

# POLYARCHY

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A MANIFESTO





# INFO

## **Polyarchy**

a Manifesto

World Wide Wisdom

Oxford, Saint-Imier, La Coruña, Milano - 2021

ISBN 978-1-905668-07-6

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Polyarchy - Panarchy - Statism - State -

Voluntary Communities - Aterritorialism

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## INTRODUCTION

A virus has sprung up and spread throughout the world during the 20th century.

It has taken hold of people's minds and bodies, it has affected attitudes and directed actions, and it has dominated the life and marked the death of individuals and communities.

The name of this virus is statism.

From London to Washington, Paris to Berlin, Moscow to Beijing, Madrid to Buenos Aires, statism has emerged and operated in various forms and under various disguises and denominations.

It is time to analyse the nature of this virus and the diseases and destructions it has spawned.

It is time to unmask the ideological cover-ups perpetrated and accepted throughout the 20th century and to put forward a new paradigm capable of explaining a series of otherwise inexplicable phenomena.

In order to do this we have first to trace the origins and growth of this virus.



# PART I

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PAST/PAST



## HISTORICAL PREMISES

The social history of humankind is, in large part, a tale of power and of the conflicts it generates, in various spheres of life, between parasitic and productive groups.

Power can be seen as the imposition of restrictions by one person or group on the freedom of thought, speech and action of others.

From around A.D. 1000, the development of commerce and the urban revival with its burgeoning centres, led to the breakdown of the closed system of the feudal economy.

The new power of the towns and of their guilds overcame local boundaries and opened up new space in which both rural labourers and servants enjoyed greater freedom.

The city became the magnet and the harbour of a new group of people, involved in various arts and crafts, producing for and trading with near and distant markets. If the term "bourgeoisie" has any historical meaning it is precisely with reference to the large and small circles of artisans and merchants who lived and prospered in the many burghs of Europe during the 13th and 14th centuries.

These “bourgeois” were the ones who not only developed production and commerce on a large scale, free of feudal shackles, but who promoted new values of thrift and trust and devised new accounting tools (double-entry books), ways of payment (bills of exchange), and forms of gathering and investing savings (*commenda* or partnership) that gave further impulse to production and commerce.

By the end of the 14th century, these dynamic individuals and groups had become not only rich and powerful but also jealous of their position of wealth and power. The guilds, or town corporations, then started introducing restrictive rules against the countryside (rural population) and other towns (foreigners).

The rules were aimed at safeguarding the monopoly of the town guilds in producing and trading within a specific area.

To achieve this aim, the town guilds, once proud of their independence, were even ready to accept royal charters that granted them privileges: a clear case of bartering freedom for security.

It took several centuries for that bartering to bear its inevitable poisonous fruit. As communal liberties were gradually crushed, a powerful force was gaining control: the state.

## THE STATE

Contrary to what people are eager to believe, the state (and above all the nation state) has not always existed.

First of all, societies (organised groups of human beings) existed long before the state and without the state.

Secondly, in the course of history, not the nation state but other entities, both large (the Macedonian empire, the Roman empire, the Catholic church and the Holy Roman empire) and small (the Greek city, the Mediaeval fiefdom, the Renaissance commune), have been the main forms of political organization.

The affirmation of the state as a central power (16th century) derives from two historically concomitant weaknesses:

- universalism: universalistic powers such as the papacy or the empire were culturally and politically weak;
- particularism: local powers (such as towns and town guilds) were becoming more and more reactionary and giving up their rights to a more powerful body in return for the protection of their monopolies (production, trade).

The new elements introduced by the state with respect to the feudal/communal period were:

- the monopolization of power over a larger territory;
- the centralization of decision-making and law-making processes which resulted in the suppression of local mores and rules.

From the 16th century the power of the state kept growing and a theoretical framework was elaborated as to how it should behave in the running of its political and economic affairs. This theoretical framework is known as mercantilism.

## MERCANTILISM

Mercantilism was the economic ideology of the nation states in their infancy.

It was characterized by:

- interventionism. The state promoted or favoured the development of highly regulated monopolies and oligopolies. In general, production and trade (especially foreign), were under the control of the state;
- fiscalism. Monopolies were easier to control for taxation. Even the attribution of monopolistic privileges (e.g. to guilds and merchants) had the principal aim of enhancing the fiscal benefit to the state;
- suprematism. Production and commerce were meant to increase the amount of precious metals (gold, silver) held by the state as this was tantamount to an increase in its power and wealth, internally and with respect to rival states.

From the 16th to the middle of the 18th century, mercantilism was the dominant ideology and praxis of the ruling power. It was feudalism on a larger scale, with the same pyramidal structure but with two main differences. First, the town and its guilds had replaced the feudal master in dominating the countryside. Secondly, at the top, regulating

and controlling (or trying to control) everyone and everything there was a central power: the state.

This aspect of regulating and controlling (interventionism) appears in the many and minute ordinances concerning apprenticeship, labourers, manufacture, and trade.

Interventionism had a short-term aim of collecting revenues (fiscalism) for the running of the state machinery and a long-term aim of buttressing the power and predominance (suprematism) of the state interests, internally and externally.

## THE DECLINE OF MERCANTILISM

The implementation of the mercantilist ideology was very rigid in France, but more relaxed in the Low Countries and England.

This relaxation of state control allowed these two regions to embark on a process of development that would bring them to a position of increasing prominence.

In contrast, France, where the practice of mercantilism was more stringent, would lose her dominant role and be left behind for centuries to come.

In fact, mercantilism could be portrayed as a revised and updated version of feudalism, based on the alliance between monopolistic local guilds and a centralistic state.

All the state interventions in the economy through financial investments and the granting of monopolistic privileges, had the effect of hampering instead of strengthening industry and commerce.

Certainly it was not by chance that ideas urging a new approach to political economy first appeared in France, where state regulations were more oppressive.

The new school of thought was called physiocracy.

## PHYSIOCRACY

Physiocracy (18th century) was a reaction against the importance attributed by the state to manufacturing and export trade in contrast to agriculture. It was, at the same time, a belief in natural economic laws as opposed to state regulations.

This belief was synthesised in the advice “*laissez-faire, laissez-passer*”, a cry against state interference in activities that would flourish if only left alone.

The role of the physiocrats was to produce theoretical ammunition supporting the view that economic progress could only be achieved through the curtailment of the role of the state. But they did not really succeed in France, their home country.

In fact, the *ancien régime*, the French revolution and the Napoleonic empire, laying aside rhetorical declarations about people's freedom and emancipation, were all, increasingly, expressions of an omnipotent state, eager to control and monopolise for its own aggrandizement, even at the cost of impeding social and economic development.

France, which was already lagging behind due to mercantilistic practices, was to play, from that moment on, a clearly subordinate role with

respect to freer and more dynamic countries. Amongst the most liberal and dynamic was England.

## FREEDOM

Throughout its history, and up to 16th century, England was a backward country (economically and technologically), compared to most of Europe.

It had neither the riches of Spain (gold and silver from South America), nor the magnificence and refinement of France. It was sparsely populated in addition to having low productivity.

Notwithstanding this, it started developing something that would matter much more in the long run: tolerance and freedom.

- Tolerance made it possible, for instance, to accommodate people who had been persecuted in and expelled from other countries (e.g. Huguenots). These new “human resources” contributed to the setting up of new branches of industry.

- Freedom allowed a greater fermenting and experimenting of ideas which resulted in the invention, adoption and diffusion of mechanical devices. The unbound Prometheus gave rise to a new world of industry based on machines.

From the middle of the 18th century and especially from 1780, England enjoyed steady growth in manufacturing, mechanical inventions and power.

It is not the accumulation of gold and silver that represents the basis of economic growth as a very crude analysis would have us believe, but the attitude and practice of tolerance and freedom.

It was in such a social climate and from the happy marriage of liberalism and individualism that came revolutions in agriculture and in manufacturing, which led to a tremendous increase in production of the means of sustenance and started a general improvement in living conditions.

## INDUSTRY

The recipe for the industrial revolution had freedom as its main ingredient. In the 18th century England was one of the freest places on earth. That is the main reason why the industrial revolution took place there.

The industrial revolution was the product of freedom and resulted in a further development of freedom: freedom to produce, to trade, and to invent.

It is not the division of labour (as in the famous example of the pins factory) that constituted the basis of the industrial revolution. An increase in productivity was not enough to spark and sustain such a radical transformation. The freedom to improve productivity, to apply ingenuity to production and commerce without the invention being barred or the inventor harassed or even hanged, this is what counted and made all the difference.

The bourgeoisie as a class was not the engine of the industrial revolution.

