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ERUDITIO

*“A multidisciplinary forum focused
on the social consequences and policy
implications of all forms of knowledge on
a global basis”*

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Editorial

ARTICLES

- | | |
|--|----|
| Toward a Comprehensive Approach to Paradigm Change
– Jakob von Uexkull | 1 |
| To Care for the Future of the Human Race
– Joseph Agassi | 8 |
| The Psychology of Warmaking
– Roberto Vacca | 14 |
| Simulated Judgment on Campaign Finance in the
Constitutional Court of the Republic of Azania
– Winston P. Nagan & Madison E. Hayes | 21 |
| The Greatest Adventure on Earth
– Carlos Alvarez Pereira | 31 |

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The vision of the Journal complements and enhances the World Academy's focus on global perspectives in the generation of knowledge from all fields of legitimate inquiry. The Journal also mirrors the World Academy's specific focus and mandate which is to consider the social consequences and policy implications of knowledge in the broadest sense. The vision of the Journal encompasses major challenges facing global society and seeks to examine these issues from an interdisciplinary, multi-method and value guided perspective.

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Editorial

Jakob von Uexkull is the brilliant founder of the influential World Future Council. His articles and speeches are noted for brevity and incisive insights. In this short article, ["Toward a Comprehensive Approach to Paradigm Change,"](#) the author seeks to clarify precisely what the preexisting paradigm is, and how we are to understand the shift in this paradigm. He gives us many illustrations of the problems indicated in conventional economic wisdom and the hard reality outside about the dangers we face, which seem oblivious to the conventionally trained experts. He draws attention to the problem of climate change and why it is that public concern is so deficient. A central insight, critical to scientists and intellectuals who influence public opinion, is that paradigm changes cannot be negotiated away. It is impossible to negotiate away melting glaciers and spreading deserts. There is no nature that provides for rescue packages here. So, we confront the challenge of a non-negotiable world future. The issues are starkly presented and represent an utterly important urgency. The author presents the issues with a sharp and unambiguous clarity.

Joseph Agassi's essay, ["To care for the future of the human race,"](#) focuses on the real dangers that challenge human survivability. Matters such as the proliferation of nuclear weapons, exponential pollution, unconstrained poverty, and population expansion are central crises of our time. He contends that the most urgent task of enlightened intellectuals is to think clearly about how we might minimize the risk of the destruction of all humanity. He sees in this the dire necessity of some form of global governance. Notwithstanding the fears of some form of globalized central authority, he suggests that we can create an institution whose authority is vested in a world constituent assembly. This, it appears, is a shift towards the notion of a world politics and possibly away from the field called international relations. The notion of a world politics, if thought through, results in a demand for a radical change in the global power process. It would require a radical redesign of hierarchies and a complex realignment of global participatory interests. The author opens up the discourse for what is effectually a radical democratization of the entire global social, power, and constitutive process.

In ["The Psychology of Warmaking,"](#) **Roberto Vacca** has revisited a classic to date initiated in the correspondence of Einstein and Freud about the role of personality in the initiation and conduct of war. In a sense, we tend to think of the impulse which drives war-making decision making as reflective of darker unconscious drives. Pitted against this is another important drive, and that is the drive that somehow connects altruism with compassion, love and reason. What makes these considerations matters of urgent global concern is the fact that human technological capacity points to the real and serious possibility of human extinction. The author addresses these issues from a variety of vantage points and emerges with a critical challenge given the state of global organization and disorganization. One key issue moves us simply beyond the

domain of psychology or it moves psychology into the important domain of culture, and in particular, the culture of peace. He challenges us to think more deeply about a paradigm of peace culture. In addition, the new paradigm calls for an alertness of imagination in understanding, new horizon, resources, tools, and mileposts. This is a provocative and thoughtful contribution.

Democracy is an endangered political practice when unlimited forms of wealth are used to influence, dominate, or otherwise undermine the essentials of democratic participation in politics. An excessive wealth in these processes will ultimately lead to the institutionalization of plutocracy, which threatens the fundamentals of democratic governance on a global basis. In [“Simulated Judgment on Campaign Finance,”](#) **Winston Nagan** has followed his earlier example of providing a simulated judgment of the International Court of Justice. Co-authored with **Madison Hayes**, the article revisits the lawfulness of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. This simulated judgment is identified with a fictional jurisdiction of the Constitutional Court of Azania. The term ‘Azania’ was promoted by some groups resisting apartheid in South Africa. However, the constitutional provisions quoted are from the new Constitution of South Africa. The judgment assumes that the constitutional provisions of the Azanian Constitution and the Constitution of the United States are functionally similar. The judgment then has to look at the Azanian provisions and take into account the decisions of the United States Supreme Court. The Azanian Constitution permits the Azanian Court to consider comparative law as a source. Therefore, it is in a position to review the judgment of the United States Supreme Court to determine whether it should be followed in Azania. This provides the author of the simulated judgment an opportunity to review the U.S. Court’s approach to campaign expenditures. In this review, it is concluded that the reasoning of the U.S. Supreme Court is constitutionally deficient and may indeed open the floodgates for changing democracy to plutocracy. – **Garry Jacobs**, **Member of the Editorial Board, *Eruditio* Journal.**

Carlos Alvarez Pereira’s short essay [“The Greatest Adventure on Earth”](#) is a wonderfully provocative meditation on the contradictions, dangers and possibilities of human existence. He sees among the challenges of global importance the immense value of human potentiality, the importance of the expansion of trust and generosity, a deeper sense of appreciation of feminine and masculine values, the changing objectives in organizational behavior, the importance of the empowerment of all human beings, and the centrality of a holistic view of the global human prospect. This essay is a challenging intellectual adventure.

Winston P. Nagan

Chair of the Board, World Academy of Art & Science

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Toward a Comprehensive Approach to Paradigm Change

Jakob von Uexkull

Founder, World Future Council and Right Livelihood Award;
Fellow, World Academy of Art and Science

Abstract

The term ‘paradigm shift’ suggests a dramatic discontinuity, one which is almost impossible to prepare for. Paradigm shifts happen quickly and often unexpectedly. We presently find ourselves on the precipice of another threatening environmental catastrophe.

Developing a comprehensive approach to our challenges will require us to spend less time discussing why we need change and where we want to go and more time focusing on how we can actually get there. We must facilitate a choice of futures through policy incentives. A failure to take action today will see major global conflicts arising over increasingly scarce resources and increasing areas of our planet becoming uninhabitable, causing countless millions of refugees.

The World Future Council’s latest initiative, the Global Policy Action Plan (GPACT), is an essential tool for today’s policy-makers seeking to implement proven innovative policy solutions for our most urgent challenges to protect future generations. Bringing together the minimum policy changes required to achieve the goals the global community is debating, at the very least, GPACT will ensure that we are ready when the seemingly impossible suddenly becomes imperative.

The term paradigm change signifies a drastic discontinuity, practically impossible to prepare for. After such a change, the previous paradigm is not just seen as wrong but as incomprehensible, even mad, or at the very least “exhausted”. It no longer makes sense and we find it hard to understand how it ever did. Did learned men in medieval Europe really debate how many angels could find room on the top of a needle?

The 2008 financial crisis did not change the worldview of the global majority. But those working in the financial sector might feel justified in speaking of a paradigm change. The World Wars and the collapse of the Soviet empire fall in the same category. For those who lived in the affected European countries, the world of 1915, 1940, and 1992 had dramatically changed, in ways which were inconceivable only a few years before the events occurred.

What can those drastic changes teach us about paradigm changes? First, they happened very quickly and unexpectedly. Neither the media, nor the markets, nor decision-makers and “experts” expected a world war at the time – with very few exceptions. As for the collapse of the Soviet order, at a conference in Moscow in May 1989, I heard the West German government representative assure his East German colleague that no one in the West was thinking of changing the status of Berlin – six months before the wall fell.

Another key lesson is how insignificant an event can trigger such momentous changes. The wrong turning which brought Archduke Franz Ferdinand in front of Gavrilo Princip's gun is well-known. In 1938 my father, working as a journalist in Berlin, became convinced that Hitler was planning a war and that killing him could prevent it. My father had an apartment overlooking a square where Hitler often spoke and was prepared to shoot him. But while he was within a good shot, he feared he might miss, with disastrous consequences. So he sent a message to London via his contacts, suggesting they send a sharp-shooter, but the reply came back that His Majesty's Government would not do such a thing... As for the collapse of the Soviet Union, a few years later President Gorbachev told a common friend that, if he had known how badly Yeltsin wanted to be "Number 1", he would have offered him his job so that he did not have to destroy the Soviet Union to get it...

"There is a growing paradigm gap between the "experts" our governments follow and our sense of reality."

What paradigm shift are we facing today, if any? While the "end of history" school has been discredited, we are still assured by leaders and opinion-leaders that our current world order is the best imaginable. The consequences of the financial crisis are being overcome, "growth" is resuming and poised to take off, technology and markets will solve our problems and a bright global future awaits.

The media love self-proclaimed converts who have re-joined this optimistic mainstream. A Danish statistician, Bjorn Lomborg, who claims to be a "self-proclaimed convert," but now "skeptical" environmentalist, assures us that "growth" will solve all environmental challenges. In a 100 years' time, he tells us, Bangladesh may be flooded because of climate change, but, if you extrapolate the country's current GDP growth rates, it will then be as rich as the Netherlands and thus able to afford to build enough sea-walls to protect itself. Orio Giarini, Director of the Risk Institute, identifies this modern belief in the "magical power of price" as a key element of the current paradigm, which is increasingly disconnected from the real world. In a ruined natural environment, there is unlikely to be any economic growth – or markets, or democracy or human rights. All our achievements and all our hopes depend on sustainable ecosystems, enabling life on earth to flourish. This may seem obvious. But it is not the preachers of GDP magic who our political leaders follow. Prominent climate economists like William Nordhaus and Thomas Schelling write that climate change will only seriously affect agriculture. But, in an industrialised country like the USA, agriculture only represents ca. 3% of the economy. So, they say, even a 50% collapse would only slow down GDP growth by 1.5%, which can easily be compensated for in other areas. Thus, as long as we produce enough iPods and iPads, it does not matter if food production is collapsing.

This is not an isolated example. In a famous disagreement with his colleague, Herman Daly, while they were both at the World Bank, the US economist Lawrence Summers insisted that our natural environment is a dependent subsystem (box within a box) of our human economy. To many outside the economics profession, this belief is not just wrong, but mad, on par with the belief that the earth is flat. But Summers is one of the most influential men on the planet, having served as a chief economic advisor to two US Presidents (Clinton and Obama), as well as chief economist of the World Bank and President of Harvard University.

So it would appear that there is a growing paradigm gap between the “experts” our governments follow and our sense of reality. It is hard to deny that this gap is the most serious ever, as it reflects not just a shift in worldviews, but how to deal with a threat to the survival of our civilisation, possibly even of life on earth. The fear that runaway climate change can trigger events which will make our Earth uninhabitable, like the planet Venus is, fortunately, not a majority view among climate experts. But neither is it a negligible minority view. It has recently been expressed by Lord Giddens, a former prominent British government advisor and Director of the London School of Economics in *The Politics of Climate Change*.

