling elite. The voluntary servitude of the human being is then built on the manipulation, by some, of those very malleable features that are so appropriate to a free (self-regulated) social life.

Through successful manipulation:

- the compliant and convivial human being becomes the obedient and gregarious state subject.

- the helpful and caring human being becomes the usable and exploitable worker/soldier/citizen/taxpayer or whatever else suits the state leaders.

- the empathic and compassionate human being becomes the impressionable and pliable dupe of every possible pietistic or fright-

ening con produced and circulated by the state rulers and their high clerks and servile accomplices, the social scientists.

"Life in society requires consensus as an indispensable condition. But consensus, to be productive, requires that each individual contribute independently out of his experience and insight. When consensus comes under the dominance of conformity, the social process is polluted and the individual at the same time surrenders the powers on which his functioning as a feeling and thinking being depends. That we have found the tendency to conformity in our society so strong that reasonably intelligent and well-meaning young people are willing to call white black is a matter of concern. It raises questions about our ways of education and about the values that guide our conduct."

(Solomon A. Asch, *Opinions and Social Pressure*, 1955)

"A substantial proportion of people do what they are told to do, irrespective of the content of the act and without limitations of conscience, so long as they perceive that the command comes from a legitimate authority."

"Ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process. Moreover, even when the destructive effects of their work becomes patently clear, and they are asked to carry out actions incompatible with fundamental standards of morality, relatively few people have the resources needed to resist authority."

(Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*, 1974)

This might be all very well for the state and the state rulers while the state lasts and while the con works; but in the long run, as the collapse of the Soviet Empire has already shown, a society made of a relatively few absolute scoundrels and many obtuse gullible morons is likely to produce, sooner or later, a very perverse social dynamic.

## Social Dynamics

The social scientists have not only misrepresented human nature but they have also led people astray with regard to social dynamics.

Their descriptions of and prescriptions for society are unsound because they have added to the false premises (about human nature) false inferences (about social dynamics) based mainly on intellectual preconceptions instead of factual reality.

It is a common belief that evil (bad thoughts, deeds, attitudes) comes from:

- Illnesses (physical, spiritual): consequences of traumas, suffered violence, past deprivations, etc.

- Ignorance: lack of learning about how to live and how to care, appropriately and effectively; wrong information received; imitation of unsuitable models, etc.

- Intolerance: hubris, bigotry, inhumanity, arising mainly from cultural upbringing and resulting in excessive self-assurance and importance being assigned to some personal/group beliefs to the point that it is considered right to impose them onto others.

This belief about the sources of evil has been also verified and highlighted repeatedly by empirical evidence and it has become widely accepted on the strength of that empirical support.

However, what social scientists still fail to accept and take on board in their research and reflections is that most evil comes from professed good intentions and righteous practices or, rather, from professed good intentions gone regularly astray and proclaimed righteous practices that invariably wreak havoc in people's lives.

"I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good."

(Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, 1776)

"If I knew for a certainty that a man was coming to my house with the conscious design of doing me good, I should run for

my life ... for fear that I should get some of his good done to me."

(Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854)

The simple fact of proclaiming good intentions and righteous practices without (1) knowledge and wisdom at the start (to assess the acceptance and appropriateness of the course of action proposed and the means employed) and (2) knowledge and honesty at the end (to assess if the prefixed goals have been achieved through the use of suitable means) is most likely to lead to moral and material disasters.

It might then come as a shock to many well-meaning but quite naïve individuals to learn that illnesses, ignorance and intolerance can be the result of officially planned actions, generally devised, approved, and extolled by the social scientists as beneficial to most human beings if not to the entire human race.

For example:

- Illnesses (spiritual, physical) can be the result of a suffocating moral upbringing or of a too aseptic environment, all provided with the best intention of protecting the child from unwanted risks of any nature;

- Ignorance can be the product of state mass schooling which, with the "noble" pretext of granting equality, succeeds in universally instilling conformity and eradicating creativity.

- Intolerance can be the outcome of the deep felt desire to spread what is firmly considered (and what might even be in some personal cases) the good and the right, in all directions and with all means, up to the point of forcing it on everybody.

"Most of the greatest evils that man has inflicted upon man have come through people feeling quite certain about something which, in fact, was false. To know the truth is more difficult than most men suppose, and to act with ruthless determination in the belief that truth is the monopoly of their party is to invite disaster."

(Bertrand Russell, *Ideas that Have Harmed Mankind*, 1946)

Disseminating the true religion or the modern culture, exporting freedom and democracy, spreading what is reputed to be knowledge and development, all through the gentle use of bayonets (in the past) or of "intelligent" bombs (in the present), these are, for example, the missions of the ruling elites of the self-proclaimed advanced and progressive world. In the course of these missions, millions of people have been tortured and killed but, according to our rulers, these are only minor details, largely justified by the lofty ends.

The popular saying that "the road to hell is paved with good intentions" has then remained a simple hunch that has never been taken seriously into account by the state rulers and the social scientists because it would highlight the fact that, relying on pretended and professed good intentions, both of these groups have built and continue to build their role (power) and status (privileges), subjugating, manipulating and dominating people.

Clearly it is not so easy to unmask the unwarranted belief that good intentions lead, automatically, to good outcomes, without appearing (or rather, without being made to appear) as insensitive and heartless individuals opposed to what is good and right and unreasonably fastidious to those people who advocate what they believe is good and right for humanity.

In fact, this is precisely the strategy carried out by state rulers and social scientists against those who try to expose their fallacy. They are qualified as selfish and callous, devoid of any sense of compassion and care, even when the so-called compassion and care, as practiced by the state rulers and the social scientists, feeds only corruption and leads mainly to dependency.

And so, in the course of centuries, we have witnessed a perverse social dynamic through which some basic human aspirations, for example to do good and to worship a God (God as any perfect entity that some love and respect for reasons that go beyond simple rationality), have been distorted and manipulated, first by the Church priests and then by the state priests, for ends that have nothing to do either with good or with God.

"Oh how we hate one another, for the love of God!"  
(Cardinal Newman, XIX century)

In the contemporary age the state is the new Church, having replaced the power and symbols of the old Church with its own power (bureaucratic caste, intellectual clerics, etc.) and symbols (the flag, the national anthem, the pledges, the statues of national heroes, the monuments to the glory of the Fatherland, etc.).

Under the new Church the same perverse social dynamics persist, employing the same old tricks. The banality of evil keeps preying on simple minds. As a result of it, basically good or harmless people carry on perpetrating or silently witnessing wrongdoings and atrocities, either in the name and in support of "good" causes or as official agents performing their assigned tasks (magistrates, policemen, prison guards, teachers, economists, social workers, etc.).

The fact is that the practice of top-down or authority-taken decisions, advocated by the social scientists, is, in too many cases, succeeding in producing numb people with no ideas and no will of their own.

The lack of freedom in social experimenting and in taking personally responsible decisions (i.e. decisions for whose consequences, whether positive or negative, the person is responsible) is the hallmark of the contemporary bureaucratic societies dominated/regulated by so-called professionals. This arrangement represents a formidable obstacle to any learning process by individuals and to any progress in the quality of the relations amongst human beings and with the surrounding environment.

"When responsibility coincides with liberty, when the person who takes some decisions suffers the full consequences of these decisions, then there is a feedback loop; then people benefit from their good choices and lose from their bad choices; and so they may learn from experience."

"Without responsibility, we lose track of how to behave; worse, with misplaced responsibility, where those who decide are not

those who suffer the consequences of decisions, then we get on the wrong track, and we run into disasters."

(François-René Rideau, *Responsibility: The Dynamic Feedback of Ethics*, 2005)

## Scenarios

The social scientists see society as a machine with a captain (the political and intellectual elite), a professional crew (the social experts and practitioners) and many passengers (the common people). The captain gives orders and dictates rules while the crew is paid for making sure that the passengers obey the orders and follow the rules.

For these social scientists the only acceptable view is that society (i.e. human beings) receives impulses from a centre in the form of laws or monetary incentives and that it functions only on the basis of those impulses.

The idea that societies (i.e. the social exchanges amongst human beings) might be, as a whole and in their component parts, self-regulating organisms, whose entities are capable of self-direction and self-management through a series of continuous adjustments in response to life requirements, is something that is not acceptable to the social scientists because it would reduce and even dispose of their role.

However, this would not be a big loss because their role resembles more that of the fly on the coach-wheel (boasting inexistent abilities and influence of direction) than that of the foresighted oracle (pin-pointing social problems that might arise).

If we accept the way society is deemed to function according to the social scientists, we should accept also the fact that an organism exclusively activated from the centre loses the flexible capacity to react swiftly and autonomously when a new situation arises. This means that the burden on the centre of taking decisions for everybody in every slightly novel case increases continuously until nothing is solved and nothing is done unless prompted by the centre or even performed by the centre. Clearly, this is an absolutely crazy and totally unrealistic situation.

If this were the case, we should call it social statics, having nothing to do with social dynamics and with the way human beings function and make society function (i.e. through their social intercourse).

The frightening truth about current reality (which everyone should be aware of) is that it is characterized by technological dynamics on the one hand, associated, or rather, conflicting with social statics on the other. In between, there are human beings that are part of both realities and so are, at the same time, empowered (by technological tools) and enslaved (by ideological rulers).

Out of this epochal contradiction, perhaps never seen in such sharp terms, come three possible scenarios for the future that could either take place at the same time but in different parts of the advanced world, or in succession one after the other, or one to the exclusion of the others. They are:

- decadence
- collapse
- regeneration.

## **Decadence**

Decadence is the running down of the physical and mental energy of an organism.

It is a natural process affecting all living entities, which ceases only when a final state of permanent static equilibrium (death) is reached.

Decadence can be opposed and postponed through a continuous appropriate interchange of energy with the surrounding environment (food, air, water, light, mental inputs, etc.).

In a social organism decadence still affects its constituent parts (individuals) but a final state of equilibrium (universal death) is avoided because new individuals are born who replace the departed.

Nevertheless it is possible for all the members of a small society to descend to such a level of decadence that even the survival of the newborn is compromised (extinction); or it may happen that the

newborn, on reaching maturity, introduce such sweeping changes as to extinguish, metaphorically speaking, the old society and to give rise to a new one (regeneration).

Decadence is a natural and inevitable process for any organism but it is accelerated for those entities which remain in static positions (resembling equilibrium), isolated and insulated from all sorts of exchanges and changes. The remedy consists in generating situations where the living entities are far from equilibrium but not far from equilibration. In other words, situations where there is a suitable metabolic interchange between the organism and the environment, within appropriate parameters that allow for the (indefinite) continuation of the interchange. Otherwise decadence will be eventually replaced by collapse.

In present times many individuals living in advanced societies seem to have fallen and got stuck in a trough of decadence compounded by a risk of ecological disasters.

This actual and potential decadence comes as a result of a technology that has practically solved (or can practically solve) all problems of material survival (food, shelter) but which is combined with an ideology still primarily obsessed with material concerns.