If, for bourgeois, we refer to the master of a guild, with his monopolistic practices, he certainly acted, for a very long period, as a powerful

brake to any economic and technological progress. By then, the time of the bourgeoisie as a revolutionary class had already long passed; only the name, bourgeoisie, would be kept and used, for ideological reasons, as a title of honour or contempt.

The protagonists of industry and mechanisation were those who, in this climate of freedom, applied curiosity and ingenuity to production. Inventors and entrepreneurs came from many walks of life and from many trades; not only the landed aristocracy (the gentry) who adopted improved agricultural methods but also people like Arkwright the barber with the utilization of the water-frame in the cotton industry and Watt the watchmaker with the invention of the steam-engine.

This historical period was characterized by the dominant role played by stock capital (machinery) and that is why it is referred to as Capitalism.

## CAPITALISM

### ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Capitalism emerged in England, Scotland and the Low Countries towards the middle of 18th century.

If we (wrongly, as pointed out by Adam Smith) attribute to capital the meaning of money then capitalism existed before the industrial revolution and its origins can be dated alongside the introduction of money.

But “capital” (with reference to the Industrial Revolution) means mainly machinery employed for the production of goods. With this qualification, capitalism is the economic system of production based on the extensive and increasing use of machinery (simple or complex tools).

Capitalism is, then, characterized by the predominance of capital (mechanical machinery) and its central role with respect to other factors of production (land, labour).

It is a fact that many mechanical devices were invented in other countries (e.g. China) prior to their development in England, but the lack of freedom, due to the despotic control of the state, had prevented their utilisation, let alone their diffusion.

For this reason, machinery, while important and central to the existence and working of capitalism, plays its productive role only in the presence of specific prerequisites.

These prerequisites of capitalism refer to the social climate and psychological attitudes favoured and developed by groups and individuals.

## CAPITALISM

### CLIMATE AND ATTITUDES

The main characteristics of capitalism and of the social climate and psychological attitudes surrounding it were:

- liberalism (political, economic, cultural);
- individualism (natural rights, entrepreneurship);
- economism (industriousness, frugality, economic calculation).

Capitalism was a highly dynamic period of production, a vivid epoch in economic and social history when individuals kept revolutionizing the means and modes of production.

The advocates of capitalism favoured the development of a simple ideology: each individual by looking after his/her own interests would help further the achievement of the interests of his fellow human beings and of the community as a whole. For this reason, the freer each individual was to pursue his/her interests, the better the interests of everybody would be safeguarded and enhanced.

It was the total reversal of the Hobbesian "*homo homini lupus*" which justified the existence of an absolute power. It was such a progressive and optimistic ideology that it provided fertile soil for the birth and

dissemination of all sorts of utopian and messianic visions of social regeneration in which the human being (not the “enlightened” autocrat) took centre stage.

Amongst those visions, the two most relevant were anarchy and socialism.

## ANARCHY AND SOCIALISM

Anarchy and socialism were conceptual systems of social organization resulting from an analysis of capitalism and advocating to go beyond it. In other words, the aim of anarchy and socialism was to overtake capitalism, for a full development of individuals and communities.

After the so-called dark ages (feudalism) and the light of dawn (capitalism), would come the full splendour of a sunny day (anarchy and socialism).

The basic principles of anarchy and socialism were, in many respects, similar. They referred to the overcoming of three main scissures:

- the division between different nations through the promotion of pacifism and internationalism;
- the division between manual and intellectual labour through the full development of all productive forces, foremost among them, the human being;
- the division between town and country through a balanced distribution of population and the provision of housing, green spaces and facilities for all.

Where they diverged was on:

- the different stress on the role of the individual (anarchy) as opposed to the role of society (socialism);
- the function or the lack of function assigned to the state in the transition towards the new organization of individuals in society.

Throughout the 19th century, the dynamic antagonism and conflictual partnership between capitalism and its potential superseders (anarchy and socialism), resulted in a continuous improvement in the general conditions of life to such a point that it created the illusion of never-ending material and moral progress.

## THE APOGEE OF CAPITALISM AND ANARCHY/SOCIALISM

Industrial capitalism and anarchy/socialism shared some common principles that can be summed up as:

- scientism (reliance on science and technology);
- universalism (internationalism and world exchanges);
- pacifism (anti-militarism).

In actual fact, scientism, universalism and pacifism saw their heyday during the flourishing of capitalism (the first half of the 19th century), when England, the cradle of capitalism, was mainly busy toiling and trading on a world scale, and was not waging all-out wars that would have caused disruption to production and commerce.

The dynamic intercourse/struggle between capitalism and its counterparts, anarchy and socialism, allowed for:

- the destruction of most feudal remnants and mercantilistic particularisms and the propagation of new general norms of economic behaviour;

- the production of an increasing amount of goods, on such a scale that, for the first time in history, some people began to nurture the dream of a world free of poverty, with prosperity for all.

During the 19th century, hope in the unending progress of political democracy and social development was widespread, reaching its climax with the revolutions of 1848 and the Universal Exhibition of 1851.

Capitalism and its counterparts, anarchy and socialism, were at their apogee.

In the meantime the state, especially in England which was the most advanced country in the world, remained mainly in the background.

## THE STATE IN THE BACKGROUND

For the greater part of the 19th century, the state kept aloof, at least as far as economic life was concerned.

Even a state-dominated country such as France, witnessing the exceptional economic development of neighbouring regions (e.g. England, Low Countries) had to restrict its hold on individuals.

The state had to retreat.

Railways, electrification, production and commerce were developed and run by individuals and companies.

The actions of a weak state, weak with respect to other strong forces, exerted nevertheless a progressive influence because it aimed at limiting the dominance of those other forces.

We have, for instance in England, state inspectors reporting on working conditions, intervening on health and hygiene, advocating the reduction of working hours and the setting up of educational establishments.

Apart from the state, there were also sectors of society and individual entrepreneurs who intervened to speak and act against many of the

more brutal aspects of capitalism, especially the dominance of the machine over the worker, treated in some cases as an appendage to it.

Some of those negative aspects were vestiges of previous periods like enforced labour, in some industries, for children as young as five, a practice imposed by the mercantilist state in France and England by means of fines on uncompliant parents.

Social imbalances, terrible cases of exploitation and harsh living conditions notwithstanding, people were full of hope as improvement was continuous in terms of sanitation, education, housing and food, leading to longer life spans.

In addition to this, more and more people were playing an increasingly active social role, which was supposed to grow through the extension of political suffrage. Alas, this resulted in a situation in which new patrons and advocates came forward to represent the masses.

At that point, the free play / struggle of interests that had produced a real dynamic of personal and social improvements, gradually shifted towards the political stage where it found a plethora of new actors ready to play different “public” (i.e. state cast) roles such as politician, bureaucrat, judge, army officer, and policeman.

The state was fighting back.

## THE STATE FIGHTS BACK

This massive work of destruction of the past and construction for the present and the future could have led to never-ending progress if only the degenerated aspects (i.e. chauvinism, protectionism) existing in any reality (capitalism and socialism included) could have been kept under control. This was not the case.

So, after the short interlude when the state, keeping or being kept in the background, had to share power with other emerging forces (capitalism, socialism), it began to reassert its former supremacy.

At first, it took action against forces which were in decline, like the Catholic Church, or weak, like the anarchist movement.

The Catholic Church, already thoroughly battered by expropriations and restrictions all over Europe and especially in France, received another blow when the Ferry decrees (1880) imposed registration on all religious orders, that is the requirement to apply to the state for a permit to exist, and the expulsion of the Jesuits who refused to comply. This sanctioned the total reversal of centuries of church dominance in favour of state dominance.

The anarchist movement, the freest but also the most naive movement for a new society, was rapidly discredited and destroyed through infiltration and manipulation. The state propaganda succeeded, with uninformed and simple-minded people, in equating anarchy with chaos and disorder, as if anarchists were against organization and regulation *tout court* and not just against state-imposed control and regimentation.

After that, it was time to deal with capitalism and socialism.

The chosen tactic was to dominate capitalism and to dilute socialism, employing both the carrot and the stick, pitching one camp against the other until disgruntled and worried new capitalist entrepreneurs would agree with new ambitious power-seeking socialist leaders, under the patronage of the state.

It was a fine work of co-optation, corruption and coercion.

It would take decades and it received a boost from a new phenomenon that would rally the masses and infect both capitalism and socialism: nationalism.

## NATIONALISM

During the 19th century, while capitalism was dominant on the world stage and socialism was battling with it to grant workers a bigger /better share of the growing pie of production, a new phenomenon appeared on the political scene: the struggle for national states (e.g. Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland).