The majority of climate change experts predict a world radically different from today, with ongoing major global conflicts over ever scarcer resources, increasing areas of our planet becoming increasingly uninhabitable and with countless millions of refugees. Such scenarios can also be found in studies from the Pentagon and British defence government think tanks.

So why is there no greater public concern? The Club of Rome warned of such scenarios 40 years ago and predicted that the crisis would hit now. But such truths are still too inconvenient, to use Al Gore’s term, because the required changes would not only be very difficult, but, in many cases, inconceivable. Economic globalisation has enabled us to extend natural limits by growing into the economic and ecological space of other countries, ensuring that, when limits hit, they will come globally and simultaneously: “global peak everything”. Orio Giarini, who participated in the early Club of Rome discussions, writes that “no one at that time had any idea of a possible warming of the planet or of the role of the greenhouse effect” (*Itinerary to the Third Age*, The Risk Institute 2013, p. 88).

Of course some experts did, but it is sobering to consider that today, not just humanity as a whole but even a single wealthy human being could fund geo-engineering experiments which could influence the global climate...

Paradigm changes are non-negotiable. We can negotiate with financial creditors, and find a solution (including a refusal to pay) within years to even the most serious economic crisis. But melting glaciers and spreading deserts do not negotiate. Nature provides no rescue packages.

The shift of perspective required is very hard to imagine within the old paradigm. But we have to try to visualize it if we want to secure our shared future. Al Gore warned in his 1992 book *Earth in the Balance* that the environmental challenges force us to re-think and, where necessary, change every institution, treaty, law, etc. As we know, not much has happened since in this respect.

A sustainable energy supply is now a human and environmental security issue which cannot be subjected to the rules of the market. A World Future Council study last year found that the cost of the non-use of renewable energies amounts to over US \$3 trillion p.a. in wasted natural capital. The solar, wind, etc. energy potential we do not use every day is lost forever. Instead we burn valuable fossil fuel raw materials. Cost comparisons between non-renewables and renewables which omit these wider costs are bad accounting, reflecting the power of the corporate oligarchies ruling the world.

Chandran Nair, who founded the Global Institute for Tomorrow and advises the Chinese Government, says that the most urgent innovations now needed are not technical but new accounting models which help internalize costs. But costs have been externalized for so long and on such a massive scale – at the expense of our environment and future generations – that such reforms will be extremely difficult to implement. Attempts to abolish fossil fuel subsidies in African and Arab countries have caused major riots. Integrated approaches for compensating the poor are being tried e.g. in Indonesia, but so far with limited success.

“We are ruled by increasingly absurd economic dogmas.”

WFC councillor Pavan Sukhdev, who was referred by Deutsche Bank to UNEP to study the costs of biodiversity destruction, writes in *Corporation 2020* that most corporations would be bankrupt if forced to pay the full costs of their production. Not doing so is of course unfair competition, even fraudulent. But the necessary transition will be an enormous challenge, requiring detailed strategies and a new legal framework for corporations and markets. Sukhdev points out that our economic planning is based on discounting the future, based on the assumption that we will be richer then. But what, he asks, if we become poorer, due to the need to share scarcer resources, as many now fear? Should future discount rates then be negative? Should value-added taxes be replaced by value-depleted taxes? Where is the research being done on the economic implications of such reforms?

Sukhdev is not alone. Lord Stern, former Chief Economist at the World Bank, regards discounting the future as discriminatory.

We are ruled by increasingly absurd economic dogmas. No political leader would dare proclaim a goal of 1% to 1½% GDP growth. But such a growth rate would still expand the economy by a third to one-half in one generation. The German Empire was industrialised with such growth rates. CEOs in the extractive industries warn that the resources to support global 3% growth are not being found at rates which would make this possible. Chandran Nair, founder of the Global Institute for Tomorrow (GIFT) in Hong Kong, writes in *Consumptionomics* that it will not be physically possible for China to have the p.c. resource consumption of the USA – or even Taiwan. There can be no human right to something which is not possible.

When asked what a sustainable future would be like, Nair replied: “Fewer car races and more dancing competitions”. In the USA, this earned him the accusation of being “an environmental Taliban”... A re-focusing on traditional community values is the key message of the “Chinese Dream” of an ecological civilisation spread by President Xi. But he finds it very difficult to change course, facing demands to open up China’s financial markets to speculators with very different priorities...

Developing a comprehensive approach will require us to spend less time discussing why we need change and where we want to go. There is already considerable agreement on this, but far too little attention has been paid to the “how”, i.e. the practical steps necessary to get from here to there. Many believe that this will require either a sudden change of human consciousness (which we cannot wait for) or a huge “bottom-up” movement to debate and agree

on a common future. But, while our future will be shared, as we live on the same planet, there is no reason why it should be “common”, i.e. the same. This terminology reflects the “end of history” and globalisation ideology which claims that there is only one global future.

Our task should be to ensure that a variety of futures can flourish. That is our duty to future generations: to expand their choice of futures, rather than reducing them, as we are currently doing. This also requires that future generations are represented when decisions affecting them are made, which is why the WFC is working for the establishment of a UN High Commissioner for Future Generations. (This will be decided at the High-Level Political Forum and then at the General Assembly in the coming months).

We are also working for the creation of Parliamentary Ombudspersons for Future Generations on the national level in different countries, as well as on establishing the concept of crimes against future generations in international law.

Removing ‘unfreedoms’, to use Amartya Sen’s term, for future generations requires first of all reversing trends which will increase such unfreedoms by biodiversity destruction, over-fishing, reducing forest cover, destabilising our climate, etc. It also requires a sustainable economic and financial system facilitating the creation of real and sustainable wealth, where money and markets become our servants, instead of our religion.

This will include monetary reform to ensure that whatever a society can do, it can also finance. It will require a radical ecological tax reform, taxing resources instead of labour, as well as building sustainable systems of production and finance to create the right incentives for entrepreneurship and innovation.

The key policy reforms we have identified, after a broad international consultation process, are presented in the WFC Global Policy Action Plan (GPACT), which we plan to publish next year as a (draft) Global Pact. The aim is to provide a tool for decision-makers and public campaigning by bringing together the minimum policy changes which we believe will be required to achieve the goals the global community is debating. At the very least, this will ensure that we are ready when the seemingly impossible suddenly becomes imperative.

The end of the belief in the power of market prices to solve human and planetary challenges – the “modern magic formula” (Orio Giarini) – is likely to have very drastic consequences. But the paradigm change approaching may go even deeper, challenging another cornerstone of our modern worldview: the belief in the unstoppable global dominance of science and technology over our lives and minds. There is today a growing public disillusionment with both, seen as intolerant gods which increasingly dominate instead of benefiting us.

As is to be expected, this change of perspective is first appearing in the nation which was a pioneer in adopting and embracing technology. The latest issue of “Baku Eye” reports that young Japanese “are becoming distrustful of technologies in a broad sense, as they are now often associated with falseness and futility. Having developed unimaginably complex virtual worlds, the Japanese have found themselves in a situation where dreaming about the future is no longer appealing because it can readily be visualized, packaged and sold in a matter of seconds”. Young Japanese are “astonishingly anti-consumerist” and “frustrated with the values of progress”, preferring to seek ‘satori’ (enlightenment). This is not an

isolated example. The pilgrim path to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, the monasteries of Mount Athos in Greece, spiritual and “intentional” communities in many countries, almost all deserted a few decades ago, are finding it hard to cope with demand. The young want to be captains of their soul, to use Dr. Ismail Serageldin’s expression, instead of being ruled by economic cost-benefit-analyses. Their indicator of progress is not economic growth, which has not delivered for them. In the last six years, the percentage of young Americans describing themselves as “lower-class” has doubled. Those in their 20s and 30s are less likely to have a high-school diploma than those aged 55-64. The American middle-class lifestyle, the dream of the global poor, is becoming unaffordable even in the USA (“*The Observer*”, London 27.4.14).

“Is it conceivable that the coming paradigm change will even invalidate the reductionist materialism on which our modern worldview is based?”

So the shift in focus from consumerism to inner growth is not surprising. My grandfather, the Baltic-German biologist after whom I am named, predicted 80 years ago that the key discoveries in future would be “diesseits” ourselves, i.e. in our inner rather than our outer worlds.

Our current paradigm is based on scientifically confirmed and mediated reality, but this is increasingly challenged, causing a counter-productive (and very unscientific!) backlash from a dogmatic thought-police. Prof. Rupert Sheldrake’s book *The Science Delusion: Freeing the Spirit of Enquiry* was bound to upset the scientific establishment. But the massive pressures which caused his TED Talk recording to be removed show a disturbing trend.

But is it conceivable that the coming paradigm change will even invalidate the reductionist materialism on which our modern worldview is based? This question has increasingly become taboo, because our scientific elites fear that any doubts will be used to validate creationism and superstition. But such taboos and fears reflect the weaknesses of the current worldview.

My grandfather, who studied the sensitive universes (Umwelten) of many animal species, and the irreducible complexities of their interactions, regarded the grandiose claims made for Darwinian evolutionism as “playing games, not science”. His work has inspired the science of biosemiotics.

“The ‘scientific’ reactions to Nagel’s book show that the defenders of old paradigms have not progressed in 500 years.”

The biologist Lynn Margulis, who collaborated with James Lovelock on developing the Gaia theory, thought that Neo-Darwinism would come to be seen by history as a “minor twentieth-century religious sect”.

In 2012 the US philosopher Thomas Nagel, a self-proclaimed atheist, published *Mind & Cosmos*, subtitled “Why the materialist neo-Darwinian conception of nature is almost certainly false”. He describes it as a “heroic triumph of ideological theory over common sense

(which) will come to seem laughable in a generation or two”. His critique is two-fold. First, physico-chemical reductionism is becoming increasingly unbelievable as science discovers more details “about the chemical basis of life and the intricacy of the genetic code”. Second, neither the development of consciousness nor of reason can be explained in reductionist terms.

The ‘scientific’ reactions to Nagel’s book show that the defenders of old paradigms have not progressed in 500 years. He was inter alia accused of being part of a “reactionary gang”, causing the US *New Republic* magazine to warn of a “Darwinist mob”....

This leaves us with a twofold task, remaining open to new paradigmatic challenges while also being prepared to defend the values and achievements of modernity in an increasingly disorderly world of transition. From 1989-91, many citizens in Eastern and Central Europe assembled at round tables to help steer their countries to a new future. But they had a functioning model to follow, while we will have to both build and implement a new world. As Winston Churchill said, it will not be enough to do our best. We will have to do what is necessary.