The technology makes possible, for instance, the production of huge quantities of food, and this possibility becomes a nightmarish reality because the official ideology promotes subsidies for the production of ever larger quantities of food, which are stocked, destroyed or sold for an ever larger consumption, leading to all sorts of material and mental problems.

The technology makes it possible to transfer to machines most of the work necessary for the survival and comfort of individuals, but, at the same time, the official ideology remains focused on how to create employment in the form of dependent jobs, and the answer is by setting up useless bureaucratic apparatuses where masses of people perform useless bureaucratic tasks.

All this is done for two main reasons:

- to convey money towards the state coffers by collecting state income receipts (VAT) via material consumption

- to retain power within the state castes by preventing, via occupational alienation, the development of individuals' critical faculties.

The results are:

- physical obesity (fat)
- mental apathy (dumb)
- moral aridity (numb)

These are the essential factors that make for the decadence of people in a technologically advanced society.

*"Il se plaignait de ne pas avancer.*

*Pourtant il suivait son idée.*

*C'était une idée fixe."*

*(Jacques Prévert)*

*"He kept moaning he wasn't advancing*

*Even though he was pursuing his idea.*

*It was a fixed idea."*

*(Jacques Prévert)*

"Politics offers yesterday's answers to today's questions."

"The old civic state and national groupings have become unworkable. Nothing can be further from the spirit of the new technology than 'a place for everything and everything in its place.' You can't go home again."

"Our 'Age of Anxiety' is, in great part, the result of trying to do today's job with yesterday's tools - with yesterday's concepts."

(Marshall McLuhan & Quentin Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage*, 1967)

There is no solution in view or way out of the decadence unless the ideology that has produced this situation (statism) and the organization that gains from this situation (the state) are disposed of in the scrap-yard of history. If this is not done, the individuals and groups concerned are likely to undergo a long period of physical and mental degeneration that could lead to various types of collapse (moral, ecological, organizational).

## Collapse

Collapse is the sudden breaking down of the physical and mental energy of an organism.

The causes can be either a severe internal malfunctioning at the climax of an ever-accelerating deterioration, or an external blow (a catastrophic accident) that severely compromises or even puts an end to the existence of the organism.

With reference to a social organism we can differentiate these two eventualities as:

- internally engendered collapse
- externally provoked collapse.

This differentiation is made only for analytical purposes and should not give the idea that the two aspects (internal-external) are neatly separated in reality.

As to the first eventuality, this is the situation likely to take place in a closed society after a very long period of decadence. A collapse is especially to be expected if the society is decaying while growing in size and complexity to the point of becoming unworkable.

Almost all advanced societies are, presently, semi-open societies in the sense that they are open up to a certain point; in fact there are still several barriers to the free circulation of individuals, goods, ideas.

These barriers are becoming more and more anachronistic and more and more difficult to enforce (especially as far as ideas and goods are concerned) because of the advancement and spread of technology.

So, the most likely scenario of collapse for an advanced society is a severe inner crisis provoked by external interventions in the form of catastrophic occurrences.

In this respect, it is worth remembering that the main rationale for the existence of the state is the defence of the realm and the protection of the population living in the realm.

However, since at least the Second World War and the massive use of the airplane for aerial bombing, the distinction between military and civil targets has practically disappeared. The bombing of

Dresden (Germany) and Coventry (England) and especially the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Japan) have shown not only that the state cannot protect the citizens living under its sovereignty but that it might be the main source of situations that put in danger entire populations.

With the advancement of technology also in the area of weapons of mass destruction, the risks of insecurity provoked by the aggressive postures and actions of state governments have multiplied.

We have now reached the age of do-it-yourself bombs and mini atomic bombs assembled in a garage (like the first personal computers). With the coming onto the scene of personal bombs, to think that the state (i.e. your state) can protect you from other individuals that are full of rage against the state (i.e. your state) which is, more or less brutally, meddling in their lives or in the lives of their fellow human beings, is an idiotic illusion and a macabre joke.

A matter-of-fact analysis of this new development shows that some individuals are only attempting to replicate the strategy introduced by the states during the Second World War (and employed in other conflicts, for instance the war in Vietnam) with the bombing of civil populations aimed at spreading terror, weakening morale and forcing the government of the civilian victims to surrender. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are the clearest example of that strategy.

In current times and with current technology, that strategy has fallen within the reach of any fully-determined individual who can assemble a personal bomb, in the same way as an expert hobbyist, with a relatively small amount of money, can assemble a personal computer. And as personal computers are as powerful as a main-frame of some time ago, so a personal bomb can/could be as destructive as an atomic bomb of some decades ago.

The collapse of an entire society caused by a small atomic bomb exploded in the centre of any large capital city whose state is carrying out an act of aggression (or what is perceived as an act of aggression or undue interference) is a highly likely eventuality. At the same time it is not an inevitable occurrence or something that is expected to happen in Sankt Gallen or Montecarlo.

Social scientists and especially state rulers are keeping quiet on all this or, what is worse, are sending misleading messages of a civilization under attack from evil forces, plagued by envy and cultural backwardness (Robert A. Pape, *The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*, 2003).

This denial of responsibility and self-absolution is, precisely, the attitude that will lead to a disastrous collapse.

The state is incubating/generating the loose destructive cannons/forces that will bring it down, together with everyone and everything around it. It is a suicide strategy, set in motion by paranoid and blind state rulers, and triggered into action by desperate human beings who think they are left with no other way out of their desperate rage. If both of these sets of people succeed in occupying centre stage, the collapse scenario will be the most likely ending for some advanced societies.

That is why we need to dispose quite soon of senseless state rulers and servile social scientists and we should have a myriad of reasoning social critics, whose unceasing task should be to help making everybody aware about:

- what might happen: a collapse of an advanced society caused by a man-made catastrophic event for which the technological means already exist and are within the reach of many determined individuals;

- why it might happen: the existence of aggressive state rulers with their bullying behaviour, masked by bogus good intentions;

- where it might happen: in the most delicate and complex nodes within those states, for instance in a big city bustling with life and with centres of administration and decision-making;

- what should be done for it not to happen: to reduce, as soon as possible, the power of territorial states to a bare minimum, prior to their definitive disposal, and to start replacing it with the widest development of other humane and sensible modes of personal and social organization.

If awareness about all these aspects could arise in a substantial number of people, in different places and walks of life, it would mean

that we are not any longer under the nefarious influence of state rulers and their servants, the social scientists, and that the power of both is coming to an end.

In this case, the avoided collapse could be the prelude to a total regeneration.

## **Regeneration**

Regeneration is the healing and heightening of the physical and mental energy of an organism.

It follows either a situation of sickness of the organism (or of some of its parts) or a situation of malaise (e.g. impasse) where the existence of problems is not matched by the capacity to find solutions.

The human being is a whole made of biological and cultural entities that operate as building blocks. They can be the source either of evolution and development or involution and degeneration.

Biological and cultural entities can be suffocated and altered in their functional development, can be put under excessive stress and attacked by some unhealthy agents, in other words can be transformed into and reproduce viruses that will engender sickness and malaise in the organism (i.e. physical, intellectual or spiritual cancer).

A virus is a parasitic agent that preys on weak/weakened entities, by infiltrating, replicating and causing damage to tissues not sufficiently healthy and strong to withstand the attack.

Regeneration is a process that succeeds in fighting the viruses, healing the attacked entities and even enhancing (by immunization) the general strength of the organism.

The organism of the human being is here considered as an integrated whole of nature (biology) and nurture (culture). This is never clearer than when a tissue is under attack and the counterattack, in order to be successful, must be of both a physical and mental order, because health is a physical and mental concern/compound.

"Mens sana in corpore sano." (Juvenal, Satires, X)

"Mens sana in corpore sano is a foolish saying. The sound body is a product of the sound mind."

(Bernard Shaw, *Maxims for Revolutionists*, 1903)

For this reason we need to posit a basic unit having mental (significant) and material (substantive) qualities and performing the task of regeneration.

This basic unit is here called "seme" and the term could be intended as the conceptual and practical fusion of semen/seed and sema/sign (i.e. meaning)

The "seme" is characterized by being a

- germinator, that is a producer of new original and healthy combinations
- gladiator, that is a fighter for new original and healthy combinations,
- propagator, that is a diffuser of new original and healthy combinations.

The Regeneration is here considered as being:

- a micro affair (regeneration is performed by the basic units within the total organism);
- a direct affair (regeneration is achieved through personal initiative);
- a free affair (all of the healthy entities must be free to react in order to regenerate the entire organism).

Regeneration takes place when healthy productive entities (the "semes") germinate, fight back and propagate while the unhealthy destructive ones (viruses) lose strength, yield terrain and finally die out.

Looking at the wide picture, it seems reasonable to conclude that, in current times, human beings, through their technological and cultural artefacts, have increased the possibilities either of total destruction or of speedy regeneration.

Undertaking either of those paths is clearly, as it has always been, up to individuals.

"I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscientious endeavor."  
(Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854)

Amid a lot of still discouraging realities, there are also some hopeful signs of openness and awareness. If they spread and multiply, they could signify the development of new original human actors for the present and the future, in place of the mass production of identical dysfunctional replicators of the past.

Only in that case, through a cross-fertilization and an appropriate selection of different healthy "seeds" that will transmit and transform the best of the past into the best in the future, could a regeneration of individuals and communities take place.

The technological potentialities are increasingly in place and what is now needed is a cultural climate that assigns the main role not to the state and its servants but, once again, to the human being, as in the Age of Renaissance.

### **The shape of things to come**

The scenarios presented above, even when they are in stark contrast to one another (decadence - regeneration) all share a common aspect, namely the end of statism and the disappearance of the territorial sovereign state.

Technological, ecological, economic, cultural and many other factors all coalesce into a trend whose continuous progression will sanction the end of the age of statism.

What precisely will replace the ideology of statism and the state as organization is not clear yet, but the fact that individuals living in advanced societies (and not only them) are moving in the direction of post-statism reality/realities is more than a simple matter of chance. It is a consolidated dynamic that only state subservient social scientists fail to notice.

This being the case, it is then likely that, with the formation of a critical mass of individuals thinking outside the ideology of statism

and acting beyond the sphere of the state, a tipping point will be reached (probably during the first quarter of the XXI century) that will start a chain reaction leading to the widespread acceptance of new ideas (new paradigm/s) and new forms of behaviour (new social organization/s).

At this stage we can only formulate hypotheses, based on past history, about the Who (protagonists) and What (organizations) will replace the state. They might be:

- scattered individuals and communities, like after the collapse of the Roman Empire and the abandonment of Rome in favour of the countryside;

- parallel societies, like different Churches, existing side by side, after the so-called wars of religions and the acceptance/practice of religious tolerance;

- unified ecumene like a cosmopolis (or cosmopolis) inhabited and animated by cosmopolitan human beings. This would be something totally new that has nothing to do with the emergence of a world government but with the formation of world citizens and of a global village.