This fight for nationhood was not, at first, devoid of progressive aspects such as a rebellion against oppressive external powers and a cry for self-determination. It could have remained a progressive aspiration if the new political entities had embraced decentralized federalism and cultural variety (as the Swiss had done) and expelled any trace of chauvinism and suprematism.

On the contrary, instead of federalism, it was centralism that took hold and with it an attitude of mono-cultural national hegemony that looked with repugnance or contempt at diversities of idioms and mores.

Nationalism was in the saddle.

With the assertion of nationalism in Europe, capitalism and socialism became more and more particularistic (i.e. nation-based) in their outlooks and dealings.

The original spirit of creativity, competition for progress and striving for improvement on a world scale, was waning.

In its place, under the banner of the nation state, two phenomena rapidly consolidated: bureaucratism and monopolism.

## BUREAUCRATISM

The state, coming back to preeminence, needed an army of servants to perform the many new functions it started attributing to itself in addition to the traditional ones that it enlarged and deepened: revenue collection, army, police, prisons, schools, justice, sanitation, transport, postal services, control of every branch of industry and commerce, and so on.

The material support for this large army of state servants was made possible by the collateral existence of entrepreneurs and workers operating an expanding productive machine. Only the activity of productive groups, in fact, allows the formation and consolidation of parasitic strata. In this case the area of parasitism could be exceedingly broad because the forces of production were incomparably large.

A further novelty, compared to the *ancien régime* just before the French revolution, was that now (almost) everyone could become a servant of the state, irrespective of prerogatives of birth. Eventually, by the vast and continuous expansion of the state bureaucracy, a parasitic existence was becoming a possibility for many people, not just the *élites*.

Moreover, the spreading of bureaucracy was not confined to the state, but affected capitalist and socialist organizations as well. Here too it

was possible for smart ambitious workers to climb the social ladder and become controllers and mediators of the masses.

The bureaucratisation of society introduced a degenerated dynamic between capitalism and socialism. If the original dynamic had been left to work undisturbed, as in the past, it would have most likely led to an increase in the purchasing power of the workers and an improvement in their working conditions. Moreover, a gradual and substantial reduction in their working day would have probably followed in time, as had happened previously.

But nothing of the sort took place. Instead, the affluence of the state servants and other parasitic strata grew at the expense of the forces of production.

Bureaucratism was also the result of another growing cancer: monopolism.

## MONOPOLISM

The natural inclination of the state is to monopolise power, at least within a specific, usually large, territory; to share power is intrinsically antithetical and alien to its very nature.

At the same time, the national state is fertile soil for the growth of monopolies in the economy. By reason of external power and internal control, the nation state has favoured the formation and consolidation of monopolies and oligopolies through:

- patronage: giving exclusive rights of production and distribution to national companies either directly owned or controlled by the state or subservient to it;
- protectionism: cushioning or insulating national companies against competition from outside the state borders. Through protectionism, the state has become the father, and the import tariff the mother of monopolies.

Through patronage and protectionism the state not only created and reinforced monopolies but, cunningly, provided for itself justifications for expansion. In fact, advocating, for political reasons, anti-monopo-

listic laws and state ownership of key resources, the state, the actual monopoly maker, achieved the brilliant result of being seen as the protector of the little man against big business while surreptitiously becoming, at the same time, the only real monopolist.

In any case, whether state-owned or state-regulated, the state always favours organizations that model themselves, in a subordinate level, on itself and is keener to deal with a few big companies, easier to identify and control, than with the dynamic reality of many small ones. This is historically true not just in the sphere of economic matters but especially in that of political and cultural realities.

In fact, where the state strove most aggressively and abominably to exercise monopolistic control and to bring about homogenisation, was in its dealing with minority groups, large and small. Here the criminal fury of the central state amounted to genocide, as in the case of the Armenians (1.5 million exterminated by the Turkish state) and Jews (6 million, at the hands of the German state).

Monopolism demanded bureaucratism and this, in turn, reinforced monopolism.

Monopolism is synonymous with centralisation and homogenization. In order to achieve these aims, the state resorted not only to repression but mainly to indoctrination and manipulation.

Starting with Prussia (1794), education began to be centrally administered and supervised by the state.

As ever, progressive or semi-progressive justifications, in line with the spirit of the time, supported the new measures. In the specific case of schooling, the advocates of state intervention would have had a point if it had been limited to material support to education without meddling with the content of it. But, a state schooling system meant, from the start, enforced homogenization of individuals through centralized control and moulding of minds.

Later on this would be supplemented by the monopolistic control of means of communication (e.g. radio) for spreading propaganda, sifting information and silencing opposition.

All this would prove very useful in preparing docile cannon fodder for the coming carnages promoted by the states.



# **PART II**

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PAST/PRESENT



## THE STATE TAKES OVER

Parallel to nationalism, two dishes were becoming more and more the staple food of the masses, cooked in various ways by the state, now in association with degenerated (i.e. bureaucratic/monopolistic) capitalism and socialism. They were:

- race hatred

- class hatred

The struggle for political power was conducted by groups competing for mass support and arousing irrational passions for ignoble motives.

Hatred directed against the "others", those with different religions, cultures, ways of life and political beliefs, became common currency in late 19th century Europe.

The Jews became, generally, the scapegoats, a soft target to divert attention from any crisis or misdeed. From the "Dreyfus affair" in France to the Nazi "final solution" and, beyond that, throughout the 20th century, state-sponsored race and class hatred have mixed in an intoxicating cocktail.

This cocktail, based on nationalism as its main ingredient, has produced two major results:

- imperialism

- militarism

Let us focus on each of these phenomena (imperialism, militarism) since they lead straight to the (total) demise of both capitalism and socialism and to the full emergence of the virus (statism) that has plagued communities and individuals since the end of the 19th century and for a large part of the 20th century. This period was marked by the dominance of the nation states and by the disasters and destructions of which they were the cause.

## IMPERIALISM

Imperialism is the starting stage of statism.

In the past, merchants, pilgrims and adventurers have crossed the oceans and set foot on uncharted territory; individuals have migrated and occupied land, mixing with indigenous peoples or settling and cultivating new territories (colonization).

When the mercantilist state entered the world arena, the aim became to find riches to appropriate, especially gold and silver, because these were supposed to represent an increase in its wealth and power.

This policy became known as colonialism.

During the period of development of capitalism (end of 18th century to the end of 19th century) colonialism came almost to a halt. The state, the main backer of colonialism, was no longer the centre of power, whilst the new dynamic powers represented by capitalist entrepreneurs and merchants were busy manufacturing/trading goods and inventing/perfecting new mechanical devices.

The situation changed when a system of nation states was in place all over Europe and capitalism had built such productive machinery as to

make possible the maintenance of an ever increasing parasitical stratum (bureaucracy and its social appendages).

At that moment, both colonialism and the capitalistic trading posts became things of the past and a new phenomenon appeared: imperialism.

Imperialistic dominance was built, in many cases, on the basis of existing commercial outposts; that is why capitalism has become associated and confused with imperialism. But imperialism (political dominance) was not a necessary concomitant of capitalism (economic benefit) or even of pre-capitalistic economic exploitation. In fact, before the advent of capitalism, huge profits were made with the slave trade relying on small trading stations scattered along the African coast of Senegal, without the need for white slave merchants to occupy a country or, even, to penetrate deep inside it.

As regards capitalism, it was interested in producing and exchanging goods, not in holding and administering a territory. It needed a trading station, not a land, a capital city or a bureaucracy.

The thesis that behind any imperialistic venture there are economic gains, hoards of wealth and vast treasures, is so very plausible that it is (almost) universally accepted even when it is factually untrue. Clearly it has served the state well when it had to find a *post-factum* rationalization for its follies. But, in reality, imperialism, on the whole, has been a very costly adventure and one that no sensible capitalist would have ever underwritten or even considered if their personal fortunes were at stake.

Only state nationalism, clearly relying in an exploitative way on the productive achievements of capitalism, could produce imperialism.

What is more important is that, beneath imperialism, advocating and supporting it, there was the growing mass of the state bureaucracy and the growing role of the state military.

## MILITARISM

The consolidation of national states and their imperialistic adventures demanded not only servants wielding the pen (bureaucrats) but also servants wielding the sword (soldiers).

Military expenditure rose considerably between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. In Germany it went from £10 million in 1870 to £110 million in 1914 (a tenfold increase); in Britain, over the same period, from £23 million to £76 million.

With the expenditures rose the arrogance of the military, spurred on and reinforced by the equivocal folly of patriotism, so respectable on the surface and yet rotten at the core.