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To Care for the Future of the Human Race*

Joseph Agassi

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Abstract

Humanity can now destroy itself through the Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Pollution, the increasing Poverty of the poor nations, and the Population explosion (the four Ps). The urgent task is to minimize the risk of destruction of the human race. This cannot be done locally, only globally. It belongs to the new field of global politics. Hence, to rescue humanity we must institute a global coordination agency, known as world government or as world coordinator or by any other name. There is a reasonable fear that if such a central organization were instituted, some power may usurp and control it and thus increase the risk rather than reduce it. Hence, a world constituent assembly is urgently needed.

1. The New Situation

Of the many changes that humanity has undergone, the most traumatic one was World War II. In Auschwitz we have learned the enormity of our readiness to destroy, and in Hiroshima we learned the enormity of our ability to destroy. Together this led to a culture of living without tomorrow. This culture could not sustain itself physically as the many experiences of the sixties of the twentieth century testified to, and it could not sustain itself morally as many works of narrative art made tangible to those who experienced it. We may take as representative the 1957 novel *On the Beach* by Nevil Shute that was a bestseller for decades and made into a very successful 1959 Stanley Kramer movie. It displays the loss of all joy of life due to the loss of the future. Evidently, this and similar musings over the matter managed to change attitudes somewhat. Whereas early in the day Einstein reported with amazement that too many people did not care whether humanity will survive, today, though there is still too much indifference, there is much more concern and it is on the increase. The claim is now popular that we are living in a permanent global crisis, at risk of causing a global catastrophe that we should seek to reduce.

The problems of global politics are serious and in sore need for reasonable solutions. Thus far none has been offered. Unable to offer even a clue, let me make do with a preliminary discussion of the problem-situation in general. Let me begin with two rather obvious presuppositions. First, survival is always on the top of any agenda — personal, collective, national, or human. Second, today human survival is in grave danger: human life on earth may come to an end due to the four Ps: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the pollution of the environment at large, the increased economic gulf due to the increased poverty of the poor nations, and the population explosion. These four dangers reinforce each other and there

* For more details see the author's 1985 book, *Technology: Philosophical and Social Aspects* <http://www.tau.ac.il/~agass/joseph-papers/technoln.pdf>

is no saying how much time we have before the threat of extinction becomes irreversible.

We should put the survival of humanity on top of every political agenda, global, international, national and party-political; we do not. However, the late Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess did.¹ He devoted the last years of his life exclusively to the discussions of human survival. This is admirable but not recommended: it is too radical. For all we know, the service of intellectuals as intellectuals, and of philosophers as philosophers, may be vital: they contribute to intellectual hygiene, helping to maintain some sense of proportion through the search for a comprehensive view, for clarity and precision, for the training to examine problems and get them as much in focus as possible prior to studying them, and to examine critically solutions to them.

“Science can instruct us only on details, not on comprehensive ideas.”

2. Facing the New Situation

Traditional philosophy includes some care about comprehensive matters — on the supposition that we need a broad synoptic vision that understandable but still regrettable specialization ignores, or even cautions against in the fear of superficiality. Yet we need a reasonable approach to global problems even if it will be superficial to begin with, if not even conducive to megalomania: we do need some bold speculations to guide us in our deliberations. In the 20th century at least two individuals tried their hands at this, Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell, who both cared very much about the future of humanity. We should study their teachings as they are still relevant and useful today. Yet, clearly, what they have offered is insufficient. Also, our problems keep changing. New problems accumulate and old ones deepen. Hence, the hope that their teachings should suffice is unreasonable. Still, since the Cold War is over, a new air of optimism has spread. Now, how serious is our situation after the Cold War? Is the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction bigger or smaller, now that the Soviet Union and its nuclear arsenal are no longer under much less centralized control? We do not know. To find this we need an improved synoptic view of the situation. Science should contribute to it, but it is insufficient. This assertion angers many scientists and analytic philosophers. Attempts at sweeping overviews are naturally speculative, and speculations are often not serious. At times they are not responsible. Speculative philosophers are often ignorant of details of contemporary science and at times they are even contemptuous of the details that they are ignorant of, perhaps in efforts to suppress a sense of inadequacy that may stifle efforts to do anything. So they ignore the details of relevant scientific information or, worse, they carelessly advocate outdated scientific information and theories. Without defending them one may appreciate their courage. The scientific tradition values the empiricist philosophy that shuns speculations as suspected of frivolity; it suggests that the safe ways to comprehensive ideas pass through small, serious researches devoid of megalomania. Ernst Mach denied that he had any philosophy, and declared that his comprehensive view of the world was the totality of science. Recently W. V. Quine advocated the same idea. Yet, science can instruct us only on details, not on comprehensive ideas. On questions of global politics, then, we have too little knowledge and little agreement about the way to proceed with the study of the broad outline of the situation.

We have hardly any tradition to go by. As Heinrich Heine, Bertrand Russell and John Maynard Keynes have noted, leading political ideas are those that philosophers had developed earlier. The global problems that demand urgent attention are so new, they can hardly have sufficient ancestry. Traditional religion can hardly offer anything beyond the invitation for good will. Science often serves as a substitute religion, if upheld somewhat dogmatically. Nevertheless, for efforts to cope with current global problems to succeed, we must shun science worship; they must appeal to the good will of all, including the good will of the vast populations of the poor parts of the world that are not prone to consider science as a religion. Even what western people deem commonsense is sufficiently imbued with science to be often extremely hard to spread. We have nothing much to go by, then, and have to make do with presenting the best ideas relevant to the problems at hand around as best as we can, and examine their insufficiency as solutions for the problems. There is no other way, and in particular we must discourage the idea that some great thinker will emerge and solve our problems for us. At least on this we have some idea: great solutions come in the wake of small ones.

*“Great solutions
come in the wake
of small ones.”*

Hardly anyone can claim even minimal credentials for the task of developing good, comprehensive ideas. This task is very urgent: it is becoming increasingly difficult to be sanguine about the near future, let alone the distant future. We should face the uncertainties of the future as a matter of responsibility: if responsible people neglect the task of caring for the future, and the ancillary task of developing some comprehensive ideas about it, then this task will be left to irresponsible people. And then, when action is demanded, they will lead: in emergency, when drastic action is called for, if only one plan of action exists, it wins regardless of all objections to it. What then is required of the responsible but not qualified? They should present as best and as clearly as they can the problems and the backgrounds to them in efforts to engage in them as many people as possible. What this demands most is to be as critically minded as possible.

3. Some Preliminary Rules

The required action in global politics must be global: it is futile to perform it locally. The practice of population control in one country, for example, leads to increased immigration from poor countries where this facilitates population growth. And the current practice of shipping toxic waste from rich countries to poor ones, for another example, is going to hurt us all.² This is not to discourage local moves in the right direction; these may be of some practical value even though they fall short of the target, and they always have educational value.

Global action requires global coordination. This is achievable by international bodies designed to help such coordination. These are now used by representatives of member nations to defend their nations' policies. What is missing then is a sufficiently broad, if not quite unanimous, agreement on the need to seek ways to act in the right direction. And unanimity cannot be imposed, especially not on educated, democratic publics. This holds for all ideas, no matter how obvious they look.

Unanimity within science is insufficient. Even within science, only the well examined information commands some measure of unanimity; it functions as a challenge to theoretical researchers to explain it or as a basis for acquiring licenses for practice. To be useful, applied science often needs coordination. Regarding global matters this is wanting, since the coordination we need is global. So the task is to spread the comprehension of the available information that requires a movement towards global coordination for controlling the risk of global destruction.

The required broad comprehension is unattainable without some scientific literacy. Facts are easier to comprehend than the theories that explain them, but not sufficiently easy. This invites efforts to facilitate comprehension of relevant scientific information. Discussing the reliability of information (of the question, how well examined it is) is easier than discussing the reliability of theories (whatever this means), yet theories are vital for discussing forecasts and their reliability. Unfortunately, people with much good will advocate good causes poorly as they exaggerate the reliability of their information and theories and they even blow up information and prefer extreme forecasts without saying so, in efforts to scare the public in order to mobilize public interest in important issues.³ This is irresponsible, and it causes damage.^{4,5} Perpetrators of inferior advocacy assume that the public is too ignorant to see through it; but it is easy to expose dishonesty to the public, and all the more so when scientific literacy grows and democratization opens new channels for free public discussion. The proper democratic procedure seems exceptionally frustrating whenever a huge and urgent task is at hand, and this raises hopes to achieve better results by replacing democracy with technocracy. It is suggested that experts will do things more quickly and efficiently if they are exempt from the democratic process, especially if they comprise an amalgamated team of scientific and managerial experts. There is some reason to this idea: already the ancient Roman Republic practiced it. A number of guarantees were instituted there to prevent the temporarily strong leader from becoming permanent. Julius Caesar, we remember, broke them. This was no historical necessity as the case of Churchill illustrates: he was the strongest leader ever, yet after the war he was defeated in elections. Only active democratic education made the difference between Caesar and Churchill. And active democratic education includes training for coordination.

Training for coordination is best achieved in practice, like swimming, so that possibly the best democratic education is in the democratic movement, and then it should begin from the start. If so, then the recognition of it should perhaps lead to the democratization of schools, and on all levels. Whether this is so or not is irrelevant here. For, the global crisis requires urgent solution and we hardly have the time to reform education and apply its fruits to the crisis. What is needed most, then, is a modicum of scientific literacy, grass-roots democracy and individual autonomy. Putting these in minimal form on top of the public agenda may suffice for developing quickly a forceful synoptic view. One small item may illustrate this. Today a new social philosophy is afoot: communalism. Like many buzzwords, it is not clear what it is. Some people who speak in its name oppose individual autonomy; others only play it down. It is important to confront them all and ask them, is their communalism helpful for the cause of saving humanity from itself? For, this holds generally: the task of putting global politics on the map, it seems obvious, requires mobilizing local politicians. They will not necessarily be thrilled with the idea, so they have to be won over or replaced in the political

arena by democratic means. Yet it is very important to notice that cynicism is easily misplaced here: cynics will say that it is too idealistic to expect local power seekers to give in for the sake of global politics. This need not be so. After all, the same story occurred when nationalism evolved, when local feudal potentates gave way to central authority, and at times voluntarily, understanding that it was also in their own interest to give in a little. World security is in everyone's interest. This is not such a difficult idea to comprehend.

"It is the coordination of all efforts within global politics — academic, political and other — to work together without exaggeration and stressing the great need that may create a genuine mass movement and push it to become a grass-roots democratic-scientific movement."

Why then is it so difficult to mobilize people for this great cause? Evidently because no one wants to be the only volunteer for the cause that can be profitable only if it gains momentum. This is true of all mass movements, yet some of these did succeed. The analysis of their success may be crucial. The success need not happen at random: we can try to engineer it. For example, we can ask, why do people participate in harmful activities like the transfer of toxic waste from rich countries to poor ones? This conduct depends on the understanding of an important and dangerous fact. If the persons involved in the act will desist, others will take their place and have their cut in the profit. The situation will drastically alter were such conduct illegal. Why is it not? We must investigate this question and deal with the situation according to our finds.