These new protagonists and new organizations are not mutually exclusive, but might be present, in various ways, at the same time, in different realities or even coexist in the same place.

We could give these three hypothetical outcomes the names personarchy, polyarchy, panarchy. However, what is important is not to stick labels on new realities but to sense what are the qualities of the new protagonists and the essence of the new organizations.

If decadence and/or collapse are only temporary phases of the human adventure and are followed by regeneration, for this to take hold it is necessary that individuals with creative and critical faculties multiply and spread everywhere.

The qualities of these individuals and the essence of the organizations they will be members of are likely to be characterized by:

- enthusiasm and energy
- knowledge and wisdom
- trust and care.

When enough individuals with those qualities come forward and actively use and promote those qualities, against all obstacles, then, new social entities will emerge based on new organizational lines. At that point regeneration will be in full swing.

It is up to everyone to make his/her choices.

And it is always time to make the appropriate choices.

Let the Persons be and let Life begin!

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# WAITING FOR THE BOMB?

The Precedent

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## The precedent

"On the 28 June [1914] Francis Ferdinand was assassinated at Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, by a Bosnian Serb." "The Serbian government ... certainly thought that it was likely Francis Ferdinand would be assassinated, if he provoked nationalist feeling by going to Sarajevo; and they warned Bilinski, the Austro-Hungarian minister of finance who was in charge of Bosnia, against the visit early in June. But, of course, the visit was meant to provoke nationalist feeling or, rather, to challenge it. It was deliberately timed for Serbia's national day, the anniversary of Kosovo. If a British royalty had visited Dublin on St. Patrick's day at the height of the Troubles, he, too, might have expected to be shot at."

(A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, 1954)

The idea that historical events are very hard to foresee because subject to the absolute vagaries of human nature reveals a very naïve attitude, worthy of inattentive and absentminded children who are easily distracted by the present, readily forgetful of the past, and unable to make sensible connections between the past and the present. Moreover, those who uphold this idea seem, in general, willing to justify any mischief, however grave, that they or their own side commit, and incapable of realizing the consequences of their conduct.

To illustrate this point, let us go back to the behaviour of the dominant political protagonists prior to the outbreak of the First World War.

The European state powers had prepared themselves for war by building up, year after year, a vast arsenal of weapons and by arousing a climate of increasing confrontation, fomented by a nationalistic and territorial ideology. The objective of every state ruler was to expand the size of the territory and the number of subjects under his control. These two concomitant aims of further territorial

conquest and wider political hegemony could be achieved only through wars (nationalistic wars, imperialistic wars).

The First World War, preceded by the scramble for Africa and all that frenzy for grabbing territories, was, then, the practically inevitable consequence of a series of mental attitudes (territorial conquest, political supremacy) and practical decisions (build-up of arsenals of weapons, mass indoctrination through state schooling, mass militarization through compulsory conscription) that only needed a dramatic pretext to set in motion, right in the hearth of Europe, a series of aggressive acts on a massive scale.

Almost a century has elapsed since the day when the student Gavrilo Prinzip fired the shots that killed the Archduke of Austria and his wife and signalled the start of the First World War, but we are still stuck, more or less, in the same mental attitudes and political framework that engendered that terrible outcome. In fact, apart from episodes of political federation (e.g. European Union) or break-up (e.g. USSR, former Yugoslavia), territorial state rulers are still at work, with the same narrow mentality, obsessed with fixing borders and controlling people under the pretext of the protection from enemies who are quite often either totally invented or generated through state policies of interference and repression.

Many individuals attribute the persistence of a violent reality to a perverse human nature, obstinate in its belligerent cruelty and wickedness. However, this explanation of wars in terms of biological determinism is on a par with historical fatalism, i.e. the attribution of every event to an inexorable and inscrutable "fate," and is similarly devoid of any cognitive value. As a matter of fact, the existence of non-violent individuals and of populations who have not waged war for many generations (e.g. the Swiss, the Swedish) puts this explanatory thesis definitively to rest.

"Human beings never fight on an extensive scale under the direct influence of an aggressive impulse. They fight and organize for fighting because, through tribal tradition, through teachings of a religious system, or of an aggressive patriotism,

they have been indoctrinated with certain cultural values which they are prepared to defend and with certain collective hatreds on which they are ready to assault and kill."

"[...] war cannot be regarded as a fiat of human destiny in that it could be related to biological needs or immutable psychological drives."

(Bronislaw Malinowski, *An Anthropological Analysis of War*, 1941)

Moreover, the advancement of science, based on critical and rational analysis of reality, has succeeded in producing down to earth explanations of many phenomena, completely disposing of the concept of fate.

### **The cause**

The dismissal of the fatalistic view concerning historical events such as war, presents us, however, with the challenge of identifying, with substantiated evidence, the specific causal factors that originated those events.

In fact, even if we acknowledge that aggressiveness is, in a certain measure, part and parcel of human nature, present in a latent form in all of us, and expressed occasionally or recurrently by some of us, this does not explain the origin and perpetuation of wars. Everybody knows and must recognize that, in order to have prolonged episodes of mass violence (wars) we need a proper organization whose ideology and agency not only are suited to war but which also finds in the war the justification for the existence and maintenance of the organization itself.

"War is the health of the State. It automatically sets in motion throughout society those irresistible forces for uniformity, for passionate co-operation with the Government in coercing into obedience the minority groups and individuals which lack the larger herd sense."

"The State is intimately connected with war, for it is the organization of the collective community when it acts in a political manner, and to act in a political manner towards a rival group has meant, throughout all history - war."

(Randolph Bourne, *The State*, 1919)

"... to him who contemplates the unfolding of the ages war presents itself as an activity of states which pertains to their essence."

(Bertrand de Jouvenel, *On Power*, 1945)

The conditions that make it possible for an organization to conduct large scale and prolonged mass violence consist in the exertion of:

- territorial sovereignty (territorialism)
- exclusive rule (monopolism)
- pervasive power (totalitarianism)

These are, in actual fact, the characteristics of the absolute state, which are expressed in their most mature and complete form by the modern nation state through its territorial, monopolistic and totalitarian democracy.

"A state is absolute ... when it claims the right to a monopoly of all the force within the community, to make war, to make peace, to conscript life, to tax, to establish and disestablish property, to define crime, to punish disobedience, to control education, to supervise the family, to regulate personal habits, and to censor opinions. The modern state claims all these powers, and in the matter of theory there is no real difference in the size of the claims between communists, fascists, and democrats."

(Walter Lippmann, *A Preface to Morals*, 1929)

Wars (i.e. large scale - long term violence) can be started and carried on only in presence of these conditions, and it is fair to say

that aggressive and expansionistic adventures will be more likely to be on the agenda of such an organization (i.e. the state) the more it is characterized by and can rely on those conditions.

These tendencies were in the ascendant and then rampant in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the introduction and consolidation of all sorts of rules (passports, protective tariffs, economic regulations, etc.) and ruling bodies (for administrative permits, policy directives, etc.). To sum it up, huge regulatory and directive apparatuses were instituted for state supremacy and for waging wars, and they became more and more entrenched for the simple reason that state supremacy and the waging of wars, once there, require increasing doses of state control (i.e. state centralization, state direction).

"The state makes war and war makes the state."

(Charles Tilly, *War Making and State Making as Organized Crime*, 1985)

"We see that, as every advance of Power is useful for war, so war is useful for the advance of Power."

(Bertrand de Jouvenel, *On Power*, 1945)

"War is the condition in which centralized government finds itself more fully in control, more secure in its authority, and most readily able to command undisputed public allegiance."

(Alex Comfort, *Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*, 1950)

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the balance of terror based on nuclear weapons forcibly restrained the expansionistic urge and avoided the outbreak of a generalized waged war in favour of a tactical cold war. The aggressive force of the then existing super states (USSR, USA) was mainly used to subjugate 'unruly' people inside each area of dominance (USSR vs. Eastern Europe, USA vs. Central and South America), with open warfare occurring only at the periphery of the empires (e.g. Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan).

Since the end of a bipolar world dominated by the two super states, the number of 'unruly' subjects (individuals, communities) who want to go their own way and resent being dominated by an external power has multiplied. This makes the state vs. the citizen scenario a very likely one for the violent clashes to come, if we also take into consideration the situation that affects the participants in modern-day hostilities.

### **The situation**

The last global-scale episode of mass killing (the World War of 1939-1945) and the series of smaller conflicts of the following decades (Korea, Budapest, Vietnam, Prague, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, Rwanda, Congo, East Timor, Sri Lanka, Palestine, Kashmir, Iran, Iraq, etc) have shown that the distinction between combatants (i.e. military forces) and non-combatants (i.e. civilians) is no longer practiced nor practicable due to the way wars are conducted nowadays. Non-combatants are involved in a conflict even if they are not the predestined target of a missile or a bomb. In cases like these, for instance when a baby is killed in a pram by a nearby conflagration, the fertile mind of some officer or journalist has invented the chilling absolute formula 'collateral damage.'

"[Besides] the international 'laws of war' proved themselves during World War II to be noneffective. The adversaries on both sides by saturation bombing of the combatants, and even more the non-combatants, including women and children, broke all divine and human laws."

(Pitirim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, 1957)

Moreover, the new role taken by some individuals and communities in opposition to state power (the internal state or an external state) has changed the scenario and the rules of engagement.

As a consequence, the differentiation between war and terrorism is more and more unreal and deceitful. War is, in current times, a

series of terrorist acts and terror is the most commonly employed weapon in the conduct of the war. The forms of terror depend on the technological and logistic capabilities of the fighters (e.g. a missile dropped on a market or a bomb planted in a busy intersection). Death and demoralisation are the common purpose of the terrorist war, i.e. of the war as terrorism. The only difference, in each combat action, consists in the power of the explosive employed, the number of people affected, and the consequent number of deaths caused by the conflagration.

For all the sides involved, in order to wear out and defeat the chosen 'enemy' it is necessary to destroy its war apparatus, which also consists, to a large and important extent, in its non-military personnel such as:

- taxpayers financing the production of weapons
- workers producing weapons
- citizens upholding the war effort through propaganda or by manning the supporting infrastructure.

All this means that in a situation where masses are subjected or submit to a territorial, monopolistic and all-pervasive power, they find themselves hostages to any fortune or misfortune that befalls that power, in peace and in war, till death them do part, or more precisely, do unite them forever.

In other words, in a mass society dominated by territorial monopolistic states exerting pervasive power over 'their' citizens, the time of personal responsibility is over, supplanted by the reality of collective mass liability.

Given this situation, any criminal act of violence and aggression carried out in a representative democracy by the elected rulers is committed in the name and on behalf (at least in principle) of all the citizens of that country and so the liability is to be shared by all of them. In fact, to talk of personal responsibility in the context of an accepted mechanism of majority decisions would be inappropriate if not preposterous.