In France this can be clearly seen through the tragically farcical development of the "Dreyfus affair" with the military caste out for blood, piling up outrageous lie after lie, in a bid to protect itself at any cost.

In Germany, the militaristic Prussian attitude, held in high esteem all over Europe, was ready to involve and associate other continental states in the massacre that is war.

The First World War was not an accident but the almost inevitable outcome of an outgrowing and outpouring of militarism fuelled by each state's own nationalism and imperialism.

The scramble for Africa was the muscling of the nation states, the preparation for total war.

The pistolshot in Sarajevo would become the pretext for the end of the brief interlude of liberalism and provide the spark for the events that, shortly thereafter, would lead to the full demise of both capitalism and socialism.

## THE DEMISE OF CAPITALISM

The joint growth of nationalism and militarism contributed to driving capitalism down the road of bureaucratism and monopolism.

Protectionism, weakened but never totally removed under capitalism, had already reaffirmed itself towards the end of the 19th century.

In fact, not all of capitalism was, by then, a dynamic system as portrayed by friends and foes alike. New economic masters had increased their power (trusts and corporations) trying to avoid both risk and responsibility (limited liability companies). In some cases, monopolies and cartels, favoured by the resurgent protectionism, had already made a mockery of the freedom of the market (the so-called invisible hand); in other cases, weak and outdated industries were asking for trade protection by the state, in the old tradition of the mercantilist political economy.

When the First World War broke out, the state, almost everywhere, seized control of the railways, shipping, gold reserves, and a few strategic materials.

After the war the German state controlled the allocation of more than 50% of the national income; in Italy, by 1934, Mussolini could boast that 3/4 of the economy was in the hands of the state.

At that point, the state was ready to take over and dominate not just the economy but the whole of society. And, subservient to a logic of nationalism, protectionism and monopolism, capitalism was willing to accept a subordinate position, i.e. to become for the state, in the years to come, the useful idiot to be blamed for anything going wrong, the docile cow to be milked for all its worth. And this just to be kept alive even in a degenerate form.

The imposition by the state of a neo-mercantilist policy based on protectionism strangled world trade and was responsible for recurrent crises and a long depression, both attributed to the working of capitalism. For long periods in the first half of the 20th century production stagnated or grew very slowly even in the presence of unsatisfied needs. It was only during the second half of the century, with the abolition of many tariffs (1948 GATT, 1957 European Common Market) that people could enjoy a rising standard of living. The contribution of the state in post-Second World War economic growth is nil, unless we count as merits the fact that it reduced its asphyxiating presence and its damaging control on "foreign" trade (but not on "domestic" matters).

That, in the first half of the 20th century, capitalism was purged and liquidated by the state appears clearly and in an exemplary way in the treatment reserved for the Jews. If there was a group that truly represented the spirit of capitalism (internationalism, liberalism, economic calculation, etc.) it was the Jews. And the 20th century, the century of statism, saw the discrimination, ghettoization and extermination of Jewish communities, by the state, in many countries of Europe.

The demise of capitalism and its replacement by statism with its neo-mercantilist policies can be dated, in Europe, to the outbreak of the First World War. From then onwards, Europe would be dominated by a policy of protectionism and dirigism administered by the nation states.

## THE DEMISE OF SOCIALISM

The ascent of industrial capitalism and the growth of factories had meant a vast increase in the number of factory workers.

On the political front, the expansion of the right to vote signified the possibility, for the workers, of electing representatives to the national parliament.

To enhance the living conditions of the masses of workers, socialist (labour) parties and trade unions were formed in countries all over Europe. Parties and parties' delegates, on the one hand introduced more discipline and continuity to the fight for workers' emancipation and betterment; on the other hand they became, more and more, external agents who took control and manipulated the masses to their own purpose (income, security, power).

A new bureaucracy arose. The dynamic was similar to the spreading of the state bureaucracy: production made it possible to feed parasitism, in this case new parasitic strata coming out of or taking sides with the workers. Party bureaucrats became the manufacturers and mediators of conflicts, replacing direct action and self-emancipation.

The mighty German Social Democratic party became modelled on the Prussian army and an example for other socialist parties to follow.

As in the case of capitalism, the demise of socialism was, first of all, an internal moral debacle that destroyed the soul (the socialist yearning) while keeping the body (the party bureaucracy).

There are plenty of tombstones to mark the death of socialism:

- 1919: Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht killed by para-military groups (the *Freikorps*) with the connivance of the minister of the interior, the social-democrat Noske;
- 1921: the repression by the Bolsheviks of the Kronstadt uprising;
- 1936-1937: the defamation of and crackdown on the anarchists by the communists during the Spanish Civil War.

These events were all marked by actual physical deaths. But none is so representative of death (inner death) as the almost unanimous vote of the representatives of the German Social Democratic Party in the Reichstag in favour of war credits (1914).

After that date, the word “socialist” (as in “socialist party”) was, already, no longer related, in actual fact, to freedom, emancipation, internationalism and pacifism, that is, to the basic tenets of socialism.

## THE FINAL DEMISE

The peak of all this dynamic that finally brought to worldwide dominance a new power system based on the state, took place on a Tuesday in late October 1929.

On October 29, 1929, the USA stock exchange crash damaged forever the reputation of capitalism as a viable economic system, able to carry on without regulations from above. After that event, capitalism was totally and irrevocably dead, theoretically and factually.

The fabrication of that event and of the resulting anti-capitalist feeling was a master stroke of the Federal Government of the United States of America.

At that time, the word "capital" applied more to pieces of paper, be they notes or shares, than to productive machinery, and this tells us a lot about the transformation of the word and of the world since Adam Smith. The actual fact was that this so called "capitalism" had undergone such a radical transformation (from industry to finance, from free trade to protectionism, from laissez-faire to dirigism) that it would have been more appropriate (theoretically and practically) to declare that it had died rather than that it had evolved. But this frank declara-

tion of death suited neither the state, the new hidden master, nor the public at large, still fantasizing about freedom of trade, free enterprise and the balanced budget, realities all long-since disappeared or which, in some countries, had never existed.

In the USA, since the war with Spain (1898) and the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, the federal government (the central state) had started intervening and interfering in business, both large and small.

In 1913 the Federal Reserve (state central bank) was instituted in order to put an end to the so-called "anarchy" of capitalism and as a remedy for bank failures that had numbered 1,748 during the previous twenty years.

Protectionism was on the rise. The United States government had been highly protectionist since the end of the civil war (1865) and then later (1890) with the ultraprotectionist McKinley tariff act. As a matter of fact, the decade that saw the big crash started with the protectionist tariffs of the Fordney bill (1922) and ended with a further push sanctioned by the Hawley-Smoot tariff act (1930).

So the master stroke of the USA federal state was to destroy freedom in production and commerce with all sorts of state controls while at the same time reproaching capitalism, or what was left of it, for misusing a freedom (despairingly called anarchy) it no longer enjoyed.

The crisis came because of the incompatibility between a mercantilist (i.e. protectionist) state and a capitalist (i.e. free-trade) economy on the wane. This contrast created frictions and imbalances that were attributed to the basic working of unregulated capitalism, and so justified further doses of state intervention (neo-mercantilism).

That state interventionism was not the solution, is made very clear by the fact that, during the next twenty years of Federal Reserve control, bank failures went up to 15,502 (almost a ninefold increase). And this led to wider powers for the Federal Reserve and to a larger role for the state under the "New Deal". The less the state medicine worked, the more it was prescribed!

We can mark the big stock exchange crash and the subsequent New Deal as the final demise of capitalism, and the worldwide ascent to dominance of statism.

## FROM CAPITALISM/SOCIALISM TO STATISM

The First World War and the subsequent malaise and excesses, up to the big crash of 1929, were the visible phenomena of a gigantic crisis that threw what was left of capitalism and socialism into a state of terminal exhaustion from which they would come out all but dead, in Europe and elsewhere.

Needless to say, as elements of feudalism survive amid the development of capitalism, so elements of capitalism and advocates of socialism (both of a degenerate or mutilated type) survive during the dominance of statism but in a wholly subordinate position.

The demise of capitalism/ socialism is marked by three deaths:

- the death of liberalism: people abdicated freedom in favour of patronage and protectionism, i.e. subordination, controls, restrictions;
- the death of individualism: individuals gave way to masses, parties, bureaucracies;
- the death of economic rationalism: economic calculation was replaced by considerations of power, prestige and patronage.

Besides these regrettable disappearances, the only aspect that survived was the powerful industrial machine and disciplined workforce set in motion by capitalism and socialism and now at the service and disposal of the state for the extraction of revenues and for the production of instruments of war.