4. Final Remarks

In conclusion of this preliminary discussion, let me notice that it is on the trite side — as it should be if it is to summarize what everyone concerned with the future of humanity must agree upon. All this is tentative, of course, to be scraped when someone comes up with a smashing revolutionary idea that should reopen the discussion. In the meantime, we are only able to seek hints at sketches of possible comprehensive views that may stand behind some future solutions. Everyone who is concerned who has anything new to say on the matter should present it publicly in the hope that others will succeed in developing ideas further, or in criticizing them, and thus opening the road to hints of better ideas. We are facing a tremendous intellectual and practical challenge. Many universities in many countries have already instituted a number of new departments to meet this challenge. Most of these departments are devoted mainly to ecology, leaving it to older departments to discuss the other new global issues. It is the coordination of all efforts within global politics — academic, political and other — to work together without exaggeration and stressing the great need that may create a genuine mass movement and push it to become a grass-roots democratic-scientific movement. To that end we should seek ways and means for helping existing organizations whose official tasks would be to seek ways to prevent global catastrophes to do a better job: to seek ways for creating an umbrella organization for them all, one that should have powers to

push things forward as much as possible, and to seek ways to turn this umbrella organization into a constituent assembly for a world authority for the purpose of reducing the risk of the self-destruction of humanity.

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The Psychology of Warmaking

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Abstract

In this paper, historical, cultural, juridical theoretical arguments have been collected to substantiate the conclusion that the only way to prevent nuclear war is by the neutralization of all nuclear weapons.

Why should we analyze the psychology of warmaking? Because understanding its mechanisms should suggest measures to avoid suffering and destruction of resources entailed by war. To prevent even minor local conflicts is impossible – just as preventing any crime is. The vital issue is prevention of major war. In 1932 the issue was debated in a correspondence between Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud. It was published in a pamphlet (“Why War?”), which had minimal diffusion and impact. Both authors treated the problem agreeing on two main points – discussed quite superficially.

The first was the notion that humans are subjected to the instinct to conserve and unify – to love – and also to the instinct to hate and destroy, each as indispensable as its opposite. The phenomena of life were considered to derive from their interaction.

The second point was that the war impulse could only be opposed by forming a superior class of independent thinkers upright and able to enlighten and guide both the intelligentsia and the masses so they would follow the dictates of reason – a utopian hope in the view of the two authors.

We shall discuss these naïve views both based on historical evidence and on theoretical grounds in the substantive conclusions of the present document.

Obviously in the 21st century THE major war would be a thermonuclear war, possibly producing ‘The Holocaust’. Assume, then, that we accept the categorical imperative of preventing the major war. Note that the London Charter of August 8, 1945, signed by the plenipotentiaries of the governments of France, United Kingdom, USA and USSR established the principle that “the mere preparation of total war constitutes an international crime against peace and humanity”. The intent was sensible and meritorious, but in almost seven decades no attempt was made to apply the principle although the four original nations and a handful of others advocating it have indeed experienced total war vastly more devastating than those experienced up to 1945.

Waging major wars historically was decided by autocrats as well as by democratic governments with popular support. The public was often brainwashed to favor war by means of campaigns evoking visceral passions masked by allegedly rational, nationalistic or ethical

motivations. During the Cold War the balance of terror was accepted by millions. They were induced to think evenhandedly about the *unthinkable* global thermonuclear holocaust. The underlying rationale was based on considering the threat of ultimate nuclear warfare as a factor of restraint – a deterrent apt to guarantee peace.

Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) took decades to achieve steps on the path of total elimination of nukes. At the peak of the Cold War the destructive potential in all the thermonuclear weapons arsenals of the world was estimated to be equivalent to 4.5 tons of high explosive for each human being on Earth. After the partial disarmament achieved over the years the amount is now “only” 700 kilograms of high explosive for each of us.

The military confrontation between NATO and Warsaw Pact exists no more. Possession of thermonuclear weapons has now spread to many countries and it appears with increasing probability to be within reach of “crazy states”. This term was coined by Prof. Y. Dror to define countries or regimes which are: unreasonably aggressive, prone to risk taking, apt to choose means unrelated to their goals, sticklers to styles incorporating quaint rites and dogmas. Cases in point are: Crusaders, violent anarchists, Nazis and, more recently, revolutionary Iran and Al Qaeda. The psychology of “Crazy Leaders” is hard to analyze. By definition they tend to be unpredictable.

The systems comprising radar and satellite early warning, aiming, control and real time steering of nuclear warheads vectors are highly sophisticated. Their complexity is comparable to that of systems controlling thermonuclear power stations. The latter have provoked major disasters (Chernobyl, Fukushima). Causes were due to gross incompetence in design, implementation or management – not obviated, although the corresponding situations were widely known and amenable to corrective criticism of experts. In the case of nuclear weapons, designs, structures, functional rules, safeguards are kept secret. Outside experts cannot suggest improvements nor caution about covert risks. The consequence of glitches could be a first thermonuclear explosion, followed by others in retaliation of an assumed attack. To convince the target country that the attack was not deliberate, the attacking country could, perhaps, inflict an identical attack on one of their own major cities. This drama was vividly depicted in *Fail-Safe*, a well known novel and film.

The situation is made more critical because a large part of the complexity is not visible. It is hidden in the software of control and telecommunication systems and of telematics networks and in some cases not even experts are fully aware of how it all works. A critical problem in delegating decisions to computers is integrating software operation with human decisions. Expert systems are of no use in the hands of morons. A vital task is to make software control transparent so that well trained humans may monitor the process and override it if needed (as aeroplane pilots do with automatic pilots).

The most imminent danger, then, is the unleashing of nuclear war caused by malfunction of computerized control systems or by human decision to launch reprisal Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) after having erroneously concluded from faulty early warning radars, that a first strike is about to hit. In 1983 the radars of the Serpuchov 15 Bunker near Moscow signaled the detection of 5 American ICBMs in flight towards Russia. The commanding officer, Colonel S.Y. Petrov of the Soviet Air Defence Forces, correctly identified

the warning as a false alarm and prevented an erroneous retaliatory nuclear attack on the United States which might well have unleashed World War 3.

Probably, then, warmaking would not be the outcome of deliberations by politicians nor of decisions by the military. Analyzing the psychology of decision-makers in these groups may well be irrelevant: a first nuclear strike is likely to be the random consequence of malfunctions of control systems or the improvised extemporaneous demented action of crazy states or of self styled freedom fighter groups or jihadists.

The only way to prevent nuclear war is then the neutralization of all nuclear weapons.

More than the psychology of warmaking we have to investigate the psychology of absentee populations who don't realize that eliminating nukes is the only salvation from total war. We cannot expect international diplomacy to achieve this goal: their progress in this direction has been too slow. We cannot expect a benevolent tyrant to decree the elimination of A- and H- bombs. We have to bring back the nuclear disarmament issue on the political agenda of our nations and of supranational bodies (UNO, UN Security Council, FAO, ILO, OECD, International Court of Justice, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO). These organizations will have to be prompted by the people through all channels: from mass media to academia, from the WWW to local groups, from political structures to NGOs. Spiritual leaders of organized religions and of informal movements have to be challenged. If they persist in ignoring this ultimate risk, they should be branded as unreliable and irrelevant.

Warmaking cannot be fettered by a superior (benevolent?) brute force. It can be blocked by the strength of culture. This statement is proved by historical evidence.

In the '30s, militarist, nationalistic governments were ready to start war and they did start it in cold blood. The culture of that time was not uniform. It hosted democracy descending from British parliamentarianism, Jeffersonian principles, the French Revolution. It also contained Nazi-fascist and Bolshevik dictatorships, negating basic freedoms and actively exercising extreme violence. There are still dictators as well as crazy states around, but no big powers advocate war as a superior mystic value.

“European peace stems from European culture.”

In 2012 the European Union and the European Commission were awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace as they *“for over six decades contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe.”*

Prof. H. Menuhier of Nouvelle Sorbonne University celebrated this Peace Prize in Vienna at OECD on December 18, 2012. He said that from 1870 to 1945 in 75 years France and Germany fought 3 fratricidal wars with a disastrous material, human and moral toll – whereas today the very notion of a Franco-German war sounds utterly absurd.

European peace stems from European culture. It is true that some diehard, extreme violent politicians still have followers in France, Greece, Hungary. However aggressive ranting in the style of Hitler or Mussolini would not find large audiences today.

“Warmaking can be blocked by the strength of culture.”

Peace is not global in the 21st century. Europeans have intervened, fought and died in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Mali. Even now, local wars erupt in Asia and Africa. Escalations are still to be feared. So we have to study, plan and act to identify the applied psychology of war prevention. This would not be effective, if it was limited to the dissemination of do-gooder exhortations. The message MAKE LOVE, NOT WAR was not a success. The symbol is vaguely interpreted by most people as “for peace”, whereas it stands for “ND” – Nuclear Disarmament [it is the superposition of the letters N and D in the flag semaphore alphabet].



The Anti-nuclear weapons culture has to be disseminated explaining the meaning of symbols, the cause-effect mechanisms of the threats – the unique solution being Nuclear Disarmament. These vital factors have to be brought to bear to understand and modify the psychology of absenteeism.

Culture should certainly continue to be fostered and renewed as a factor of human growth, of scientific progress, of research and development. In a specific sense, it should be oriented toward Nuclear Disarmament – a worldwide movement to be revived in the wake of the great thinkers Linus Pauling and Bertrand Russell.

The goal here is to raise cultural levels so that entire populations understand the numbers and the probabilities involved – the fact that we are facing **extinction**, not just hardships and decimation. To really grasp this impending tragedy, the public should learn how to forecast future events, how to identify real dangers and how to calculate their consequences. The fact that the equivalent of 700 kilograms of high explosive for each human is stored in nuclear arsenals could destroy most of our world, should motivate the public to accept and disseminate a new BAN THE BOMB manifesto. This cannot be a single purpose edifying text.

The manifesto must be an appeal to design and implement a large international endeavor involving many public and private sponsors, academia, firms, communicators, Web operators, agencies and all the media.

Hi-tech war is a much more severe threat than conventional war. The movement should, then, promote the spreading of technological upgrading of the public. High technology runs the risk of being strangled by lack of culture. Very fast and powerful personal computers are less and less expensive, but (apart from professional tasks) the public predominantly uses them for playing games, reproducing non-descript images, listening to music, watching films and for swapping improvised words. These instruments should be used, instead, for significant aims of knowledge processing, acquisition and creation. If the public understands the world better, it will be convinced that war has to be avoided.

The number and complexity of technological choices to be made by governments, international bodies and enterprises are growing. The consequent impacts are large on society's wealth, health and stability and also on international dramatic issues. The latter are: poverty, injustice, violence exerted to secure resources, migrations to the West and the North. Many least developed countries have vast potential natural resources (minerals, energy, arable land) which are blocked due to lack of culture and investments. They don't need short term

emergency measures, but major international enterprises aimed at their pacification and stabilization and then at advanced technical solutions. The socio-economic impacts of technology are positive, if it is permeated with culture and if culture is disseminated and offered as a real option. These results would also diminish international tensions generated by the determination of securing more equitable distribution of resources and wealth. Raising cultural levels is the prescription to avoid not only ultimate total war, but also stark inequalities and local grievous conflicts.