This notion of collective mass liability, albeit abominable in so far as it annihilates the individual as a unique human being with inde-

pendent free will and critical autonomous mind, has long been and is still largely current political practice. This extremely immoral notion has been applied also to many individuals, all of whom have been indistinctly assigned as 'belonging' to a certain group (ethnic, religious, racial, political, national, etc.) and have been held responsible and made to pay for something committed elsewhere or at other times by others with whom they are deemed to share certain traits, real or presumed.

Most horror stories of the XX and the beginning of the XXI centuries are related to the concept of collective mass liability. Amongst them we have:

- group internment (e.g. the imprisonment of American Japanese in the USA after Pearl Harbour)
- ethnic killing (e.g. the reciprocal slaughters of Muslims and Hindus after the partition between India and Pakistan)
- mass extermination (e.g. the massacres of Armenians, Kurds, Jews, Indonesian communists, Tutsi, Bosnian Muslims, Chechens, etc. by the prevailing state power reaffirming its monopolistic rule on minorities).

If the principle of collective mass liability is bound to prevail also in the future, underpinned by the conditions listed above (namely: territorialism, monopolism, totalitarianism) which enable that principle to be accepted and practiced, willingly or forcibly, we must then be fully aware of what future events are likely to be in store for many of us.

### **The event**

If, in the course of our busy days, we take a good moment of complete quiet and we start thinking about the way we live and the reality that surrounds us, and add to this reflection a minimum of imagination, we may really see what might happen to any one of us living in or passing through a crowded city in this small world.

Picture an anonymous person, dressed like millions of others, carrying a small bag or pulling a suitcase on wheels. The person is

going down an automatic escalator into the depths of a subway station. No one is noticing the passenger because he/she is like one of the identical hundreds of thousands that board trains on the underground every day.

The difference will be felt afterwards.

That day and that anonymous person will remain transfixed in the memory of billions of individuals and recounted in the electronic history books of the future, like the student's pistol shots in Sarajevo a century earlier.

The passenger sits calmly, waiting patiently for the moment when the train will reach a surface point close to the centres of command. Then a button will be pressed that will detonate a device whose power can be, on a certain scale, compared with the ones that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki more than half a century ago.

*I do not know just how horrible Bombdeath is I can only imagine  
Yet no other death I know has so laughable a preview I scope  
a city New York City streaming starkeyed subway shelter  
Scores and scores A fumble of humanity High heels bend  
Hats whelming away Youth forgetting their combs  
Ladies not knowing what to do with their shopping bags  
Unperturbed gum machines Yet dangerous 3rd rail  
Ritz Brothers from the Bronx caught in the A train  
The smiling Schenley poster will always smile  
Impish death Satyr Bomb Bombdeath.  
(Gregory Corso, Bomb, 1958)*

This event, even in the minds of the most inattentive people, will mark the beginning of a new chapter in the (somewhat infamous) history of humanity. Gone are the times of the Church vs. the State contraposition; almost over are the times of States vs. States wars. Now comes the time of the Individuals vs. the State clashes.

March 2003 - May 2003 : U.S. army vs. Iraqi state army : American casualties (deaths) 176

June 2003 - May 2006 : Individuals vs. U.S. Army : American casualties (deaths) 2267  
(source: <http://icasualties.org>)

May 2003 - May 2006 : US army and UK army vs. Individuals : around 38,000 Iraqi civilians killed after the end of major combat operations  
(source: Time magazine, June 12, 2006)

April 2006 : British Flight Lieutenant Malcolm Kendall-Smith has refused to take part in the war in Iraq because it is contrary to "international law, the Nuremberg principles and the rules of armed conflict." For this, he has been put on trial by the British State.  
(source: The Independent 12 April 2006)

May 2006 : Individuals vs. British State : A thousand British soldiers have deserted since the start of the occupation of Iraq by the British army.  
(source: BBC News, 28 May 2006)

## **The signs**

In the course of modern history there have been individuals who have fought against state power, the most notable of them being anarchists.

In contemporary times, the first premonitory signs of the clash Individuals vs. State were some desperate acts of rebellion which highlighted the total helplessness of the person in the face of the viciousness of the state machine crushing him, and not just figuratively, under its tanks.

In these first examples of the Individuals vs. State clashes we see the coming forward, out of the anonymous masses, of desperate beings ready to give up their lives rather than sacrifice their human dignity.

16 January 1969. In Saint Wenceslas Square, Prague, the student Jan Palack set himself aflame in protest against the Soviet state invasion of his country, Czechoslovakia. Twenty-six people imitated his example in the following weeks and seven of them died.

5 June 1989. In Tiananmen Square, Beijing, a young man stood in front of a column of tanks sent by the rulers of the Chinese state to crush a protest movement against the citizen's lack of freedom and the despotic occupation of power by the leaders of the Communist Party.

Subsequently or contemporaneously to these facts, in other political and geographical contexts, out of desperate individuals there emerged enraged individuals, willing to sacrifice themselves in violent demonstrative deeds that would kill people in a crowd, bringing terror to what they considered the enemy camp.

1981. In Lebanon a series of suicide bombings take place against the presence in the country of foreign soldiers. The protagonists of these suicide acts are replicating the legendary deed of the first suicide fighter known in history and celebrated in the Christian and Jewish tradition, the famous Samson and his cry of vengeance: "Let me die with the Philistines."

27 January 2002. In Jerusalem, a 28 year old paramedic woman called Wafa Idris, blows herself up in protest at the occupation by the Israeli state of territories she considers belong to her own Palestinian people. One old man is killed and more than 100 people are injured. She is the first female Palestinian suicide bomber.

At the beginning of the new millennium we have reached the third stage when enraged individuals are so determined that they are

willing to spend months in planning an attack meant to cause mass human carnage and total shock in the minds of millions of individuals.

11 September 2001. The Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York are destroyed by hijackers who hit them with two jet airliners full of fuel. Almost three thousand people are killed in the attack. One of the motives for the action is the presence on Saudi Arabian soil of American soldiers, seen as occupiers.

7 July 2005. Three trains on the London Underground and the number 30 bus are the targets of bombings that result in 60 deaths, including the four individuals responsible for the action. The motive behind the attack is to be found in the bloody intervention in Iraq by the army of the British state. The same motive, namely the intervention in Iraq by the army of the Spanish state, is behind a similar attack on trains carried out in Madrid in March 2004, leading to 192 dead and 2,050 injured.

We are now going towards the next stage, when totally enraged and highly determined individuals will gain all the relevant technological capabilities for manufacturing the most up-to-date and destructive weapons (nuclear, chemical, bacteriological). The time is approaching when suicide combatants will use those weapons, causing such devastating death and destruction that no rational human being will ever think with the same frame of mind as the day before that event.

And the emotion driving the atomic warriors of the XXI century to their (likely) acts of carnage will be the same as that already expressed by Aeschylus more than 2500 years ago:

*Death is better, a milder fate than tyranny*  
(Aeschylus, 525 BC - 456 BC, *Agamemnon*)

To this tragic assertion we should add another tragic proclamation of past centuries:

*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*  
["Sweet and noble it is to die for your country"]  
(Horace, *Odes*, III, 2, 13)

Both these statements depict with extreme clarity the mental and behavioural attitudes of those who, over the centuries, have willingly fought against what they consider tyranny and died for what they feel to be their home (*patria*).

By the way, home (*patria*) is not, necessarily, a territorial or a fixed reality. The ancients had already observed this when they said:

*Ubi bene, ibi patria*  
["Where the goodness is, there is my home"]

What is important to notice is that the aspiration to autonomy and the desire to enjoy goodness are part of human nature and that there will always be somebody somewhere fighting openly against tyranny and for his home.

Therefore, the planting of an atomic bomb by an individual, albeit an absolutely abominable deed by whomever and for whatever motive performed, nevertheless should not be seen as an abnormal act (abnormal would be fighting with swords and muskets) but as the most ordinary occurrence, that is the use of the latest and most powerful weapons in a conflict whose motivations are so old and persistent that they might even be considered as intrinsic components of human nature, likely to operate until the end of time.

We should, then, focus on the reality of tyrants/tyranny and *patria*/home at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century if we want to go to the root of the problem.

We should ask ourselves first: Who are presently the tyrants, besides the classic image of somebody who seizes absolute power

and makes the life of the people subject to him horrendous or just utterly miserable?

Again we can clarify this point with the aid of a quotation that does not give room for any misunderstanding:

"Whoever lays his hand on me to govern me is a usurper and a tyrant, and I declare him my enemy."

(Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Confessions of a Revolutionary*, 1849)

To make things even clearer for those who are so often distracted by shiny appearances and verbal decoy, it is helpful to cite another classic author who stated:

"There is no crueller tyranny than that which is perpetrated under the shield of law and in the name of justice."

(Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence*, 1742)

To carry on with our reflection we should then ask ourselves: what is this patria for which some people are ready to sacrifice their lives?

The answer to this question might make us discover the existence of two facts leading to some specific conclusions:

- Firstly, that patria is, for many individuals, their minority, secessionist, or opposition group, united in the aspiration to live according to their own rules, without being prevented from doing so by the territorial power under which they live;

- Second, that in order to affirm the right to their patria they must aim at the reclamation/appropriation of a certain territory because this is, up to now, the only way to achieve full autonomy.

- From those facts, it follows that, in current times, one's patria can be perceived and pursued only through the reclamation/appropriation of an exclusive territory. In the presence of contrasting territorial claims, this matter, that is this zero-sum game where my

territorial dominion is your political subordination and vice versa, has been, is and probably always will be resolved through war.

The real tragedy in all this is that, in order to escape tyranny, a group must fight for the supremacy over a territory otherwise it would remain in a state of permanent subjection, if not even in a state of continuous peril. In fact, in the course of history and especially during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, those people who were without a territory (e.g. Jews, Armenians, Kurds) have been murdered in large numbers by the dominant power of the territorial state. The tragedy of the absolute necessity, within the present political context, to fight for a territorial homeland, is compounded by the fact that, once the dispossessed people have grasped/regained a territory in which to exert their dominion, they are likely to oppress the minorities living in that area, because this is in the very nature of any territorial state sovereignty.

And so the cycle of oppressions and revolts and further oppressions and further revolts goes on and on.

To come full circle, the person reflecting on the surrounding reality, and focusing his attention especially on the aspects related to territorialism (i.e. exclusive rule over a territory and all its inhabitants) in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and how people will fight over it, must come to very important realisation.

And the realisation is that, in our age, there exist the political circumstances which will motivate and the technological conditions which will enable somebody to make a sort of atomic bomb and to detonate it. And this because s/he considers his existence and that of his fellow brothers totally ruined by the intrusion of an external power against which s/he wants to take revenge even at the price of annihilating his life and that of innumerable other people whom s/he considers accomplices or servants of the territorial tyrant.

Tyranny and territory appear then to be the crux of the problem, i.e. the source of deep-seated and widespread grievances that are likely to lead to the occurrence of horrible violent events at a gigantic level.

Let us then analyse the phenomenon of war (i.e. protracted

violence on a large scale) paying especial attention to the reality of territorialism (tyranny over territory).