Actually, something else survived: the labels “capitalism” and “socialism” were kept, to designate what were, by now, empty shells, to be filled or fought over for the use and convenience of the scoundrels of statism. It must be made very clear that, as the word “capitalism” used during the 20th century has nothing to do with the historical phenomenon of free enterprise that flourished mainly during the 19th century, so the word “socialism” (or for that matter “liberalism”) employed in the 20th century has similarly undergone such a total change of meaning, with respect to the previous century, as to be no longer useful in a scientific historical context.

And so, finally, from the death of capitalism and socialism and the incestuous intercourse of degenerated remnants of so called capitalism and socialism, statism was born.

## STATISM

### ORIGIN AND TYPOLOGY

The state is the power constituted for the preservation and perpetuation of parasitic strata, and statism is the general label that applies to all ideologies and realities that aim at expanding and consolidating the power of the state.

The origin of statism can be ascribed and dated to the First World War and the incredible enlargement in the role of the state that ensued. Wars, as Randolph Bourne stated, are the health of the state. They lead, almost inevitably, to a situation in which people are ready to give up freedom in exchange for security. And usually, the very forces which, in the first instance, deprived them of security (the state, especially the state military apparatus) are then supposed to reestablish it and grant it. The usual deceitful pre-condition for doing so is that people remain silent and obedient (besides killing and being killed in war).

As history has shown over and over again, from that single shot in Sarajevo at the beginning of the 20th century to the many shots in Sarajevo at the end of the same century, the silence and obedience demanded or imposed by the state have produced appalling tragedies in which neither security nor freedom have survived, let alone been granted.

The binomial “law and order” as a trademark of the state and the very justification for its existence, has actually become a misnomer for oppression and disruption. In fact, the proliferation of laws by the state to keep everybody and everything under its control, has produced the phenomenon of “disnomy”, that is laws that provoke material and moral disorder.

The term statism refers to a system of power characterized by the control and dominance (absolute or relative) of the state in any life situation and activity, with the crushing or subduing of all opposing or intermediate bodies. The only recognized sovereign body is the state. Clearly, there is no such thing as "the state" but bureaucrats of all kind and in all sectors (political, administrative, judiciary, military, financial, etc.), working hand in glove for the feeding of parasitic strata of which they are the central core.

The old vocabulary has remained on the surface (i.e. capitalistic society, fight for socialism) as a smoke screen, a useful device for the bureaucrats to employ when things go wrong.

Statism has presented itself under three main typological labels:

- socialism/communism
- fascism/nazism
- dirigism/welfarism.

As previously repeatedly pointed out, labels should not distract us. The “socialism” here concerned has nothing to do with the ideas elaborated and fought for during the 19th century (especially the first half). The state “socialism” referred to here shows many resemblances with fascism and nazism (that is, national socialism) and in fact people moved from one movement to the other as it suited their own ambitions for power (Mussolini, Laval and Quisling, amongst others). And even the word “welfare” under statism does not refer to physical and mental well-being of individuals and communities.

## **SOCIALISM/COMMUNISM**

The first clear example of statism took place in the most backward and most absolutist state in Europe: Russia.

Russia at the beginning of the 20th century was a feudal society that had almost nothing to do with capitalism and certainly nothing at all to do with liberalism.

In the same way that, in England, the existence of freedom provided the best conditions for the birth of the industrial revolution, so in Russia, the lack of freedom and the existence of a large bureaucracy under an absolutist ruler were the ideal conditions for the growth of statism.

To have qualified the October Revolution as a socialist revolution has been either a misunderstanding (self-deception) or a mystification (mass-deception) of reality. Nothing, theoretically or practically, supported this belief other than the use of a socialist phraseology. Not enough, to say the least.

In reality, the October Revolution marked only the passage from feudalism to mercantilism under a new leadership.

Almost from the start, this revolution favoured and imposed the same mix of mercantilist principles that would be applied for years to come:

- interventionism: the state activating and controlling industry and trade;
- fiscalism: the state extracting the maximum of revenues through taxation, to the point of total expropriation and physical elimination (e.g. the kulaks);
- suprematism: the state striving for expansionism and for the imposition of unequal terms of trade (e.g. in dealing with foreign nations or with the so-called “brother” nations, that is, satellites or subordinate countries).

It was this mercantilism that was hailed as socialism by infatuated or deceitful intellectuals and accepted as such by gullible or hopeful believers.

Later on, the attempt by the Russian state to modernise the economy through plans for mechanization and electrification masterminded from the top, that is to develop a full blown form of statism, was presented as the transition to communism. Through propaganda, this became the example to follow for increasing numbers of workers and intellectuals, each camp attracted by the security and protection the state was offering to large masses, though in exchange for total submission.

The Russian experience, while presenting further evidence of the death of socialism, would provide a lesson to many future leaders/dictators (especially in backward countries) on the path to statism.

## FASCISM/NAZISM

As the First World War led to so-called socialism in Russia, so it was the source of fascism and national socialism in Italy and Germany.

Italy had an economy with a few capitalistic areas, mainly in the north, while, elsewhere, it was basically up-dated feudalism.

Fascism found fertile soil in the resentment of those who, after the turmoil of the war, could not find any satisfactory position within the existing power bases (the state bureaucracy, the socialist bureaucracy). Everything had already been taken. There were no more posts available.

Something had to be done through a new movement: fascism and the "*fasci di combattimento*".

To attain power and impose their dictatorship, the fascist leaders were ready to promise all things to all men as they did on various occasions, like in the San Sepolcro manifesto (1919): suppression of the monarchy, universal suffrage, fight against imperialism, distribution of land to peasants, workers control and so on and so forth. Promises not worth the paper on which they were written. Once fascism was in power, what remained beyond the empty words was the bureaucratisation,

militarisation (the so called "fascistization") and, finally, disintegration of an entire society.

Germany had very advanced capitalistic enterprises; however, at the same time, state interference in the economy from the end of the 19th century onwards had given a strong impulse to cartels (monopolies and oligopolies) and state-controlled banks.

It was then a very ambiguous and fragile social and economic balance that collapsed when, in a period of crisis (the recession of the early '30s), the Germans consigned their freedom to the state and the state to the Nazis in a quest for security and protection.

Nazism was the movement that seemed best able to provide an answer to people's anxieties, culturally and materially. Fine-tuned propaganda, impressive gatherings, grandiose shows of power, all contributed to the success of nazism. Later on, once the Nazi party was in power, the state embarked upon a series of public works (i.e. the motorways or "*Autobahnen*") and on other huge projects aimed at providing employment. This reflected a new economic thinking from which the intellectuals of the new deal took inspiration and on which Keynes based his state-spending recipes.

Nazism was the clearest, most advanced and so the most horrific expression of statism in every aspect of life: cultural, political and economic. As a social experiment it vied with Russian communism. In fact, Hitler and Stalin can be considered like the bosses of two criminal gangs, similar in every respect, that initially agree on sharing the loot (Molotov - von Ribbentrop pact and the carving-up of Poland) but, finally, are destined to fight each other for the total and exclusive control of the territory.

Fascism and nazism, both anti-capitalistic (in their phraseology "anti-plutocratic") movements, were those that best represented the monocratism and imperialism intrinsic to statism in its extreme criminal form.

## DIRIGISM/WELFARISM

While communism (Left) and nazism (Right) dominated hearts and minds in the first half of the 20th century, dirigism and welfarism (Centre) became the common ideological tenets of statism, in the developed countries, from the second half of the century.

Needless to say, Left, Right, Centre are ideological concepts, that is weapons of political struggle, void of any cognitive (scientific) value insofar as they are labels masking not just similar but, in many cases, identical policies.

In the United States the big crash (brought about by the Federal Reserve with a policy of easy money followed by one of restriction of money) and the following depression (sustained by the Federal Government with a policy of high tariffs that strangled world trade) threw large masses into a desperate situation.

The conditions were in place for the appearance on the political stage of a fatherly figure: Franklin Delano Roosevelt. His proposals (the "New Deal"), shortly preceded by the new national socialist government in Germany with similar measures of state control and intervention, would put the federal state in charge of many spheres of social life.

What the New Deal tried in psychologically helping people to regain confidence was considerable; but the practical results in the fight against unemployment were very poor. In 1933, over 12 million people were out of work; in 1938, after 5 years of the New Deal and huge federal expenditures, 10 million people were still unemployed. But, by then, the Second World War was about to erupt, unemployment could be absorbed through enrolment in the army and by the massive production of armaments, and Roosevelt could emerge triumphant both on the domestic and on the foreign fronts. In the end, it was the war which eventually gave millions of unemployed Americans what the New Deal had not been able to deliver, confirming, once again, what had already been acknowledged, that war is, truly, the health and salvation of the state. Nevertheless, the true economic recovery came when the war was over; at that point the state reduced its parasitic spending and its bureaucratic meddling, leaving the productive forces to do what is normal for them to do in the absence of state-made obstacles: to employ people and to produce goods and services to satisfy existing needs. However, in the course of time, the production of an arsenal of weapons and of army-related occupations would come to play an increasing relevant role for sustaining the economy (the military-industrial complex).