1. Resources, Tools, Mileposts

The World Wide Web offers data banks, software packages, sophisticated financial and banking services, highly significant texts, information on advanced control and decision systems, but the majority of people (often including managers, planners and decision makers) are not knowledgeable enough to use them. In fact they are often unable to tell high quality information and services from valueless, illusory items of which there is ample supply. They end up accessing irrelevant, volatile materials.

It is necessary to create alliances and task forces enrolling culture, academies, parliaments, business enterprises of all sizes, to use the media in order to offer to the public tools for continuous cultural upgrading. This improvement will boost not only demand and profits for hi-tech industries, but also the value added by human activity to any other resource. Affluence grows in societies where the search for knowledge is an accepted and financed value.

This endeavor will use all media: newspapers, TV, radio, magazines, electronic publishing. The very concept of entertainment will have to be redefined. The new contents will not be volatile, but edifying.

The art of communication will be at the service of culture. The dissemination of culture is the basic task of schools, but their functions need to be integrated, stimulating emulation. School systems are slow to innovate. It is advisable to start new cultural enterprises outside of schools. No single firm, even among the largest, could be so wealthy to be able to finance such a large program. It would be appropriate to create an international consortium of firms (publishers, information and communication technology producers, engineering companies), advertisers and experts, all united to promote a cultural revolution. Culture may not be surrogated by television spots, slogans and platitudes.

The following goals and resources will have to be publicized by highly visible, authoritative, learned individuals who will credibly twist the arms of politicians, entrepreneurs, publishers, media moguls. Their non-participation or lack of support will have to be construed as a scandal. A detailed program prepared with the help of an adequate number of experts will have to be submitted to sponsors – a major undertaking.

2. Indoctrination for Cooperation

The cultural upgrading enterprise needs vast popular support in order to succeed. Indoctrination of academics, teachers, human resources managers, parliamentarians, publishers, journalists, media moguls will have to be organized. Examples of positive rational

thinking as well as abstention from abstract, ill-defined, vaguely optimistic endeavors will be proposed.

From prehistoric times the psychology of the majority has been warped to believe that egotism and avidity in the end are profitable. In fairly recent times the mathematical theory of cooperation has proved that the reverse is true. Cooperation is more advantageous to all concerned than self-seeking and self-aggrandizing. However logical proof and rational thinking are often disregarded: people trust conventional alleged wisdom and gut feeling more. A first step should be to teach cooperation theory in schools at all levels.

Obvious word of mouth channels will be used and advertising experts will be enrolled shifting their pitch from their traditional approach (more sales, larger audiences, sacrifice taste and rigor to popularity, centering messages on logos and slogans) to intellectual yardsticks. Their abilities will be aimed at a viral diffusion of the equation “cultural upgrading = salvation”. There is no surefire prescription for this. Many cut-and-try empirical attempts will have to be experimented.

“Cultural upgrading will not advocate a mere scientific and technological rehabilitation program spread by geek missionaries but will spread knowledge of teaching from the classics.”

3. Tenets to be Carved in Collective Awareness

The ablest wordsmiths have to produce memes which are apt to carve themselves in people’s minds. Not slogans – but meaningful, easy to remember tenets to foster motivation.

4. Teachings from the Classics, not just from Technology

Cultural upgrading will use modern ICT technology. It will not advocate a mere scientific and technological rehabilitation program spread by geek missionaries. It will revamp cultivation of the “two cultures” and of many more. It will spread knowledge of teaching from the classics.

5. Outstanding Contributors

Support will be sought from first class scientists already active in cultural upgrading, as for example,

1. Prof John L. Casti, Senior Research Scholar at IIASA
2. Prof. Richard Dawkins, author of “The Selfish Gene”, Foundation for Reason and Science
3. Prof. Freeman Dyson, physicist.
4. Sir Harold Kroto (discoverer of C60 buckyballs carbon molecules), founder of the Vega Science Trust (www.vega.org.uk) enrolling scientists to disseminate their knowledge; founder of the Kroto Research Institute for nanoscience and technology, connected to the University of Sheffield.

5. Carl Weiman (Physics Nobel 2001) who has defined programs for improving post-secondary education (see www.livescience.com/technology/080725-sb-education-future.html)

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Simulated Judgment on Campaign Finance in the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Azania

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Abstract

This article comes in the form of a simulated judgment of a fictional constitutional court. Its focus is on the scope of liberty in the distribution of private sector funding in the contentious democratic political process. The judgment is triggered by rulings of the United States Supreme Court, which seeks to limit the power of the legislature to constrain campaign expenditures. In its recent judgments, the Supreme Court has equated political liberty as a device to permit unconstrained political spending. This simulated judgment is drawn from the constitution of South Africa, which has provisions functionally similar to related provisions in the U.S. Constitution. This “Azanian” Constitutional Court is set the task of interpreting its own provisions in the light of the U.S. Supreme Court’s determination of provisions similar to its own. This judgment in reviewing the central elements of the American Court considers that the approach of the American Court undermines democracy and promotes plutocracy. The promotion and defense of democracy are, as a global matter, intricately tied to the principles of good governance, which include responsibility, accountability, and transparency. Plutocracy is the antithesis of good governance and as a global norm should be rejected.

Introduction to a Simulated Judgment in the Supreme Constitutional Court of the Republic of Azania

This simulated judgment is written from the perspective of jurisconsults reviewing the jurisprudence of comparative constitutional law concerning the right of the legislature to enact legislation that seeks to control, regulate, and limit contributions from private-sector actors to those who are campaigning for electoral office. The developed constitutional jurisprudence in this area has been significantly defined by two recent Supreme Court decisions of the United States. The Constitutional Court of Azania has both constitutional provisions and legislative enactments that are remarkably similar to the constitutional and legislative provisions of the law of the United States. Thus, the Supreme Court of Azania, although facing a paucity of judge-made law, has the benefit of reviewing its own law and Constitution via an examination and appraisal of the example set in the Supreme Court of the United States.

Supreme Constitutional Court of the Republic of Azania

October Term 2014

Appeal from the High Court of the Cape of Good Hope

Chief Justice announced the judgment of the Court. The judgment is unanimously joined by the other six Justices.

The Constitution of the Republic of Azania in its Preamble indicates that the Constitution of this Nation was drafted and adopted in order to “lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law.”^{*} Chapter One of the Constitution expresses several of the founding provisions of the Constitution. Chapter One Article 1d states “universal adult suffrage, a national common voters roll, regular elections, and a multi-party system of democratic government, to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness”[†] are among the foundational values of the new constitutional order. Chapter Two of the Constitution codifies the Bill of Rights of the Nation. The cornerstone of a democratic political culture must ensure and advance “the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom.”[‡] The Constitution stipulates that “the state must respect, protect, promote and fulfill the rights in the Bill of Rights.”[§] The scope of the application of the Bill of Rights is that it “applies to all law, and binds the legislature, the executive, the judiciary and all the organs of the state.”[¶] The scope of the Bill of Rights inter alia binds both natural and juristic persons, taking into account the specific circumstances of each context.^{**} The Constitution also clarifies the position of juristic persons under the Bill of Rights: “a juristic person is entitled to rights in the Bill of Rights but only to the extent required by the nature of the rights and the nature of that juristic person.”^{††} In dealing with the interpretation of the Bill of Rights, the Constitution provides additional guidance. It “must promote the values that underlie an open and democratic society.”^{‡‡} In order to interpret the Constitution, the interpreter must consider international law. The interpreter may as well consider foreign law.^{§§}

Because freedom of expression is a foundational value of all open and democratic societies, the Azanian Constitution Article XVI stipulates that “everyone has a right to freedom of expression.”^{¶¶} This includes the following:

- (a) freedom of the press and other media;
- (b) freedom to receive or impart information or ideas;
- (c) freedom of artistic creativity; and
- (d) academic freedom and freedom of scientific research

^{*} S.A Constitution, Preamble

[†] *ibid.*, art. 1d

[‡] *ibid.*, art. 7, sec. 1, cl. 1.

[§] *ibid.*, art. 7 sec. 2.

[¶] *ibid.*, art. 8, sec. 1.

^{**} *ibid.*, art. 8, sec. 2.

^{††} *ibid.*, art. 8, sec. 4.

^{‡‡} *ibid.*, art. 39, sec. 1a.

^{§§} *ibid.*, art. 39, sec 1b and 1c.

^{¶¶} *ibid.*, art. 16, sec. 1.

Additionally, the Constitution clarifies the scope of freedom of association: “Everyone has the right to freedom of association.”^{*} This implicates the political rights listed in the Constitution:[†]

1. Every citizen is free to make political choices, which includes the right-
 - (a) to form a political party;
 - (b) to participate in the activities of, or recruit members for, a political party; and
 - (c) to campaign for a political party or cause.

The Constitution does not specify the precise coordination of these rights in actual practice. In particular, it does not indicate how these rights are to be expressed in terms of the process of funding the promotion and defense of these rights. In this sense, our Constitutional scheme is somewhat silent about precisely how this is to be done, what standards are to govern it, and precisely what the scope of the prescriptive power of the State is to legislate standards to ensure that the foundational values of an open and democratic society are enhanced and not undermined.

The central problem posed for the process of ensuring the integrity of the electoral process is the problem that in an open society which has a significant private sector for the production of wealth and capital, that segment which monopolizes and controls the wealth-generating process may use its wealth and capital assets to support particular candidates in the political competition for electoral success. This led the United States Congress, in a bipartisan initiative,[‡] to begin the process of limiting campaign contributions so that the political process is not swamped by the wealthy contributions of a few members of the electorate, a process that may therefore diminish the competitive capacity and weight of the average citizen voter in the political campaign arena. In the U.S. system, there are limits to what an individual may contribute to a particular candidate.[§] That same individual, however, can also channel unlimited funds through a Super PAC that supports that same candidate or party.[¶]

In a recently decided case,^{**} the Republican National Committee and a citizen of Alabama, Shaun McCutcheon challenged a law that limited an individual’s aggregate campaign contributions to \$48,000.^{††} McCutcheon was simply claiming that he could provide a donation of \$2,600 [the base limit] to as many candidates for election as he chose. In short, his money provided him with a form of political influence and communication that could not be matched by poorer sections of the community. The fundamental principle here is that the freedom of speech and communication in the American Bill of Rights restricts campaign contribution limits. Since we have a similar provision in our Bill of Rights and similar limitations on

^{*} *ibid.*, art. 18.

[†] *ibid.*, art. 19, sec. 1.

[‡] *An Act to Amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to Provide Bipartisan Campaign Reform*, Public Law 107-155, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 116 (2002): 81-116, also known as the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act or the McCain-Feingold Act.