### **The analysis**

We, as rational human beings, should accept the fact that behind any consciously planned action there is a more or less precise cause. In the instance of the planting of a bomb of extraordinary power there must be very deeply felt grievances to instil in the mind of someone such a determination that it will lead him to the bomb. As rational human beings, we should strive to identify those motives in order to defuse them as swiftly as possible.

As already pointed out, the opinion that prolonged operations of mass slaughter, i.e. wars, are the inevitable products of a fundamentally aggressive human nature, fails to take account of some important aspects of the matter, in particular that:

1. Human nature is not a frozen monolithic reality but a series of potentialities and attitudes, many of which have nothing to do with violent behaviour. Consider, for instance, the widespread presence, at all times, of peace-loving human beings, some of whom even find the courage to openly oppose war, refusing to carry out criminal orders, deserting and being court-martialled by the organizations waging the war.
2. An aggressive human nature is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the mass carnage that is war. The other requisite, already stressed, is the existence of an organization intent on and expert in waging wars, having the power to coercively mobilise huge military resources in terms of men and means.
3. Human nature, apart from pathological and uncommon cases, becomes (or might become) aggressive only in response to something perceived as an offence or an injustice. In other words, there must be a real or presumed

grievance in order to activate violence (attack, reprisal, resistance).

The dispositions of a person in relation to somebody/something could be classified, following loosely the scheme of the psychoanalyst Karen Horney, as moving:

- toward
- away
- against

that individual (somebody) or that experience (something).

In the presence of subjectively felt unpleasant individuals or negatively felt experiences, the usual and sensible human reaction is that of leaving, moving away.

However, if this is not possible, the remaining option and the likely reaction is one of going against in order to overcome that specific situation.

"If the activity of breathing be interrupted by accident or a deliberate act of another individual, the immediate reaction to it is a violent struggle to remove the obstacle or to overcome the human act of aggression. Kicking, biting, pushing immediately start; a fight ensues which has to end with the destruction of the suffocated organism or the removal of the obstacle."

"... the impulse which controls aggression is not primary but derived. It is contingent upon circumstances in which a primary biologically defined impulse is being thwarted."

(Bronislaw Malinowski, *An Anthropological Analysis of War*, 1941)

In fact, it is part of the human nature to strive for the satisfaction of needs and to fight when the realization of physiological needs (for food, water, shelter, etc.) is imperilled and that of personality needs

(for autonomy, creativity, mobility, self-esteem, etc.) is suffocated. These are the grievances that are likely to generate violence.

By contrast, mass violence (i.e. war) starts when the rulers have satisfied all their needs and have resources in excess (arms, provisions, shelters, etc.) which they can use for the satisfaction of their pathological delusions of grandeur or compulsions of revenge.

"War is essentially the playground of the psychopath in society."

(Alex Comfort, *Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*, 1950)

All this means that we have to distinguish clearly between limited, localized and episodic acts of violence by individuals and small groups because they are prevented from satisfying certain human needs, and large scale organized violence, i.e. war, carried out through subjects of the state who will bear the brunt, and aimed essentially at conquering territories, expanding influence and dominating people.

Considering that many human beings, following their human nature, have opposed the inhumanity of war in so many cases where it was possible to do so (e.g. being conscientious objectors, by leaving the army, by denouncing the carnage, etc.), we would do better to focus attention not on the violent individual but on the organization waging war if we want to locate the source of mass slaughters and protracted violence in general.

As previously pointed out, an organization eager for war and expert in how to wage it must rely on:

- territorial sovereignty: the organization must have the power to place under its sovereignty all those who live within a certain territory (compulsory ascription)
- monopolistic rule: the organization must have the power to impose its exclusive laws on everybody under its territorial jurisdiction (compulsory submission);
- pervasive power: the organization must have the power to make

use of the life of the individual for the maintenance of the territorial organization itself (compulsory conscription).

In modern times this organization has been the territorial nation state and that is why the coming to full dominance of this kind of state by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also led to the biggest mass slaughters in the history of humanity. This is not an accidental correlation of events but a precise and documented conjunction of cause and effect.

### **The hypothesis**

In the contemporary age characterized by Individuals vs. State conflicts, we can reformulate the problem of war and its origin in terms of:

- gangs: groups of people with exclusive control over a certain territory
- gates: the artificial borders of the controlled territory
- guns: the repressive means for controlling the territory, including the arms of state propaganda and school indoctrination
- grievances: the various objections and resentments of those who oppose the control of a territory by a certain gang.

Considering that most of the grievances that lead to open warfare consist, in the final instance, in territorial claims of exclusive sovereignty, the success of a gang/government in displacing and replacing another gang/government does not, as previously pointed out, cancel the likelihood of further grievances emerging at some later date, but only postpones it until a new organized and determined group arises with its own demands for exclusive control of some territory.

And then the cycle of violence and warfare is re-ignited once again.

This is exactly what has happened and is still happening in the course of history.

In short, whatever way we deal with the problem of war, it seems that the crux of everything is the pretension by a tyrant (be it the majority as in a democracy or the minority as in an oligarchy) to lay exclusive claims to the control and exploitation of a territory and all

its resources, people included. Gangs, gates and guns are there only because of territorialism, that is because of this absurd imposition of monopolistic territorial dominance.

The hypothesis put forward here, and for which plenty of historical evidence can be brought to bear, is that territorialism is the core reason for the emergence of deep-seated grievances that lead to violent clashes and, in the final instance, to total protracted warfare once the social groups have reached a certain level of political structure and organizational weight.

If this is true, it follows then that, if we accept territorialism as the everlasting way of social organization (namely, one territory - one boss) grievances amongst groups of individuals will always be with us.

The supposed means for controlling the eruption of bloody, large-scale conflicts might be:

- The small ghetto: to go for completely homogeneous territorial groups (culturally, racially, politically, etc.) totally segregated one from the other (final aim: to love your small cell).

- The big brother: to set up, in each territory, a highly effective propaganda apparatus, capable of making servitude and conformism highly desirable even to minority and alien groups (final aim: to love your big brother).

This nightmarish future of apartheid and subjection on a world scale could perhaps reduce mass warfare to localized internal conflicts to be dealt with through more segregation and more manipulation. Otherwise, with the joint presence of territorialism and globalism, we have to accept that wars will always take place and that today's liberation struggle, intifada, guerrilla campaign, will be tomorrow's total war once a group has conquered/achieved a territorial base and a certain level of political and military force.

According to this hypothesis and on the basis of historical records, it will be so whatever the type of political system adopted, provided that the ideology of territorialism is shared by different groups and one harbours deep-seated grievances towards the other coupled with a strong desire for autonomy.

In the past, some thinkers (for instance Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer) put forward the idea that the development of production and commerce (in other words, industrial capitalism) would make militarism and wars a thing of the past. However, when national capitalists allied themselves with the national rulers of their territorial states and started demanding protection and exclusive rights of exploitation and commerce over specific territories, wars became more rampant than ever. Some capitalists, through their press, even lent support to the imperialist myth that "trade follows the flag."

Later in history, some easily deluded intellectuals advanced the thesis that so-called socialist states don't fight against each other. The presence of soviet tanks in the streets of Budapest (1956) and Prague (1968) and the violent clashes between China and the USSR in Sinkiang (1969) put this other myth finally to rest.

In our times, other naïve intellectuals uphold the conviction that democracies (i.e. states with elected representation) don't wage wars between themselves. If this were true, the spread of democratic states would be a guarantee for the maintenance of peace. Unfortunately this is another myth that will equally be refuted by the course of events.

It is already clear that the only reason why (in the year 2006) the democratically elected representatives of Palestine and the democratically elected representatives of Israel don't start a full-scale war resides in the disequilibrium of forces and not in any supposed but actually non-existent moderation of their democratically elected representatives. As a matter of fact, territorial democratic states (e.g. Britain) have not been less war mongering than territorial authoritarian states (e.g. Italy under Mussolini).

What restrains a territorial state from fighting a war is its weakness and not the form of its political structure. This means that, whenever confronted with an attack to its territorial sovereignty or animated by territorial aims or claims, any territorial state is ready to wage a war, provided the chances of success are sufficiently good.

"The popular opinion that democracies are much less belligerent than autocracies seems to be unwarranted by our data. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the relative magnitude of the war activities of democratic England (measured by casualties) was higher than of Spain; of France higher than of Austria or Russia."

(Pitirim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, 1957)

What is common to all these cases of war under so-called capitalism, socialism, democracy, is the presence of territorial state rulers convinced that it is their right to enforce their will on everybody living within a certain territory and eager to expand further their sovereignty or sphere of influence over other territories. This is called statism, which is the current ideological and organizational form of territorialism.

The two main traits of statism are:

- Nationalism: waging war against social and political entities considered alien to a certain territory;
- Imperialism: waging war against social and political entities considered inferior in order to replace them in the administration of a certain territory.

Historically, the territorial urge has fed a nationalism in which the strongest indigenous group has crushed the weaker ones. Nationalism has then begotten imperialism, in which the strongest states have subdued the weaker ones. All this has been carried out with the use of appealing slogans (the civilizing mission, the white man's burden) or supposedly compelling reasons (lebensraum, a place in the sun).

The same dynamic is still active, with some new protagonists, some new slogans (exporting democracy, war on terror) but with the same underlying aim: to control territories in order to control people in view of exerting total power.

We always come back then to the problem of territorialism (tyranny over a territory) as the real source of war, once we have

dropped a series of other alleged causes that do not withstand even a superficial critical examination.

### **The alternative**

The link between territorialism and war was already clear to those who, in the past, put forward proposals for the abolition of war. The most ingenious solutions presented in history are:

- Cosmopolis. The end of national territorialism and the surrender of territorial sovereignty to some overarching organization in order to grant peaceful world governance/administration (Freud, Malinowski, Einstein, H. G. Wells).

- Panarchy. The end of territorialism altogether and the re-appropriation by the individual of the power of association with and disassociation from any social or political entities, all equally devoid of territorial sovereignty (Paul-Émile de Puydt, John Zube).

These two solutions are not antithetic, as might appear at first sight and could be amalgamated assuming that we go beyond conventional or misleading interpretations of either of them.

Cosmopolis as world governance/administration should not be understood as centralization of all controlling power in one world super-state. This would be a totally unworkable proposition besides being a quite tyrannical one (as acknowledged already by Kant). Instead, it should be understood as a general framework of universal civic principles within which individuals and communities freely associate and interact.

In other words, Cosmopolis should mean a world federation (network) of independent communities and individuals (nodes) in which the soundness, robustness and richness of each node is given by the plurality and quality of its connections and not by the size or brute force of its components.

Panarchy as free choice by every human being to associate with or secede from any social or political entity, is certainly not to be understood, on the whole, as personal egotism or communitarian isolationism

(or, even worse, narrow sectarianism and endemic factionalism). This would be the very opposite of what Panarchy advocates (i.e. universal political tolerance) and in stark contrast with a good deal of current reality characterized by an incredible and growing number of links and exchanges that connect each person with so many others. Instead, Panarchy is to be seen as the actuation, at last, of personal choice and personal responsibility in any field. This would mark the real beginning of the history of humanity, i.e. of universal free human beings, after so much history made of states, rulers, armies and wars.