In England the war had the same effect of greatly extending the power of the state to regulate the life of the citizens. At some point in the course of the war it was only natural that somebody started thinking about the state taking care of everybody and everything even after the war.

The welfare state was thus born from a series of good intentions by caring and decent people.

The result is that dirigism and welfarism have led to the state taking control of society and dominating the life of the individual. More and more the state has occupied the role once played by the mediaeval church, perfecting it to become even more greedy (taxes), more intrusive (secret police, un-American activities committee, etc.) and more paternalistic (social security) than the old church and, in addition, with compulsory membership, from birth to death.

## STATISM AS A WORLD SYSTEM

(20TH CENTURY)

During the 20th century statism has emerged and affirmed itself all over the world, even in backward countries, sometimes more as mercantilism than as full blown statism.

All these experiences of statism have been characterized, at least initially, by:

- the emergence of a father figure, a saviour
- an anticapitalist stance that was, in actual fact, an attack against liberalism and individualism.

Besides the most striking examples such as Mussolini (the corporative state), Hitler (the volk state), Stalin (the proletarian state), Roosevelt (the interventionist state) and Beveridge (the welfare state), many more figures and experiences of statism have appeared all over the world.

In France, where the state has generally played a primary role, Gaullism and the Fifth Republic reaffirmed and reinforced the dominance of the state in a period of troubled transition from decolonisation.

In Spain and Portugal, Francoism and Salazarism represented a more pre-capitalistic phase of statism, still meshed with colonialism and feudalism.

In Argentina, a very wealthy country after the Second World War, Peronism built and consolidated its statism by associating vast sectors of the population in the sharing and squandering of all the available assets.

In China, Maoism became the new imposed religion and Mao the high priest of a despotic imperialistic state. He was the main culprit for the economic disasters of the "big leap forward" (around 30 million deaths from famine) and for the destructive struggle for power, deceptively called the "Cultural Revolution."

In Africa the state and its bureaucracy have been the poisonous legacy of the European powers, the true black man's burden. In fact, it is not what has been taken away (i.e. natural resources, which are still plentiful in Africa) but what has been left behind (i.e. the beginning of statism) which constitutes the real shackles to any attempt at social emancipation and economic development. African statism has been, in some cases, the result of the combination of nationalism with marxism, which allowed the ruling élite to disguise, underneath the glossy varnish of a revolutionary phraseology, what was nothing else than the expropriation of freedom and the monopolization of resources by the state masters and their servants (the bureaucracy, the police, the army).

In all these cases the state can be considered neither as the "*comité d'affaires*" of the bourgeoisie nor the "patron saint" of the proletariat but a bureaucratic, often criminal, organization sucking wealth from productive groups and allocating it to parasitic strata (factions and sycophants).

And statism is the historical period of wide and deep dominance of this entity called the state above any other social and economic organization.

## STATISM: FOUNDATIONS

(WARFARE-WELFARE)

Statism, as it emerged after the Second World War, is based on two main pillars:

- Warfare (militarism and authoritarianism): the army and the police.

State and state of war are two faces of the same coin. Without preparing incessantly for war and waging war, at regular intervals, the existence of the state cannot be justified, as regulatory tasks can be more suitably performed by other, wider and smaller, organizations. In the absence of full scale war, enemies have to be invented and anxieties have to be artfully manufactured. The cold war, for instance, was a clever invention of statism on both sides. This does not deny the fact that aggressive posturing and imperialistic behaviour were common practice in the post-war period, but they were the result of statism and not the product of communism or capitalism, realities already dead and surviving only as emotionally charged labels. From the perspective of statism it is possible to view and account for, in a more satisfactory way, the Sino-Soviet clashes and the French-USA rivalry.

As a matter of fact, the propaganda about the communist or capitalist menace, while making people insecure and docile, allowed statism to

carry out, everywhere, the biggest programme of army and weapons build-up ever seen on the face of the earth.

There were two main reasons for this display and deployment of military personnel and war equipment:

- to increase and reinforce (willingly or unwillingly) allegiance to one's own side, internally and externally
- to provide employment for masses of people, which leads to the second pillar of statism.
- Welfare (paternalism and parasitism): the bureaucrats and the underclass.

The increase in productivity through the introduction of more effective means and modes of production has led to an increase in output. Over time, the state has become, on a grandiose scale, the controller and allocator of this massive production. And here resides the cunning of statism. With the introduction of welfare it has produced a revised and updated version of the old provision of "*panem et circenses*" to the Roman plebs. Its aims are identical: to manipulate the masses in order to win their favour. State welfare has become the path towards mass "wares-fare", the ever-increasing consumption of goods which, in time, dulls the senses and destroys the critical mind. The proletariat has been replaced by the "consumariat", a crowd of consumption-addicted people ready to follow any fad and any craze, whose sole aim in life is to swallow anything, any time, anywhere. The original sentiment of compassion that was at the basis of the welfare provision has led to corruption via consumption.

Welfare parasitism and ever-escalating levels of consumerism have also acted as a barrier to the progressive shortening of working hours because a growing mass of superfluous goods is expected from a shrinking number of workers, instead of useful and fruitful activities being shared by everybody.

The two associated / antagonistic groups (entrepreneurs and workers) that represented the dynamic of capitalism, have been largely replaced under statism by two mutually supporting groups that feed off each

other: the distributor and the recipient of state benefits. An increase in the numbers of the second group (recipients) requires an increase in the first group (distributors). So it is a bonanza for both of them, as long as it lasts. Welfare has truly become the “worstfare” of late statism, the programmed fabrication of a lost and wretched humanity.

From cradle to grave or, rather, from pristine innocence to moral death: what a devious work of castration and corruption done in the name of care and compassion!

## STATISM: THE CULTURAL SYSTEM

Statism has not been a trick played by a small minority of devious people against the large majority of decent folks. Not at all.

Statism has been the (almost) inevitable, if temporary, result of a long historical process of tumultuous change ushered in by industrialization. In its wake, power libido and anxiety reduction, the longing for terrestrial gods and the quest for security, appeared and mingled, amongst other factors, to give birth to the Leviathan.

The common person of the 20th century, like the one emerging from the dissolution of the Roman empire, was possessed by the terrible angst of being alone and defenceless. In the past, the church had represented, during fearful times, the fatherly / motherly figure in whose embrace the soul could rest until a new period of splendour would come (e.g. the renaissance) and new, more resilient individuals would emerge (e.g. the merchants, the entrepreneurs, the adventurers).

In modern times, capitalism, on the one hand advocating freedom and individualism and, on the other, transforming human beings into machines, had the effect of plunging masses of people into a feeling of utter impotence. That is why the factory workers felt such a strong need to join together in trade unions and parties.

Even many capitalist entrepreneurs, feeling threatened not only by workers' movements but also by the continuous revolutionizing of means and modes of production, joined into associations and lobbied for the safeguard of their interests, supporting factions and coalitions.

All these collective bodies offered protection, assistance and identity, under the guidance of strong leaders.

Almost inevitably, they modelled themselves on the organization in power (the state) and, under the control of ambitious personalities, they became more interested in grabbing a share of that same power than in abolishing its despotic nature.

The long march of approaching power was finally completed in the 20th century when even those organizations that were previously fiercely antagonistic to the state of the "bourgeoisie" (e.g. the socialist parties) became themselves "the state." This was made possible by the common person:

- exchanging freedom for protection
- abdicating responsibility through delegation
- drowning individuality and loneliness in gregariousness and yearning to belong to a "superior" entity, such as the state or the party.

As for the state, its paternalistic and patronizing role during the 20th century was most evident in the economic sphere and was made possible by the powerful productive machine previously brought into being by capitalistic entrepreneurs.

## STATISM: THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM

The economy of statism is based on three main pillars:

- Employment. The survival of statism and its *raison d'être* consist in granting employment to the common person. While capitalism laid the accent on productive or profitable work, statism stresses employment, regardless of the usefulness or meaningfulness of what somebody is requested to do. Employment is paramount even if it consists in alternately digging and filling holes. This need to create jobs is hence at the root of the expansion of bureaucracy and of many intermediary and regulatory tasks (lawyers, accountants, consultants, etc.). During the 20th century, the rise of statism was unstoppable and unstopable mainly because more and more people were earning a living from the state (bureaucracy, army, police), by the state (lawyers, accountants), for the state (tax collectors). The state was feeding them and they were dependent on the state. Without the state, no job, no security, no future, nothing. At least, so many believed.