[§] For a complete list of all current campaign contribution limits, see the Federal Election Commission’s website: “Contribution Limits 2013-2014,” <http://www.fec.gov/pages/brochures/contriblimits.shtml>

[¶] The notion of a Super PAC emerged after United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit decided *Speechnow.org, et al. v Federal Election Commission*, U.S. 2 (2010). The Court ruled to invalidate the \$5,000 base limit previously imposed on individual contributions to independent political committees.

^{**} *McCutcheon et al., v Federal Election Commission*, 572 U.S. 1 (2013).

^{††} The law in question was a section of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act.

campaign expenditures we are facing roughly the same question: whether Article XVI of our Constitution should be given a similar interpretation as the First Amendment has been given in the American Constitution. Our Bill of Rights is subject to Article XXXVI, which stipulates:*

1. The rights in the Bill of Rights may be limited only in terms of law of general application to the extent that the limitation is reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom, taking into account all relevant factors, including-
 - (a) the nature of the right;
 - (b) the importance of the purpose of the limitation;
 - (c) the nature and extent of the limitation;
 - (d) the relation between the limitation and its purpose; and
 - (e) less restrictive means to achieve the purpose.
2. Except as provided in subsection (1) or in any other provision of the Constitution, no law may limit any right entrenched in the Bill of Rights.

Our judgment will mainly focus on two decided cases from the United States Supreme Court because these cases are very similar to the appeals before this Court. The first of these appeals focuses on the role of corporations engaging in the expenditure of corporate funds in the electoral activity currently in the state.[†] The second appeal deals with the mechanisms by which legislation placing limits on aggregate political expenditures is constitutionally challenged. The United States Supreme Court, in handling these issues of corporate identity, expenditures, and aggregate limitations, has ruled that matters fall squarely within the reach of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.^{‡,§} In approaching the process of adjudication here the Supreme Court of the United States has developed extra-constitutional tests [words not found in the Constitution] to guide its interpretation of the proper constitutional reach of the First Amendment. Since the First Amendment represents a fundamental constitutional right, the Court provides a level of strict scrutiny over the legislation that seeks to control and regulate it. This places a burden on the legislative drafter to show that any legislation impacting upon the freedom of speech represents a compelling state interest. If the court finds that this interest is indeed compelling, the legislation is valid. If it finds that the reason for the legislation does not represent a compelling governmental interest it will be struck down.

The United States Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* overturned the provision of the 2002 Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act prohibiting corporations from engaging in "electioneering communication,"[¶] including the funding of political advertisements to be aired in the 30 days before a federal election. The Court ruled that to restrict the political

* S.A. Constitution, art. 36, sec. 1 and 2.

† On the theories of the nature of corporate personality see George Whitecross Paton, "Types of Incorporation: § 90 Theories of the Nature of Corporate Personality", in *A Textbook of Jurisprudence* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967) 365-376, discussing fiction theory, concession theory, bracket theory, and purpose theory.

‡ *McCutcheon v FEC*, 3.

§ *Citizens United v Federal Election Commission*, 588 U.S. 1 (2010), 3.

¶ *Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act*, § 203.

spending of corporations based on their identity as juridical persons was in violation of their First Amendment rights.* In short, the Federal Government could not establish a compelling governmental interest prohibiting corporations from dispersing funds in federal elections. It would be useful to provide some further contextual background to the effects of this case on the American electoral process. The net effect of this precedent was that nearly \$1 billion in new spending money emerged in the Federal elections.¹ Super PACs became a routine part of the vocabulary of National elections.[†] Additionally, non-profit corporations could contribute to campaigns through Super PACs without disclosing the source of the funds they were contributing.[‡] For example, the American Crossroads PAC and Crossroads Grassroots Policy Strategies Non-Profits created by political operative Karl Rove raised \$123 million of which 62% was undisclosed.^{§¶} The Court's ruling also influenced non-federal elections. "Laws restricting spending by outside interest groups in elections were invalidated in 24 states, extending the impact of the high court decision to races for governor, state supreme court and beyond."^{***}

"Current reports indicate that the official total of funds expended on lobbying activity in Washington is \$3.2 billion, however, investigative reporting indicates that the real figure is vastly in excess of this and is estimated to be closer to \$9 billion."

The evidence connecting super PACs and their donors appears in the following table:^{††}

Table 1: Super PACs and their donors

Rank	Name	Total Given	Ideology
1	Sheldon Adelson & family	\$93.3 million	Republican
2	Harold Simmons & wife, companies	\$30.9 million	Republican
3	Bob Perry	\$23.5 million	Republican
4	Fred Eychaner	\$14.1 million	Democratic
5	Joe Ricketts	\$13.1 million	Republican
6	William S. Rose (Specialty Group)	\$12.1 million	Republican
7	United Auto Workers	\$11.8 million	Democratic
8	National Education Association	\$10.8 million	Democratic
9	Michael Bloomberg	\$10 million	Independent
10	Republican Governors Association	\$9.8 million	Republican

* *Citizens United v FEC*, 50. See footnote * on this page for further discussion.

† See footnote ¶ on page 23.

‡ Michael Beckel, "Nonprofits outspent super PACs in 2010, trend may continue" *ibid.*, Part III: *Nonprofits, the stealth super PACs*, 56.

§ These startling numbers certainly call into doubt Chief Judge Sentelle's statement that "contributions to groups that make only independent expenditures cannot corrupt or create the appearance of corruption." *Speechnow.org v FEC*, 14.

¶ Michael Beckel, "Crossroads political machine funded mostly by secret donors" in *Consider the Source, Part II: Super PACs crash the parties*, 13.

** "Introduction" *ibid.*, Part I: *Big bucks flood 2012 election*, 5.

†† *ibid.*, 6-7.

Rank	Name	Total Given	Ideology
11	James H. Simons	\$9.6 million	Democratic
12	AFSCME	\$8.2 million	Democratic
13	AFL-CIO	\$7.4 million	Democratic
14	Robert B. Rowling	\$6.1 million	Republican
15	American Federation of Teachers	\$5.8 million	Democratic
16	Robert Mercer	\$5.5 million	Republican
17	Steve and Amber Mostyn	\$5.2 million	Democratic
18	George Soros* & family	\$5.1 million	Democratic
19	William Koch	\$4.8 million	Republican
20	Peter Thiel	\$4.7 million	Republican
21	SEIU	\$4.4 million	Democratic
21	Joe Craft	\$4.4 million	Republican
23	John Childs	\$4.2 million	Republican
23	Plumbers and Pipefitters Union	\$4.2 million	Democratic
25	Jerry Perenchio	\$4.1 million	Republican

When we look at these numbers, which are payments to influence the elections, it is worthwhile to consider these financial facts in the context of the aggregate funds spent directly to influence policymakers in Washington. This is of course to consider the financial foundations of Washington's lobby industry. Current reports indicate that the official total of funds expended on lobbying activity in Washington is \$3.2 billion, however, investigative reporting indicates that the real figure is vastly in excess of this and is estimated to be closer to \$9 billion.² The major lobbyists include Public Relations Firms, Law Firms, In-House and Corporate Public Relations Departments, Trade Associations and Policy Advocates representing interests such as the natural gas, petroleum, clean coal, food marketing, aerospace, film, biotechnology, healthcare industries, the financial sector, and specific corporations and corporate interests, for example TransCanada's Keystone XL Pipeline, Apple, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), and Monsanto.* The fact that there is a \$9 billion slush fund to fuel and disperse these funds in the Washington arena of political action signals that as a Constitutional matter it is inappropriate to confuse the idea of the unlimited diffusion of cash into the political process with politics as usual. It is critical that as a matter of constitutional adjudication a Court of Law brings a sense of serious contextual realism to its process of authoritative and controlling decision-making. More importantly, from a juridical point of view these vast infusions of private-sector wealth into the political process suggest a reallocation of fundamental power in the body politic from democracy to the financial elite.[†]

“The Supreme Court of the United States has a focus on the interrelationship of wealth and power that is vastly astigmatic.”

* *ibid.*, 12-13.

† See *infra* footnote on page 28.

By broadening the contextual focus of the Court's concern for the role that wealth plays in the electoral and legislative process in the United States we conclude that the Supreme Court of the United States has a focus on the interrelationship of wealth and power that is vastly astigmatic. A central concern of the American legislature has been to protect the democratic foundations of the American Republic from being swallowed up by the overwhelming infusion of money meant to influence the political process and possibly dominate it.* The interest of the American Congress therefore has been to protect the democracy of the Republic. The Supreme Court's inversion of the compelling governmental interest in the protection of democracy from the overreaching influence of a plutocratic impulse is a conclusion that is not necessarily warranted by the text and the values behind the American Constitution. It is certainly not warranted under the text and values of the Azanian Constitution.

Our own Constitution provides us with a form of scrutiny that in principle is not radically different from the form of scrutiny engaged in by the American Court though our Constitution is a bit more explicit in the interpretive guidance it gives. For example, our Constitution makes clear that there are limitations to our Bill of Rights. However, those limitations must be ones that are "reasonable and justifiable in an open, democratic society."† These are important guidelines relating to the democratic culture and its constitutional underpinnings, which are not as clearly enunciated in the American Constitution. It is with this background that we can examine in a more contextually sensitive way the importance of the freedom of speech and expression and the importance of legislation which secure that the freedom of speech or expression will not be so extended as to confuse the notion of a right with the notion of political license. Our legislation must also be examined in terms of "the nature and extent of the limitation"‡ on corporate expenditure or aggregate expenditure in the electoral process. Are these limitations restrictions of a fundamental right or are these limitations the preservation of approximate fairness and equality for all citizens participating in the political process? In short, if you are a schoolteacher, a plumber, a garbage worker, a student, or a minority, the flood of funds targeting the interests of the few may drown out your ability to express yourself politically. Our Constitution then provides more structured guidelines in order to make the context more relevant to the process of adjudication.

The U.S. Supreme Court takes the view that money and speech are the same thing.§ This is tortured logic. If such a position were taken as a Constitutional truism then those with fat bank wallets can ensure themselves an even fatter level of participation and influence in politics. And if this is entrenched the United States could well be on its way of evolving from democracy to plutocracy.¶ The approach of the Supreme Court of the United States is

* This concern has been the driving force behind a number of congressional acts in the last century. The Tillman Act of 1907 (34 Stat. 864, now 18 U.S.C. § 610), the 1910 Federal Corrupt Practices Act (2 U.S.C. § 241), the Hatch Act of 1939 (5 U.S.C. §§ 7324-7327), the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 (Pub.L. 80-101, 61 Stat. 136), the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (Pub.L. 92-225, 86 Stat. 3), and the 1975 creation of the Federal Election Commission, and the recent Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act were all enacted for the purpose of regulating the influence of money on the federal government.

† S.A. Constitution, art. 36, sec. 1 and 2.

‡ *ibid.*, art. 36, sec. 1c.