The two proposals are, then, not incompatible but can be integrated in a general proposition, a Cosmopolis of Panarchies promoting the broadest and deepest co-existentialism between autonomous individuals and independent communities throughout the world.

And if or when divergences arise, they can be settled through forums for clarification and mechanisms of arbitration (as already happens for disputes between companies); or, in cases of outbursts of heated passions, through the temporary use of neutral forces of interposition and pacification (as has always happened when the contenders need time and assistance in order to come back to their senses).

In short, as previously and repeatedly stressed, without the monopolistic and totalitarian control of a territory and of its inhabitants, war (i.e. large scale - long term violence) is not possible.

If territorialism, monopolism, totalitarianism are the requisites that make for a war mongering organization, it follows that those who are against war should promote the overcoming of these three aspects and should develop in their place alternative organizational structures and arrangements that neutralize and finally extinguish the drive to war and the capability for it.

The new social entities should display characteristics antithetic to territorialism, monopolism, totalitarianism, namely:

- Spatialism. Governance is dissociated from territorial sovereignty (aterritorialism) and is related only to performing specific circumscribed functions, affecting exclusively the people voluntarily

concerned by those functions. This frees the individuals from being hostages of a certain power for no other reason than that of living in a certain territory, and eliminates the main drive to war (i.e. conquer/control new territories).

- Pluralism. There are no limits to the number of existing communities (voluntary and free from territorialism) as long as there are individuals ready to set them up and people to associate with. This will give rise to a wealth of social entities, most of them interconnected and open to external inputs and to new members, and will eliminate the pervasive power of any large centralized organization. The consequence is the getting rid of another prime condition favourable to engagement in mass slaughters, namely the existence of large groups of people subject to a central power.

- Voluntarism. All the individuals are free to associate with the community of their choice, to set up new communities or to live apart, on their own, totally undisturbed. This personal universal right to social choice will implement the basic form of freedom (i.e. free will) and will definitively leave behind the remaining traces of modern feudalism, that is territorial nationalism, in so far as free contracts will replace compulsory ascription everywhere, even in the social and political sphere.

"... originally no one had a greater right to any region of the earth than anyone else."

"... the right to the earth's surface ... belongs in common to the totality of human beings."

(Immanuel Kant, *To Perpetual Peace*, 1795)

These three conditions represent not only the most sensible way to promote and preserve peace, but also the most reasonable option for dealing with the most intractable problems (Iraq, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Northern-Ireland, Ukraine, multi-ethnic Europe, etc.) in a complex multicultural cosmopolitan world. The time of one ruling territorial government, one dominant political faith, one all encompassing nation, is finally over. We have only to

fully realize it and act accordingly. We need then new ways of thinking and acting in order to master the art of living (expressing, exploring, exchanging) in all its complexity and variety.

### **The responsibility**

The responsibility to prevent the occurrence of catastrophic man-made events relies on each individual. Otherwise each person, in different ways, will be doomed, going down with the conflagration or being swept away by the resulting vortex, unaware of why ultimate terror is befalling him and naively proclaiming his innocence right until the moment terror arrives to visit him.

What is instead required from each one of us, in the ways and forms which are humanly possible in each case, is the:

- Dissociation from tyrants: We should distance ourselves, as soon as possible, from vicious rulers and their criminal gangs and withdraw our support, as much as possible, either through underground resistance or through open intervention.

- Denunciation of tyrants: The open intervention should aim at deposing the tyrant and his criminal clique, bringing them to trial. The examples set by the detention of Slobodan Milosevic and Charles Taylor should represent only the beginning and should lead to a wider and deeper cleansing of the world of murderous rulers.

- Dissolution of tyrants: A judicial process should be the proper way for the abolition of tyrants. However, if a Prime Minister, President of State, Commander in chief of the army, etc. cannot be brought to trial for one reason or another, then, tyrannicide is the justifiable act of last resort.

"They [the Utopians] regard it as honourable, as an act of humanity and mercy which, by the death of a few guilty individuals [the warmongering rulers], saves the lives of thousands of innocent people who would otherwise die on the battlefield. For the mercy of Utopians embraces all enemy soldiers. They know that the soldiers do not begin a war on

their own initiative but are forced by orders resulting from the quarrelsomeness of princes."

(Thomas More, *Utopia*, 1516)

"The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure."

(Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to W. S. Smith, 1787)

Clearly tyrannicide should only be the extreme option, taken in order to:

- stop further large scale crimes committed/ordered by a person;
- stop other people following the example and engaging in similar crimes.

However, if the person (Prime Minister, State President, etc.) responsible for those crimes

- brings an end to the wrongdoings (completely)
- makes reparation (as far as possible)
- asks sincerely for forgiveness (as soon as possible)

he should be re-admitted into the circle of humankind and no attack on his life should be undertaken.

With this necessary act of retribution we are, nonetheless, still in the realm of politics and so of hatred and vindictive deeds.

After that, we need to move beyond politics and beyond territorial, monopolistic and totalitarian organizations, towards the sphere of spatialism, pluralism, voluntarism, a sphere inhabited by cosmopolitan individuals characterized by the universal attitude and practice of tolerance and acceptance of different creeds and customs, in all fields.

The trajectory started a few centuries ago with the introduction of religious tolerance would be then extended and completed with the practice of political tolerance and freely chosen membership covering the wide social area of state allegiance and group association. In other words, the practice of voluntary association (or abstention from any association) should be available to every individual, in

relation to any community and organization, the non-territorial state included.

### The question

ESTRAGON: Where do we come in?

VLADIMIR: Come in?

ESTRAGON: Take your time.

VLADIMIR: Come in? On our hands and knees.

ESTRAGON: As bad as that?

VLADIMIR: Your Worship wishes to assert his prerogatives?

ESTRAGON: We've no rights any more?

VLADIMIR: You'd make me laugh if it wasn't prohibited.

ESTRAGON: We've lost our rights?

VLADIMIR: (distinctly). We got rid of them.

(Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, Act 1)

On the evening of 5<sup>th</sup> of January 1953 at the Théâtre Babylone in Paris, many bewildered spectators saw the first performance of *En attendant Godot* (Waiting for Godot) by Samuel Beckett. In this surreal pièce Godot never arrives but the two beggars, Estragon and Vladimir, keep waiting for him.

### And the Bomb ?

Given the current reality, most likely it will arrive.

It might be a real, physical bomb of astounding power or a metaphorical one, i.e. an ecological, chemical, financial, cultural, moral, bomb that will shatter our lives and will show us that, ultimately, there is no master to protect us and no tutor to guide us.

At that moment we will discover our loneliness in the world but also our uniqueness and the absurdity of abdicating our task of striving to become human beings in exchange for an illusory security under elected or imposed masters.

"Servitude is a people's voluntarily accepted evil and its existence is more the fault of the servants than of the masters." [La servitù è male volontario di popolo ed è colpa dei servi più che dei padroni.]

(From an inscription outside the Museum of St. Martin, Naples)

In any case, if we are passively waiting for the bomb (consciously or unconsciously) it means not only that we have forgotten our human rights but also that we do not really deserve them because we are just dummies stuffed with straw.

We will make a good fire, then, when the bomb finally arrives!

The pre-conditions for the bomb to arrive are all there.

Observe, for instance, the incredible imbalance engendered, on the one side, by a feudal territorial model of social and political organization in which the individual is treated as a handicapped child, denied any possibility of true social experimentation and, on the other side, a technological and informational reality where the individual is the potential master of a universe of tools and data encompassing a world-wide network of connections and relations.

In the past, the narrow views of most of the populace, who spent their lives inside a limited territory and with a relatively restricted range of social intercourse were, from time to time, shaken by unforeseen events over which people had no control whatsoever.

In our times, not only do news and ideas circulate instantaneously on a world-wide scale, but, in addition, the archives of the past are open to all, to be perused and pondered in order to avoid previous mistakes, and simulations can be made to anticipate possible future events. So, we do not really need further shocking facts to force us to change direction, after having already paid a terrible toll in psychological suffering and material loss of lives.

State territorialism is a pest we can no longer afford to live with because the consequences that might be generated by it are even more appalling than the worst ones we have witnessed in the past.

Maybe a further gigantic slaughter is what we need in order to

say, eventually: Enough is Enough! - Let the carnage stop and let people live how they want, freely professing their chosen political creed, without territorial masters dictating to them their beliefs and practices of observance.

Impositions didn't work for religion and cannot work for politics (for many, the new religion).

As history shows us, only after abominable bloodshed driven by religious hatred (like the August 23, 1572, Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in France in which twenty thousand Huguenots were killed); and after long conflicts like the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) in which religious pretexts fuelled territorial ambitions, bringing grief and misery to many regions of Europe, did ideas of tolerance in religious matters slowly start to be introduced, considered, and finally accepted.

Unfortunately, the Peace of Westphalia (1648) that ended that war started the official enthronement of the territorial states and of their rulers as the protagonists of history. So, while religious tolerance was sprouting, religious grievances were declining and conflicts in matters of faith were becoming a thing of the past, new violent clashes were incubating, engendered by the usual territorial greed and fed by the new fanaticism of national hatreds based on politics.

If bloodshed itself can cure us of our territorial madness based on political intolerance, we could say that we already had the equivalent of a Thirty Years' War in the two World Wars (1914-1945) of the last century.

So, we shouldn't really need a series of further political conflicts leading to more colossal destructions and waste of lives before we start accepting and practicing political tolerance, i.e. tolerance in matters of political faith, where everybody can freely practice his own political beliefs, following not the leaders selected by the majority (democracy) or by the minority (oligarchy) but only those chosen by himself/herself, if he/she so wants, or no leader whatsoever, according to his/her personal exigencies and wishes.

Regrettably, many human beings do not seem able to remember

the past or prefer to ignore its lessons and so are bound to repeat the same tragic mistakes.

In fact, a sort of religious war has already started. As in the Thirty Years' War religion is only a pretext for political expansion and dominance. In current times, even more than in the past, defending a religion means upholding a political faith, and this has nothing to do either with spirituality or with religious sentiment.

Political faiths all based on territorialism are, indeed, the new soporific opium of people, which obfuscate the minds of individuals and lead to commit atrocities that will horrify future generations who will deride if not despise us for our blindness and intolerance as we deride and despise those who committed the religious massacres and persecutions of the past.

For all these reasons, now more than ever, each person in full possession of his rational capabilities and having at his disposal plenty of historical data and reflections on those data, should ask himself the question:

The way each of us responds to this question, intellectually and practically will make the difference between remaining moronic servants at the mercy of any foreseeable and avoidable cataclysmic event, or mature human beings who are fully independent, responsible shapers of our own future.