Plenty of these jobs, and the high number of people filling them, were not a physiological requirement for the working of an advanced society but a necessity of state control (the stick) and state paternalism (the carrot of parasitic allocations).

- Consumerism. The availability of resources and manufactured goods on an unparalleled scale has made possible an orgy of consumption. While capitalism was the realm of production, so statism is the realm of consumption. For the state, consumerism is the way to kill two birds with one stone; on the one side it generates an obtuse numb contentment in the mass of consumers; on the other, through indirect taxation, it quietly extracts revenues to feed (e.g. through welfare payments) a further expanded cycle of generalized consumerism.

- Tax and Debts. To pay for parasitic employment (bureaucrats), parasitic unemployment (welfare recipients) and gargantuan consumption by parasitic strata, there is a need for huge amounts of revenue. To this end the state has resorted to:

- printing money: this has caused inflation and it is not by chance that the period of statism has been historically and intrinsically associated with constant inflationary pressures;

- borrowing money: this has resulted in the accumulation of a huge debt (domestic or foreign) that is the most conspicuous economic legacy of statism to future generations;

- extorting money: this has taken place through scorching taxation that has hampered if not discouraged investment and hindered social and economic development. The state is not at all interested in craftsmanship (the ability to produce useful and durable goods) but in “taxmanship” (the ability to tax merchandise - the more useless and ephemeral the merchandise, the better for the coffers of the state).

Under statism two aspects have become paramount:

- the pricing of every transaction: the state is interested in the price of everything and in the value of nothing, for the simple reason that, for the purpose of taxation, price is everything and value is nothing;

- the control of every transaction: the state attributes such a weight to the control of every transaction (e.g. hiring of workers, selling of goods) that any economic intercourse unsupervised by the state is criminalized and blacklisted (black labour, black market).

The economy of statism, in fact, relies totally on this pricing and control of everything in order to drain resources from producers and channel them towards parasitic strata and parasitic occupations under the aegis of the state.

## STATISM: THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The political system of statism is based on a series of organised groups (parties, lobbies, electoral committees, mafia groups, etc.) whose aim is to acquire power or to put like-minded people into positions of power.

The capitalist aim of profit through production has been replaced, under statism, by the push for power and prestige through patronage.

Where universal suffrage exists, everybody, in principle, can be elected or can help to elect somebody to the highest positions of power. This is the strong appeal of democratic statism.

In both democratic and autocratic statism, as in every system of delegated / usurped power, the overall objective, once the summit is reached, is to stay there for as long as possible by using, towards the masses, a mix of benevolence and brutality, charity and cruelty, tenderness and terror, as deemed applicable and appropriate.

To hold on to power any trick is acceptable. The two basic ones are:

- falsification-mystification of reality

The main (inevitable) political mystification is to promote the identification of party interest with the general interest and to discredit polit-

ical adversaries (if they are not physically liquidated or practically silenced) with all sorts of specious arguments or manufactured lies. Plausible innuendoes take the place of factual truths. To put it briefly, what is part and parcel of political life would not be at all acceptable in any productive activity where mutual trust and cooperation are basic and essential pre-requisites.

- corruption-captivation of people

The mystification of party interests through their identification with the general interests is achieved mainly by corrupting large sections of the electorate through selected allocations of public resources extorted by the state. This buying of consent is done through:

- hiring an army of servants. Modern statism has done away with the "*ancien régime*" restricted attribution of state positions. It has flung the doors wide open and created a large army of bureaucrats taken from all walks of life.

- feeding a large number of dependent people (e.g. the welfare recipients), who rely more and more on the big brother state. This dissipation of public money also wins for the state the complicity of some productive sectors that find an artificially created mass market (the welfare recipients as eager consumers) for their goods.

In short, the political hand of statism supports the economic hand and both, artfully using words such as "compassion", "employment" and "redistribution", play the moral card, wearing the mask of the benevolent provident parent.

## STATISM: POSITIVE ASPECTS

The fact that statism has lasted for decades means that, in many situations and in several aspects, it has been a historically necessary response to the needs of the people.

It must also be admitted that, in the early phases, when it was not yet a monopolistic power, the state (i.e. the Parliament) introduced highly progressive and worthy laws (the limitation of the working day, the protection of children, etc.).

Furthermore, not all the money allocated by the state went towards parasitic endeavours; sometimes it contributed to improve a regional area (e.g. the Tennessee Valley Authority) or to create favourable conditions for economic revival (e.g. the case of Singapore).

In some other cases, the state, i.e. intelligent individuals within the state, have taken measures that have given some dignity to the down-trodden and lifted the common person to a better life.

Even homogenisation, when it results in the introduction of higher standards or in the repeal of cruel local customs, has to be put on the positive side of the state's balance sheet.

In many cases things would have taken place locally, in due course, through the process of imitation, but this should not discount the role of accelerator played, in various instances, by the state.

At the same time, it must be recognized that, as the state accumulated power and became a monopolistic agent, the negative aspects grew exponentially; they have now reached the point where they provide the rationale for the overcoming of the state if human beings and communities are to develop further.

## STATISM: NEGATIVE ASPECTS

While advocates could put forward other positive aspects of statism, no exhaustive register of them could match the catalogue of utter desolation and tragedy for which statism is responsible, superior in horror and depravity to any other organization or phenomenon in history. Only a pallid euphemism could describe them as the negative aspects of statism. They are here classified into three headings:

### - Dependency

Statism has made people dependent on an impersonal power, on a collective super-imposed conscience to which the personal moral conscience has abdicated. It has restricted people's freedom to move from place to place unless consented and regulated by the state (passport, visa, special permit, etc.). It has created an underclass of lifeless puppets, who wait at the door for a cheque to arrive in order to numb the futility of their lives by buying objects that make them feel alive while already morally and mentally dead.

Dependency has served statism very well, while crushing personal and social development. In actual fact, development and statism are incompatible terms insofar as development is an inner process of gaining

strength and becoming independent, whereas statism is a top-down situation of control and subjugation.

- Despondency

Statism is responsible for many phenomena of hatred known as racism, antisemitism, chauvinism, nationalism and ethnocentrism, in which one group, becoming "the state", has gone on the rampage and has manufactured, for others, a condition of utter hopelessness and despondency. The deportation and destruction of ethnic communities (Native Americans, Armenians, Jews, Kurds, Tibetans, Tutsi, and on and on), has been one of the most revolting products of the domination of statism.

Besides that, there is the brainwashing of so-called dissidents, the crushing of individuals, of anyone not in agreement with or in obedience to the State power. The Cheka, the KGB, the SS, the OVRA, the Carabinieri, the Prefecture, the Committee for un-American activities, the police, the army, or even the petty bureaucrat, all have had the power, at one time or another and in various ways and at different levels, to make the life of free individuals and communities simply miserable or totally unbearable.

- Death

Statism has been obsessed with creating a machine for destruction that has reached its zenith with the atomic bomb. Under statism, we all have been witnesses, many times, of systematic material destruction and physical and spiritual death. The atrocities committed by states during the 20th century are unparalleled in scale and can be compared in brutality (but not in duration) to those committed by the most deranged, disturbed and depraved of personalities.

Even the Spanish Inquisition, the most despicable expression of power of a sector of the Catholic Church, that resulted in the execution of between 3000 - 5000 people in the course of 350 years (1478-1834), cannot remotely compare with the 6 million Jews exterminated by Nazi statism, the more than 10 million liquidated by Stalinist statism, or the 30 million starved to

death by Maoist statism. And these are only a small sample of the death fury of the state. In fact, during the historical period of statism, approximately from 1870 (French-Prussian war, destruction of the Porta Pia wall in Rome and invasion of the Papal kingdom by the Italian state) to 1989 (fall of the Berlin Wall and dissolution of communist statism), the deaths caused by the state through the countless disasters, large and small, that it engendered (wars, deportations, famines, etc.), exceed 100 million people, on average 1 million individuals sacrificed every year to and by Leviathan.

Looking back at the 20th century, the horror of statism is still there for anyone who cares to open his eyes or remember: the gas chambers, the concentration camps, the ethnic cleansing, the mass murders, the abolition of freedom, the annihilation of dignity, communities torn apart, children denouncing parents, and friends betraying friends.