§ This precedent was set in 1976, when the Supreme Court ruled that "a restriction on the amount of money a person or group can spend on political communication during a campaign necessarily reduces the quantity of expression by restricting the number of issues discussed, the depth of their exploration, and the size of the audience reached. This is because virtually every means of communicating ideas in today's mass society requires the expenditure of money." *Buckley v Valeo*, 424 U.S. 1 (1976), 19.

¶ Recent evidence suggests that this process has already begun. In their soon to be published "Testing Theories of American Politics," researchers from Princeton and Northwestern analyze the statistical influence of various groups (the average voter, economic elites, and corporate and mass-based interest groups) in American politics and compared their findings to prevailing political theories (majoritarian electoral democracy, economic elite domination, majoritarian pluralism and biased pluralism). Their conclusion, found on pages 28 and 29 of the final pre-production draft, is perhaps less startling than

to ascribe to this plutocratic trend a single narrow possibility of limitation. This legislation must be tailored directly and specifically to the condition of political bribery.* This assumes that the giver is naïve about influence and can only expect something if he or she specifically requests a special political favor or vote, in return for the money. No moneyed citizen, if he had the brains to make that money, would make such an explicit request, one which would be criminal and land him in jail. This is therefore a vastly unrealistic standard by which to measure the unstated but undoubtedly clear expectations involved in the giving and receiving of vast sums of money. It is notoriously obvious there will be some form of connectivity between the general and specific interests of the donor and the dependency of the recipient or his agents and affiliates. In politics, there is nothing for nothing. In short, as indicated earlier, the infusion of extraordinary amounts of cash into the political process results in the disproportionate influence of those that command the wealth. Consequently, we have an allocation of power disproportionately skewed in favor of the wealthy elite at the expense of the people.

In the *McCutcheon* case the Roberts Court's apology for unlimited spending contributions is that limits on spending "unnecessar[ily] abridg[e]" First Amendment rights.† In short, the wealthy have a license to spend as much as they want in order to communicate their political ideas, and interests. The First Amendment's protection here serves to encourage broader political participation. Any legislation that seeks to limit this cannot be seen to advance a legitimate governmental objective. The only case in which there would be a legitimate governmental objective would be to control corruption. But spending large amounts of money does not necessarily imply corruption. The corruption the U.S. Court has in mind is *quid pro quo* bribery. This is so narrow a definition as to be humorous when we consider that buying and selling politicians for influence and access at least have the "*appearance* of corruption."<‡ In our view, we see the prohibition represented by aggregate limits to be a reasonable tool to prevent bribery and/or corruption of the political process and to be a restriction on the gravitation of our democracy to a plutocracy.

The Constitutional Court of Azania completely rejects the unrealism of the American Supreme Court's definition of corruption as limited by its notion of *quid pro quo* bribery. What is missing from this analysis is that the United States is a democracy and protecting the integrity of the democratic process from being purchased by the few at the expense of the many is not only a misunderstanding of American democracy but clearly this reasoning is completely inappropriate with regard to our conception of fundamental rights in the political process.

it should be:

The estimated impact of average citizens' preferences drops precipitously, to a non-significant, near-zero level. Clearly the median citizen or "median voter" at the heart of theories of Majoritarian Electoral Democracy does not do well when put up against economic elites and organized interest groups. The chief predictions of pure theories of Majoritarian Electoral Democracy can be decisively rejected. Not only do ordinary citizens not have uniquely substantial power over policy decisions; they have little or no independent influence on policy at all. By contrast, economic elites are estimated to have a quite substantial, highly significant, independent impact on policy...Similarly, organized interest groups... are found to have substantial independent influence on policy....These results suggest that reality is best captured by mixed theories in which both individual economic elites and organized interest groups (including corporations, largely owned and controlled by wealthy elites) play a substantial part in affecting public policy, but the general public has little or no independent influence.

Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens," upcoming article in *Perspectives on Politics* (2014).

* This view is summed up well by the statement made in the Opinion of the Court that "the fact that speakers may have influence over or access to elected officials does not mean that these officials are corrupt." *Citizens United v FEC*, 43.

† *McCutcheon v FEC*, 30, quoting *Buckley v Valeo*, 25.

‡ The Supreme Court's opinion on the appearance of corruption is, inexplicably to many, the exact opposite: that "independent expenditures, including those made by corporations, do not give rise to corruption or the appearance of corruption." *McCutcheon v FEC*, 5.; italics author's own.

With regard to corporations being treated as flesh and blood citizens there is much here that is problematic. A corporation is an artificial person. It is a juristic person. It has rights and it has obligations in terms of its charter of incorporation. Human beings are not given rights by some mythical charter of incorporation. Clearly, there's a vast difference between the civil and political rights of a flesh and blood person and the rights constructed for the limited purposes of the juristic life of a corporation. As our law says we must consider the nature of these participants.* What the Court in the United States is not taking into account is the widespread discontent with corporate abuse; many theorists in the United States consider that corporate reform is overdue.³ Before we give corporations the complete rights of flesh and blood citizens we had better take corporate reform seriously. We summarize five publicized notorious principles that are proposed for corporate reform:[†]

"The United States is speeding up its constitutional train without regard to the fact that it is on the wrong track, headed in the wrong direction, and will undermine democracy via its confusions between freedom and license in expression which can only lead to the tragedy of plutocracy."

1. Limit the power of top executives and financial decision-makers who may have the power to use the corporation for inappropriate ends and for personal gain;
2. Allow institutional investors, such as pension fund managers, to nominate independent directors to the boards of the corporations in which they are major investors;
3. Implement an aggressive program to make employees on all levels stakeholders in the corporation itself, thus giving them an interest in the success of the corporation; corporations may achieve this by awarding stock options to employees as bonuses or rewards for excellent company performance;
4. Give blue and white collar employees a direct voice in corporate decision-making to represent the perspectives of professional and nonprofessional employees in the business to improve the objectivity and quality of corporate decision-making;
5. Reduce salary packages and stock options for top-level executives to avoid artificial inflation of the company's share price; stock options may remain part of an executive incentive package, but the corporation should limit their magnitude to protect and enhance corporate interest.

When we examine the juristic identity of corporate entities, we should be cautious about extending to them all the benefits of the Bill of Rights, which may be inappropriate to the juristic purposes for which they were created. Moreover, the scope of corporate privilege and license is itself, at least in the United States, a contested matter. It would have been more appropriate for the American Court to have reviewed the concerns of responsible theorists about the need for corporate reform before giving them a blank check to preempt the political process. This Court is aware of these concerns and would be reluctant to underwrite the complete freedom to flood the political arena with corporate funds to advance corporate interests.

* S.A Constitution, art. 8, sec. 4.

† *ibid.*, 446.

At the very least, it is important for us to consider the criticisms that have been made about the possible abuse of corporate personality and capacity.

In 1907, The Wall Street Journal captured the essence of the Theodore Roosevelt era. “He was fighting gross and corrupt extravagance, the misuse of swollen fortunes, the indifference to law, the growth of graft, the abuses of corporate power.”⁴ Roosevelt’s concern for the capacity of the wealthy to abuse their power for unsavory political ends is captured in this excerpt from one of his letters:^{*}

The policies for which I stand have come to stay. Not only will I not change them, but in their essence they will not be changed by any man that comes after me, unless the reactionaries should have their way... I am amused by the shortsighted folly of the very wealthy men and ... how large a proportion of them stand for what is fundamentally corrupt and dishonest. Every year that I have lived has made me a firmer believer in the plain people- in the men who gave Abraham Lincoln his strength- and has made me feel the distrust of the over educated dilettante type and, above all of... the plutocratic type.

We decline to follow the example of the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of collapsing juristic identity into normal flesh and blood personal identity. We decline to follow the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in striking down reasonable and justifiable aggregate limits on campaign expenditures. Indeed, we believe that the United States is speeding up its constitutional train without regard to the fact that it is on the wrong track, headed in the wrong direction, and will undermine democracy via its confusions between freedom and license in expression which can only lead to the tragedy of plutocracy. This is a path we decline to follow.

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^{*} *ibid.*

The Greatest Adventure on Earth*

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Abstract

A paradigm shift of unprecedented scale in human civilizations is considered both as necessary and possible, towards a new form of “sustainable happiness”, as a way out of the entanglement of multiple dilemmas we face today.

For all the amount of cultural, social and technical inventions produced by the evolution of humanity, it has not solved the basic contradictions of life, in itself a source of permanent conflict between creation and destruction.

On the contrary, our current paradigm puts at risk the environmental conditions of all species, including ours. We increase the contradictions between our human drive and the future of life, on a planet whose limits have been reached and whose resources are being exhausted, without eliminating human poverty and need.

Of course we cannot suppress the contradictory essence of life, between the beauty of our aspirations and the truth of our limitations, but we can choose which limits and tensions we use in order to create more life than we destroy. By changing our purposes and betting on human potential and intelligent generosity, we can build an inclusive, sustainable and more feminine world to make life a meaningful journey for us and the generations to come.

Life is a pure contradiction. It should not even exist. Actually, as far as we know, it did not exist for most of the time of the Universe and it does not exist anywhere but on Earth. This makes it so valuable.

The contradiction is manifold: it is between the expansionist drive of life, its propensity to grow and expand by default, and the finiteness of exploitable resources; it is also about the need for animals to feed themselves by destroying other living beings; ultimately, it is about the mystery of improbable birth and inevitable death, certainly as an individual, possibly as a species.

That makes life in itself a source of permanent conflict between creation and destruction. But any particular form of life, even the simplest, is also a singular opportunity to transcend that contradiction by creating more life than it destroys.

For all our intelligence, humankind faces the same and endless contradiction, but with a big difference. The history of life on Earth is punctuated by the emergence of new adaptive forms, enabling new dynamic equilibria between emerging species and the environment, and

* This essay reflects a very personal vision, inspired by the open and passionate conversations of a group of concerned individuals convened by the Club of Rome at Castellet Castle (in Catalonia, Spain), in March 2014. The author is grateful to the Club of Rome for the invitation to participate, and especially to Robert Engelman and Garry Jacobs for their careful review and useful suggestions.

also by the extinction of species unable to adapt any longer. Likewise, but on a much shorter time scale, the history of human life is punctuated by the emergence of intelligence and culture and the production of social and technical inventions which change our relationships, between us and with the environment. That way, we are able to (re)create ourselves.

We used to think that all those human inventions meant progress, but this is not always true for earthly life as a whole or even for human life. Certainly, we have been inventing rituals, institutions, ways of exploring the world and technical artifacts in such quantities and richness that we have accumulated an impressive amount of cultural, social and material achievements. By doing so, we have also brought the expansionist drive of life to a much higher level, being able to fill the planet and alter dramatically the environmental conditions of all species, including our own, and to put them and us at risk.