## Bibliographic Notes

URLs verified: March 2023

1. War
2. State
3. Tyranny
4. Territorialism
5. Space
6. Pacifism
7. Tolerance
8. Mutualism
9. Cosmopolis
10. Panarchy

### I. War

The concept and theme of war in history is treated in

- Gaston Bouthoul, *La Guerre*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1973
- André Corvisier, *La guerre. Essais historiques*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1995

An historical and sociological approach to war is in

- Pitirim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (1957), Revised and abridged in one volume by the author, Porter Sargent Publisher, Boston, 1970 (see: Part six: fluctuation of war in intergroup relationships)
- Kenneth N. Walz (1954), *Man the State and War*. A theoretical analysis, Columbia University Press, New York, 1959

A simple statistical treatment of wars in history is presented in

- Jack S. Levy, *War in the Modern Great Power System, 1495-1975*, The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 1983

A collection of essays on war is

- Leon Bramson and George W. Goethals, editors, *War. Studies from Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology*, Basic Books, New York, 1968.

Amongst them is the essay by Bronislaw Malinowski, *An Anthropological Analysis of War*, 1941.

Also worth reading is: Harold D. Lasswell, *The Garrison State*, 1941. About the USA as a state basically inclined to wage wars see:

- Tristram Coffin, *The Armed Society*. Militarism in modern America, Penguin Books, Baltimore, Maryland, 1964
- Seymour Melman (1974), *The Permanent War Economy*, Simon & Schuster, New York, Revised Edition 1985
- Howard S. Katz (1979), *The Warmongers*, Books in Focus Inc., New York, 1981

A contemporary analysis of war with scenarios about the future is in:

- Alvin and Heidi Toffler, *War and Anti-war*, Warner Books, New York, 1993

The climate of rivalry that prepared the terrain for the outbreak of the First World War is poignantly presented in

- A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1954

In the opening is found the famous sentence that ascribes the "bellum omnium contra omnes" not to the state of nature but to the state "tout court" (i.e. to the state as political institution, territorial and monopolistic):

"In the state of nature which Hobbes imagined, violence was the only law, and life was 'nasty, brutish and short'. Though individuals never lived in this state of nature, the Great powers of Europe have always done so."

About the First World War see the materials at:

- <http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/>

A short reconstruction of the incredible series of circumstances surrounding the killing of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife is in:

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassination\\_of\\_Archduke\\_Franz\\_Ferdinand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassination_of_Archduke_Franz_Ferdinand)

About the tangle of alliances that brought a continuous accession of new states into the conflict see:

- <https://www.thoughtco.com/world-war-one-the-major-alliances-1222059>

The identification of the political causes of war makes it very necessary to refer to the state and its features.

## 2. State

For the role of the state, the functions of war and the link between state and war see the following texts:

- Pëtr Kropotkin (1897) *The State* [L'Etat - Son rôle historique] <http://www.panarchy.org/kropotkin/1897.state.html>

"State is synonymous with war. Wars devastated Europe and managed to finish off the towns which the State had not directly destroyed." (Pëtr Kropotkin)

- Randolph Bourne (1919) *The State*, Resistance Press, New York, 1919
- The essay *War is the Health of the State* is at <http://www.panarchy.org/bourne/state.1918.html>

For a more recent libertarian view about the war-state link see also:

- Murray Rothbard, *War, Peace, and the State*, 1963 <http://www.lewrockwell.com/rothbard/rothbard26.html>

Also worth reading is Rothbard's dissection of the reality of the State which contains very interesting insights on war, territory and nationalism.

- Murray Rothbard, *The Anatomy of the State*, (n.d.) <http://www.lewrockwell.com/rothbard/rothbard62.html>

For Rothbard (following Franz Oppenheimer) "the State is the systematization of the predatory process over a given territory." Moreover, "the natural tendency of a State is to expand its power, and externally such expansion takes place by conquest of a territorial area."

For a general view on state power:

- Bertrand de Jouvenel, *On Power : its nature and the history of its growth* (Du pouvoir: histoire naturelle de sa croissance, 1945), Liberty Press, Indianapolis, 1993

For de Jouvenel "the State is in essence the result of the successes achieved by a band of brigands who superimpose themselves on small, distinct societies."

About the criminal side of state power see:

- Alex Comfort, *Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*. A criminological approach to the problem of power, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1950
- Yves Ternon, *L'État Criminel. Les génocides au XX siècle*, Seuil, Paris, 1995
- Joël Kotek et Pierre Rigoulot, *Le siècle des camps*, JC Lattès, 2000

For the ideological background of a never ending war against ever present enemies (terrorists) and about the manipulation of people's minds see:

- George Orwell (1948) *Nineteen Eighty-Four*
- "War is Peace" <http://www.panarchy.org/orwell/war.1949.html>
- "Ignorance is Strength" <http://www.panarchy.org/orwell/ignorance.1949.html>
- Sigmund Freud expressed some powerful considerations about war and the State in *Thoughts for the Times on War and Death*, 1915. However his final analysis is very poor and misleading. His essay can be found at <http://www.panarchy.org/freud/war.1915.html>

For a series of quotations about the war and the state go to:

- <http://www.polyarchy.org/documents/index.html> and, in particular, to:
- <http://www.polyarchy.org/documents/war.html>

For the function of war as the means to promote and develop a centralized social organization see:

- Leonard C. Lewin, *Report from Iron Mountain on the Possibility and Desirability of Peace*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1967
- see: The Functions of War <http://www.panarchy.org/lewin/war.html>

For the mass murder activities of the State see the writings by R. J. Rummel:

- R. J. Rummel, *Power, Democide and War* <http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/>
- R. J. Rummel, *Death by Government*, 1994 <http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/NOTE1.HTM>

"My overall totals for world democide 1900-1999 ... I have estimated it to be 174,000,000 murdered (by the state)." (R. J. Rummel)  
A recent essay on the close link between war and the State is:

- Anthony Gregory, *Warmongering is the Health of Statism*, 1998 <https://ncc-1776.org/tle2005/tle348-20051218-03.html>

For contemporary examples of how war is conducted by the state see:

- Llewellyn H. Rockwell jr., *What Is Terror?*, 1998 <http://mises.org/library/what-terror>
- Yuri N. Maltsev, *Why Russia Is Destroying Chechnya*, 1999 <http://mises.org/library/why-russia-destroying-chechnya>

A wealth of data and insightful ideas on the State and war is in:

- Martin Van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999

See also:

- Charles Tilly, *War Making and State Making as Organized Crime*, in, Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer & Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985
- Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2001 (first edition 1990)

### 3. Tyranny

The quotation of Thomas More about tyrannicide is from

- Thomas More (1516) *Utopia*

For a brief general overview on tyrannicide and the position of the Catholic Church see:

- J. M. Harty (1912) *Tyrannicide* (Catholic Encyclopedia) <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15108a.htm>

For Voluntary Servitude as the most fertile ground for Tyranny see:

- La Boetie (1553) *Discours de la servitude volontaire* [http://classiques.uqac.ca/classiques/la\\_boetie\\_etienne\\_de/discours\\_de\\_la\\_servitude/discours\\_servitude\\_volontaire.pdf](http://classiques.uqac.ca/classiques/la_boetie_etienne_de/discours_de_la_servitude/discours_servitude_volontaire.pdf)

For an act of tyranny such as the imprisonment of Japanese Americans refer to:

- <http://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2011/08/world-war-ii-internment-of-japanese-americans/100132/>

#### 4. Territorialism

An introduction to the concept of Territory is:

- David Storey (2001) *Territory. The claiming of space*, Pearson Education, London

For an ecological perspective critical of state territorialism see:

- Thom Kuehls (1996) *Beyond Sovereign Territory*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis

For territorialism in the history of international relations and about the crisis this reality is undergoing see:

- Thomas J. Biersteker and Cynthia Weber, editors (1996) *State Sovereignty as Social Construct*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

and especially the essay:

- Alexander B. Murphy, *The sovereign state as political-territorial ideal: historical and contemporary considerations*

One of the visible results of modern state territorialism is the control of the movement of individuals. For this see:

- John Torpey (2000) *The Invention of the Passport. Surveillance, Citizenship and the State*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

For a view on state and territoriality in our times see:

- Mathias Albert (2001) *Territoriality and Modernization*  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228727595\\_Territoriality\\_and\\_Modernization](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228727595_Territoriality_and_Modernization)

The meddling and misdeeds of the Western territorial state powers in the last decades are portrayed and analysed in the following books:

- William Lederer (1961) *A Nation of Sheep*, Cassell, London
- William McGaffin and Erwin Knoll (1969) *Scandal in the Pentagon. A challenge to democracy*, Fawcett Publications
- William Blum (2000) *Rogue State. A guide to the world's only superpower*, Zed Books, London, updated edition 2002
- John Pilger (2002) *The New Rulers of the World*, Verso, London, 2003
- Mark Curtis (2003) *Web of Deceit*, Vintage, London
- Philip Sands (2005) *Lawless World*, Penguin Books, London, 2006
- David Keen, *Useful Enemies. When Waging Wars Is More Important than Winning Them*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2012

See also the Amnesty International magazine (U.K.), in particular the January-February 2006 issue about the detention network administered by the U.S.A. through their allied tyrants in some Arab countries (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen).

For documents exposing the causal link between territorialism and terrorism see:

- Ivan Eland (1998) *Does U.S Intervention Overseas Breed Terrorism? The Historical Record*, Cato Foreign Policy Briefing No. 50 <https://www.cato.org/publications/foreign-policy-briefing/does-us-intervention-overseas-breed-terrorism-historical-record>
- Robert A. Pape (2003) *The strategic logic of suicide terrorism*, American Political Science Review

## 5. Space

The term spatialism, which has been employed in the text above with the meaning of aterritorialism, is intended to stress the importance of space and put that concept on the agenda of social organization in place of territory. In fact, space is a more valuable idea than territory because it applies more appropriately to ecological (open) and technological (connected) realities. Territory has, instead, all the limitations of its feudal origin.

Moreover, space/spatialism gives the idea of three-dimensional wide-open reality, where individuals are free to move and explore (to ramble); territory/territorialism, instead, conveys the idea of borders and limitations (to be trapped inside or to be excluded from entering).

For anarcho-spatialism defined as "a spatial system devoid of domination" see:

- Anders Corr (n.d.) *Anarcho-spatialism: Towards an Egalitarian Land Tenure* <https://archiv.squat.net/anders/anarchospacialism.html>

Not everything in this essay is enlightening but still it is worth reading.

For a modern vision on spaces for exchange see:

- Peter Fingar et alii (1999) *21<sup>st</sup> Century Markets. From Places to Spaces* <https://journals.uic.edu/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/707/617>

Another interesting aspect to focus on and to examine from many different perspectives (biological, ecological, technological, social etc.) is that of size, considering that gigantism is a pathology that is the cause of imperialism (and so of aggressive postures and practices) in all fields.