In a deeper way, emotional, conscious and imaginative beings that we are, we constantly look for meaning and transcendence. For all our inventions, we know we are still not able to deal with the basic contradiction of life without entering into conflict with others, whether they are other humans, other living species, the natural environment in which we live, or even our own future. Actually, much of what we have done and still do is based on an ever increasing exploitation — of the many weak by the few strong, of helpless natural resources, of future time as the least renewable resource of all.

And afraid as we are of our permanent conflict with the world, we also invent self-delusions to alleviate our fears. For instance, we observe social status and practice individual accumulation to protect ourselves not from need but mainly from the feeling of personal irrelevance and the anxieties we face everyday in our eternal quest for meaning. Is that the right response to our fears?

Moreover, we artificially transmit to our inventions our own values of perpetual growth and expansion. Useful as it is as a mediation tool, we give money an undeserved centrality in our life, forgetting there is no natural law entitling money to reproduce by itself unless it is backed by human labor creating authentic value. And we also forget that real life is much richer than money because its diversity and complexity cannot be reduced to the one-dimensional nature of any currency. This is one of many examples of how we inadvertently or interestingly substitute human purposes, complex as they are, with all too simple goals, like the truly utopian one of boundless financial accumulation.

But our consciousness also tells that, tomorrow, unless we change dramatically the course of things, there will be no way to fulfil human aspirations, as we conceive them in our consumerist culture. We feel that we are not reducing but increasing the contradictions between our human drive and the future of life as a whole, on a planet whose biophysical limits have been reached, whose climatic stability has been endangered by human activity, whose living and mineral resources are being exhausted at an ever increasing pace, and all of this without eliminating human poverty and need.

At a time when 6 out of 7 billion humans strive to reach, much deservedly, the same comfort enjoyed by many of those living in rich countries, the welfare fabric of these is being attacked for the sake of financial mirages and the agenda of sustainability is being postponed, and so we continue weaving everyday the entanglement of multiple dilemmas which, in spite of the dance of change in which we live, inhibits the transformations we need.

First among the dilemmas we face is the metabolic one, the most determining in the long term: we know that our consumerist society of uneconomic growth and waste, driven by the well publicized and materialistic lifestyles of the leisure class, is totally incompatible with the pace of renewal of natural resources brought to us by the magic alliance of Earth and Sun. Without solving that contradiction, sooner or later the collapse of human civilizations is inevitable, as it was for the people of Easter Island, a small-scale but significant precedent.

“The dominant behavior we practice today when facing the contradictions and conflicts of life is based on the powerful but false idea that progress is a result of the selfish pursuit of individual interests.”

Second is the dilemma of will, especially that of western elites which, in rebellion with the societies they should serve, are living on short-term and narrow-minded purposes and not leading the construction of a sustainable and inclusive future for the planet.

Third and most important is the cultural dilemma, more difficult to apprehend and no less critical. Consciously or not, the dominant behavior we practice today when facing the contradictions and conflicts of life is based on the powerful but false idea that progress is a result of the selfish pursuit of individual interests. Powerful because it connects with many people adopting selfishness as an artificial relief for their fears, and false because it actually produces concentration of power and richness in the hands of a few, and therefore inhibits the potential of most.

“Instead of fighting others, we can decide to fight ignorance and prejudice.”

On the contrary, if we propose a definition of progress that it should create more life than it destroys, we should recognize that our individualistic interpretation of the expansionist drive of life has the ability to destroy much more life than it creates.

Time has come for a quantum leap in our strategy of adaptation. The only way to get out of the Gordian knot in which we live is to collectively transcend those dilemmas by creating a new paradigm of civilization, one that actually can be built with pieces we already have.

Of course, we humans cannot live without feeding ourselves, and we cannot aspire to a decent life without extracting many resources from our environment. But we can decide in which ways we frame and deal with the conflicts our existence creates.

For instance, if we are not preserving each animal or vegetable, we can apply permaculture practices to preserve the existence of living species ensuring at the same time the appropriate feeding of all humans. We can decide to deter mutual destruction of humans through war and violence. Instead of fighting others, we can decide to fight ignorance and prejudice. Instead of accumulating useless artifacts, we can fight our inner limitations and develop our talents. Instead of practicing depredation, exploitation and exclusion, we can require ourselves to behave better for the profit of all. We can choose creation (and self-creation) instead of destruction. We can choose life instead of death.

How to achieve that? When we calculate the balance of creation and destruction produced by our actions, the result depends on the boundary we choose: caring about other humans or living species is not the same as not worrying at all about their survival. Fixing that boundary is required to perform rigorous ecological balances, but it is the result of truly political will, since it depends on including or not into our concerns the victims (human or not) of any kind of exploitation. Ultimately, creating more life than we destroy will depend on extending that boundary so far that we only leave out the Sun, as the unlimited source of energy to which we owe our existence (for now and until the remote future of its own death).

There, at the junction of thermodynamics and humanism, lies the real opportunity to reconcile beauty and truth, the beauty of our aspirations and the truth of our limitations, and to ensure that life is able to continue its adventure on Earth under a new and transcendent form, that we could wishfully call “sustainable happiness”.

Let us try to imagine further how that could be, through different but intertwined dimensions of desirable futures.

1. Unleashing Human Potential

Actually there is one unlimited game to which we can direct our human drive in harmony with the environment. It is that of learning and experiencing together in the infinite variety of disciplines of knowledge, of sports and crafts, of art and science, of beauty and truth.

The world would look very different if we recognized at last that every human being has talents of their own which must be developed, that emotions and human relationships are among our most valuable assets and that they can be educated to produce a multitude of individual passions for the profit of all, not for the sake of individual accumulation. This in turn would require education to be no longer centered on reproducing social hierarchies and selecting narrow elites, but on the assumption that everybody has the right and obligation to achieve personal fulfilment.

2. Extending the Circle of Generosity and Trust

While it is obvious in the most universal and intimate experience of any mother with her children, it is taking a very long time to understand that the progress of civilization is all about extending the frontier inside which we practice generosity and trust by default.

Self-indulgent that we are, we prefer to ignore that the rule of generosity and care, rather than that of selfishness and exploitation, applies not only to our family but also to the weak and suffering, to the persons who share our land and language, whatever their origins or income, to those who are like us but live elsewhere or talk differently, to those who are different from us in beliefs, skin or habits, to all children of all nations, to all forms of animal and vegetable life, and in the end to the whole planet we share.

By applying the rule in clever ways, protecting the institutions of collective welfare from abuses, extending their reach and being self-demanding in our personal generosity, we could receive much more than we give and create more life than we destroy.

3. Sharing Feminine and Masculine Values

For too long, the game of human power has been an exclusive battlefield for alpha males, whose natural drive is expansion and conflict, even at unreasonable costs. We need to transcend zero-sum deals and change the nature of power to transform it into a practice of shared potentialities and care of the common nature in which we all live.

Of course, we speak here of a deep cultural revolution to recognize at last that women are equal to men in rights and opportunities, but also to change our vision of what is quality of life, to state that quantity (in particular, of offspring) is not necessarily good and that collaboration is not always but many times better than competition.

In the end, we will understand that the deep unity and richness of humanity and life are only possible through the respect of diversity and the sacred principle of dignity for all, and that overcoming segregations, whether social, cultural or racial, is both a moral and a practical imperative.

4. Changing the Purpose of Organizations

Based on such universal values, human organizations of the future will no longer be obsessed with monetized growth for the sake of it, but devoted to better problem-solving. As the parts of a societal ecosystem, they will address different facets of a global purpose: producing an equitable and universal human welfare while preserving for now and the future the essential equilibria of the natural ecosystem in which we live.

Of course, this will need fundamental changes: a combination of societal innovations and technical progress to ensure both a very high productivity in the use of natural resources and a very low unemployment, so as to maximize the use of our abundant human talents and minimize that of the scarce factors.

This will also mean abandoning the self-delusions of financial accumulation and consumerism and combining different types of property for different purposes in competitive collaboration. Also, we will have to reclaim the legitimacy of good governance and regulation to produce public good and limit public bad, and to reinstate politics, not as a pure game of power but as the common space where collective problem-solving is debated and addressed.

5. Empowering Citizens of all Ages

At a time when, even in rich countries, the promise for most is made of exhausting full-life workdays just to ensure some material comfort and avoid the threat of unemployment, we cannot help saying that life should be something completely different from a mad race towards status and hyper-consumption, where so many lose and some seem to win (while losing their own time).

Societal arrangements are feasible to produce what is needed with much shorter workdays and a variety of professional engagements over personalized curricula, so that ordinary people would no longer be just workers and consumers, threatened by the exclusion of unemployment or the (so frequent) emptiness of retirement, but empowered citizens who can enjoy substantial time in lifelong learning, exchanging across generations, practicing passions and participating in collective decisions at all levels, from local to global.

6. Taking the Holistic View

Life is more complex than ever before, and the chance is it will continue to be so, because complexity is the result of our dreams coming true. We, all humans, aspire to personal autonomy and dignity, to express our multiple identities in local or global communities, to practice our passions, to receive social recognition, to enjoy life not only with our loved ones but also with the strangers who share our feelings, whether near us or on the other side of Earth.

“Complexity is the result of our dreams coming true.”

This two-sided nature of autonomy and connection is what makes society a complex system that is much more than the sum of its parts. It is more and more so, in a small world in which the distant flap of a butterfly can produce a tornado next door. This requires us to analyze and understand reality with a holistic mindset, in which details and macro-behaviors are connected and the center of the world is everywhere.

Fortunately, this also brings the opportunity of unexpected emergent behaviors, of new capabilities of self-organization for the sake of life. And it creates as well the feeling that we are all together, of any origin, language or color of skin, in the same adventure, and that the best ideas may come, why not, from a remote village of Africa, where the whole story began.

Of course, some will say that we speak about Utopia, a land of wishful ideas which will not materialize, at least in our lifetime. But being just realistic is today a recipe for disaster. And the practicality of painting sketches of desirable futures is that they can inspire not only those who already dream but also those many more who still do not dare to dream.

So, let us get back from the future of our common dreams, and start making them real. Let us continue this adventure, the greatest on Earth – a paradigm shift of unprecedented scale in human history. Let us abandon the pervasive disenchantment of the early 21st century and our obsession with money and the exhibition of material privileges.

Let us assemble the energy of the young, the wisdom of the elders, the claim of women and the excluded, the voices of all nations, for the greatest of all revolutions, one without enemies except our very own fears. This will be to build a human world at peace with itself and the planet, an inclusive, sustainable and more feminine world where we could practice the obligation and pleasure of making life a meaningful and enjoyable journey for all of us and our children in the generations to come.

Our life is a pure contradiction. We know we will be here just for a while, and yet we try not only to survive everyday, but also to give a meaning to not just what we do for ourselves but mainly for others, to our loved ones, and also to many people we do not know. We will never suppress the eternal dilemma between beauty and truth, but by extending our innate generosity and practicing intelligence, we can make life joyful instead of miserable.

To do that, we will certainly have to overcome our fears and bet on love and trust. But, what could be the meaning of our presence here if we do not dare to love?

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