A classic text is:

- D'Arcy Thompson (1917) *On Growth and Form*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994

The idea of appropriate size, especially with reference to the biological world and then, by extension, to social organization, was sketched in a short essay by:

- J. B. S. Haldane (1927) *On Being the Right Size*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991

Other writings worth examining are:

- Leopold Kohr (1941) *Disunion Now : A Plea for a Society Based upon Small Autonomous Units* <http://www.panarchy.org/kohr/1941.eng.html>
- Leopold Kohr (1957) *The Breakdown of Nations*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1986
- Leopold Kohr, *The Over-Developed Nations*, Christopher Davies, Swansea (see Chapter II : Optimum Size at <http://www.panarchy.org/kohr/size.html>)
- Luigi Einaudi (1948) *Il mito del colossale* <http://www.panarchy.org/einaudi/colossale.1948.html>
- Ivan Illich (1973) *Tools for conviviality*, Fontana/Collins, Glasgow, 1975

- E. F. Schumacher (1973) *Small is Beautiful, Economics as if people mattered*, Harper & Row, New York, 1975
- Kirkpatrick Sale (1980) *Human Scale*, Secker & Warburg, London

This last is a well documented plea for the reduction in size of social organisms and for setting up independent communities, beyond gigantism and centralism.

The same author expresses ideas of decentralism, mutualism and promoting ecological communities in

- Kirkpatrick Sale (1985) *Dwellers in the Land. The Bioregional Vision*, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco

The idea of manageable appropriate size should not mean a world made of tiny isolated units. To counteract this view, the idea of space as network should be firmly stressed. From that perspective the entire world appears as a small world.

For the space viewed as a network and the world as a small world see the following texts:

- John Naisbitt (1994) *Global Paradox*, Nicholas Brealey, London, 1995

"The bigger the world economy, the more powerful its smallest players." (John Naisbitt)

- Geoff Mulgan (1997) *Connexity*, Chatto & Windus, London
- Mark Buchanan (2002) *Small World: uncovering nature's hidden networks*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London
- Duncan J. Watts (2003) *Six Degrees. The science of a connected age*, Norton & Company, New York

The new updated slogan for those in favour of an interconnected world seems to be:

"I link therefore I am."

The linking and exchanging should favour mutual understanding provided that all this is based on spatialism (aterritorialism) otherwise we could end up as the previous trend towards globalism ended up, that is with imperialism and nationalism leading straight to the First World War.

## 6. Pacifism

For episodes of pacifism and anti-militarism during the course of the First World War see:

- The Christmas truce of 1914, at <http://europeanhistory.about.com/library/bladyk12.htm>
- The "live and let live system" in the trench warfare of 1914-1918 (from Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 1984), at <https://www.gwern.net/docs/economics/1984-axelrod-theevolutionofcooperation-ch4-theliveandletlivesysteminwwi.html>

A satirical poem against war (in Roman dialect) is

- Trilussa (1914) *La ninna nanna de la Guerra* <http://www.polyarchy.org/enough/poems/trilussa.1914.html>

Touching and powerful verses about the insanity of war are in:

- Wilfred Owen (1917-1918) *Dulce et Decorum Est Pro Patria Mori* <https://www.warpoetry.uk/dulce-et-decorum-est>

For other poets and poems on the First World War see:

- [http://www.warpoetry.co.uk/FWW\\_index.html](http://www.warpoetry.co.uk/FWW_index.html)

A poignant novel against the horror of war is:

- Eric Maria Remarque (1929) *All quiet on the Western Front*

From which the film with the same title by Lewis Milestone (1930)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

All\_Quiet\_on\_the\_Western\_Front\_(1930\_film)

Another superb film against war and the criminality of the military elite is:

- Stanley Kubrick (1957) *Paths of Glory* <http://www.filmsite.org/path.html>

Needless to say, the circulation of this film was forbidden by the state in France for many years. This is another proof that the state rulers, if they can, will block any frank depiction of the criminal nature of war.

Stanley Kubrick took aim again at the military establishment with his (1964):

- *Dr. Strangelove. Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (where criminality and madness are fused in an extraordinary satire on the armed forces and state power). See: <http://www.filmsite.org/drst.html>

About the bomb as a phenomenon of daily life to be accepted as an artefact of popular culture see

- Gregory Corso (1958) *Bomb* <http://www.litkicks.com/Texts/Bomb.html>

## 7. Tolerance

Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536)

About Desiderius Erasmus see:

- <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/erasmus/>

Two major classic writings on tolerance are:

- John Locke (1689) *A Letter concerning Toleration* <https://archive.org/details/toleration>
- Voltaire (1763) *Traité sur la tolérance* <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8614611x/f7.image>

For a general history on the birth of tolerance see:

- Henry Kamen (1967) *The Rise of Toleration*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London

A quite recent essay on tolerance is:

- John Zube (1982) *On Tolerance* <http://www.panarchy.org/zube/tolerance.1982.html>

The sentence by Walter Lippmann on the modern state and its lack of tolerance is from:

- Walter Lippmann (1929) *A Preface to Morals*, George Allen & Unwin, London
- see also: *Patriotism and State Sovereignty* <http://www.panarchy.org/lippmann/patriotism.html>

## 8. Mutualism

One of the classic writings on Mutualism is:

- Piotr Kropotkin (1902) *Mutual Aid. A factor of evolution*, Allen Lane, London, 1972

For a later text see:

- Clarence Lee Swartz (1927) *What is Mutualism?* <http://www.panarchy.org/swartz/mutualism.index.html>

Mutualism should not be seen as a conception stressing only cooperation. Competition, whenever pursued with transparency, honesty and creative far-sightedness, is also a powerful tool for evolution and betterment of personal and social life.

An interesting simulation on how co-operation (understood as trust and absence of aggression) can develop spontaneously and freely is in:

- Robert Axelroad (1984) *The Evolution of Co-operation*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1990

Another text on the same theme is:

- Matt Ridley (1996) *The Origins of Virtue*, Softback Preview, England, 1997

## 9. Cosmopolis

A classic text is:

- Immanuel Kant (1795) *To Perpetual Peace*, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 1983 <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/50922/50922-h/50922-h.htm>

The idea of a world government appears in:

- H. G. Wells (1933) *The Open Conspiracy*, London. For a series of passages taken from that text see <http://www.panarchy.org/wells/conspiracy.1933.html>

For a similar proposal see also:

- Bronislaw Malinowski (1941) *An Anthropological Analysis of War*, in Leon Branson and George W. Goethals, eds., *War. Studies from Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology*, Basic Books, New York, 1968

In this essay the author asks himself the following rhetorical questions:

"Shall we abolish war, or must we submit to it by choice or necessity? Is it desirable to have permanent peace, and if it is this peace possible? If it is possible, how can we implement it successfully?"

Malinowski then replies that there is a price for it and "the price to be paid is the surrender of state sovereignty and the subordination of all political units to a world-wide control."

He concludes declaring that "the great enemy of today is the sovereign state, even as we find it in a democratic commonwealth."

The idea of a world government promoted by USA, Great Britain and USSR is also in:

- Albert Einstein (1945) *Atomic War or Peace*, in, *Ideas and Opinions*, Crown Trade Paperbacks, New York, 1982

## 10. Panarchy

The originator, at least in modern times, of the term "Panarchy" was a Belgian botanist, expert in orchids, by the name of Paul-Émile de Puydt. In 1860 he wrote an article published in the *Revue Trimestrielle* (Brussels) bearing the title *Panarchie*. In that article de Puydt advanced the proposal of finishing with territorialism (state territorial sovereignty) and introducing political tolerance (on the model of religious tolerance) whereby everyone could associate himself to a chosen government and various governments co-existed on the same territory, vying for the political and financial support of

the public (like many providers of public services or clubs and associations in competition for customers or members).

For the English translation of *Panarchie* see

- Paul-Émile de Puydt (1860) *Panarchy* <http://www.panarchy.org/depuydt/1860.eng.html>

That brilliant essay went practically unnoticed until the historian of the anarchist movement, Max Nettlau, rediscovered it and wrote an article that appeared in 1909 in the German review *Der Sozialist*.

- Max Nettlau (1909) *Panarchy. A forgotten idea of 1860* <http://www.panarchy.org/nettlau/1909.eng.html>

After that there is little debate to be found about de Puydt's very original idea until John Zube resurrected the notion of Panarchy in our contemporary age. He is the one who has done more than any other to promote the idea of Panarchy through his writings and various activities.

For a clarification of the concept see some of his texts like:

- John Zube (1986) *Some Notes for a Talk on Panarchism to Anarchists* <http://www.panarchy.org/zube/toanarchists.1986.html>
- John Zube (n.d.) *Further Notes on Panarchism and Anarchism* <http://www.panarchy.org/zube/notes.html>
- John Zube (1996) *Some Panarchistic Notions* <http://www.panarchy.org/zube/panarchism.1996.html>

Other authors who have expressed ideas in tune with Panarchy are:

- Anonymous (1962) *Democracy with a small "d"* <http://www.panarchy.org/anonymous/democracy.1962.html>. An enlightening view of what democracy should be, once we

stop thinking and acting in terms of majorities and minorities.

- Le Grand E. Day (1969-1977) *The Theory of Multigovernment*. <http://www.panarchy.org/day/multigovernment.1977.html>
- Roderick T. Long (1993) *Virtual Cantons. A New Path to Freedom?* <http://www.panarchy.org/rodericklong/virtualcantons.html>

For the topic concerning many legal systems present within the same territory see:

- Richard CB Johnsson (2005) *Non-Territorial Governance - Mankind's Forgotten Legacy* <http://www.panarchy.org/johnsson/review.2005.html>
- Richard CB Johnsson (2005) *To the Monopolists of All Parties* <http://www.panarchy.org/johnsson/aterritorialism.2005.html>

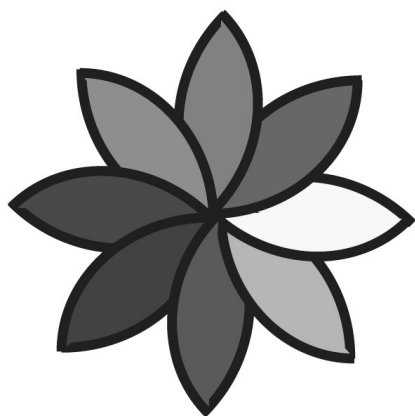
For an interesting essay about globalism and post-territorialism see:

- Bruno S. Frey (2001) *A Utopia? Government without Territorial Monopoly* <http://www.independent.org/publications/tir/article.asp?issueID=17&articleID=176>

Many of those essays on Panarchy have been collected in two anthologies:

- Aviezer Tucker & Gian Piero de Bellis, eds., *Panarchy. Political Theories of Non-Territorial States*, Routledge, New York, 2016
- Gian Piero de Bellis, ed., *Panarchy. Towards voluntary communities*, World Wide Wisdom, Saint-Imier, 2023

There are also similar anthologies in French, German, Italian.



**World Wide Wisdom**  
Oxford - Saint-Imier - La Coruña - Milano  
2023