Under the yoke of statism too many people have lived in constant fear and danger of violent death, and still do, because, all too often, the state has made the lives of free human beings and communities poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

# **PART III**

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PRESENT / FUTURE



## THE CRISIS OF STATISM

Towards the end of the 20th century, statism entered a terminal crisis from which there seems to be no way out. This is because the state itself, its very existence and permanence, has come to be The Problem, i.e. the very source of most problems. And so, as the solution of a problem consists in overcoming the problem itself by eliminating its source, so the solution to the crisis of statism consists in going beyond statism itself through the progressive overcoming of the territorial monopolistic state.

Too many hopes and beliefs about the state that too many people held dear for too long are becoming too dear to hold anymore. Too dear in terms of moral corruption, material failure and sheer political idiocy.

Let us examine the main points of the crisis. They involve at least three facets:

- Moral crisis
- Material crisis
- Political crisis

## MORAL CRISIS

The most evident sign of the moral crisis of statism is its lack of any progressive values. Fake principles such as patriotism, race, military heroism and the like, having collapsed, have been replaced by other fake messages condensed into catch phrases like “public interest” and “public welfare”, convenient formulas used to cover up the hoarding and looting of resources by parasitic groups.

Nothing better exemplifies the moral bankruptcy of statism than the total replacement of morality with legality. The functioning of society is seen as the controlled implementation of all sorts of regulations and restrictions imposed from above and not as the free interplay of human beings endowed with morality and rationality. The result is that the states with more regulations and more policing are those with more disorder and social disease. As the drug addict sees in the continuous consumption of drugs the solution to his/her problems and does not want to acknowledge that this supposed solution is in reality the enlargement and deepening of the problem, so does it happen with statism when it advocates more and more regulations and restrictions.

A further indicator of moral crisis is the belief in the thaumaturgic power of money. Statism believes that money can solve every problem,

arising from any situation, at any time and in any place. The result has been the multiplication and intensification of moral problems, with the institution and insertion of powerful mafia groups and petty criminals as sub-sections of the state.

Within the dominion of statism there seem to be no limits to legal madness (e.g. miscarriages of justice) and money squandering (e.g. misappropriation and misuse of financial resources), especially when sustained by strong parasitic interests masquerading as general public interest. In this respect, at least, capitalism offered a less hypocritical and more open picture of personal interests, advocating (rightly or wrongly) that they would eventually work for the public good. More cunningly, statism deceptively portrays sectorial or egotistic interests as general public interests.

But the main difference between the two is that while capitalism was a progressive and productive period of history, statism is a parasitic one and there is no way that parasitism could ever be in the general interest. Furthermore capitalism was provident in the use of resources while statism is profligate.

And this fact leads straight to the second aspect: the material crisis.

## MATERIAL CRISIS

Statism has found favour with the masses because, in periods of deep misery and uncertainty (war, strife, famine, unemployment, etc.), very often produced or provoked by the state itself, the same state has either provided some semblance of security (albeit fake and ephemeral) or the impression of being the only organization capable of restoring security.

The main aspect of security provision has been the redistribution of material resources (goods) that entrepreneurs (risk takers), inventors (device makers) and workers (commodities producers) generated firstly through mechanization and later automatization.

The redistribution of resources has been the master stroke of statism but it could also play a large part in its undoing. In fact it has created bigger and bigger expectations on the part of a larger and larger number of people. It has multiplied parasitism and parasitic occupations to a level never attained in human memory. At the same time, it has given people fictitious reasons to believe that they are performing useful activities that are essential in a modern society or that they are playing roles sustainable in a progressive society.

Most lawyers, accountants, notaries, civil servants, welfare recipients, etc. are part of a magma made of a mixture of illusion in the present and likely disillusion in the future. They are, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, part of a massive bureaucracy or, in other words, a vast “parasitocracy”.

To feed and sustain this parasitocracy, the states, all over the world, have accumulated huge debts that they will hand down as a legacy to future generations. To keep the façade from falling down, the states are hurriedly selling assets previously grabbed and monopolised, desperately promoting gambling (lotteries and all sorts of money games) and are pushing as ever for consumerism, to keep the flow of tax revenues running.

To every free and rational human being the state appears, more and more, as a tentacular racket based on extortion, corruption and fraud.

It is a moral and material disaster.

The bubble will burst when the perception of a moral and material crisis becomes more palpable and is compounded by a political crisis, the overdue discovery that the king is not only stark naked, but flaccid and wretched.

## POLITICAL CRISIS

The veil of fiction that shrouded and supported representative democracy has finally fallen.

Representative parliamentary democracy should have been more appropriately called manipulative totalitarian “statocracy”, as the state has intervened to regulate (or tried to regulate) each and every aspect of people’s lives, including the drinking habits and sexual practices of adult couples.

In any case, transformed or not, the electoral process no longer represents, if ever it did, the will of the majority, entrusted to honest and faithful delegates and translated by them into reality through appropriate and well-thought out measures.

In fact, even in the past, this idealized portrait of representative democracy did not correspond to reality, as we had a majority of people electing an élite and, almost submissively, without much interference, accepting to be run by it.

Now we have reached the point where a minority of the population elects and delegates everything to a micro élite. It makes the old belief

that the electoral process is an expression of the will of the majority appear not just fictional but farcical.

Faith in the polls has collapsed. The ballot box has become an empty box.

The crisis of political representation is a crisis of politics "*tout court*", or of politics as it has operated throughout the period of statism, which is to say of parties, lobbies and pressure groups busily selling votes, putting on masks, setting up smoke screens, manufacturing lies, manipulating minds, again and again, *ad nauseam*.

At present, there is such frustration and desperation with politics that whoever appears to be saying something new with a new tone of voice and a new posture attracts interest and followers, at least for a while.

But the way out of this mess is not any longer (if it ever was) through preachers and followers of new Gospels.

The way out consists, first of all, in a personal awakening to and awareness of a new reality that is emerging and of the new seeds of potential empowerment that it is nurturing and bringing to life.

## THE NEW REALITY

The new reality exposes, in many subtle but unequivocal ways, to all whose eyes are not blinded by a vested interest, the unremitting decay and obsolescence of the state.

The state is on the retreat, everywhere, on all fronts. It has had to give up its role as producer/operator in nationalized industries amid mounting debts and incompetent management. As patronizing distributor of public resources, the state is heading towards disaster as the growth in resources does not match the increase in expectations and demands. As controller of the life of people the state is totally impotent except in culturally poor and technologically backward societies.

Many tasks and powers that were the prerogatives of the national state have been taken away by international organizations or recaptured by regional communities.

The nation state is under pressure from above (globalism) and from below (localism) and is gradually being minced up by the concomitant action of these two powerful jaws.

Certainly the state and its parasitic strata are not about to go gracefully, without putting up a fight.

Revenues lost in one sector are balanced by a more stringent fiscalism in another sector (i.e. reducing direct taxation while increasing or even doubling indirect taxation). The right hand routinely recovers what the left has conceded or lost.

Reality is multi-faceted. For instance, as far as state control is concerned, the same year (1989) that saw the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of dictatorial states in eastern Europe, witnessed also the Tiananmen massacre with the strengthening of Chinese state dominance. The same year saw also the coming on the scene of the World Wide Web, which sounded the death knell to any future attempt at the control of communication and fixing of borders by the state.

So, with ups and downs, this more and more useless and dangerous entity that the state has become is vainly struggling against the new seeds sown by the ingenuity and resiliency of human beings all over the globe. These new seeds are making the state superfluous and are hastening the moment when the state will wither away as a bygone remnant of past ages.

## THE NEW SEEDS

Even while statism was on the rise, new seeds were being sown that would lead, in the long run, to its demise.

It is all to do, as often in history, with going beyond actual or artificial borders. Nowadays it is happening with a speed and to an extent that is quite remarkable.

This going beyond borders concerns three main aspects that are drawing people together:

- expressing (talking): individuals are connected to and are communicating with the entire world more and more freely, easily, and cheaply than ever before
- exploring (travelling): individuals are moving all over the earth, navigating and criss-crossing it physically and virtually
- exchanging (trading): individuals are exchanging with the entire world not just material goods but also ideas and projects.

Through this universal expressing/exploring/exchanging, human beings and the communities of which they feel to be part are progressively becoming nationless and stateless as they grow more and more

acquainted with the different cultures and familiar with the various localities and societies they go through, stop at, live in, trade with and so on and so forth.

In fact, it is not the talking, travelling or trading in itself that is noteworthy or the simple fact that this is happening on an unparalleled scale, but what it could lead to and is already leading to in terms of a new conceptual and empirical paradigm.

## THE NEW PARADIGM

A new reality, following the coming to fruition of new seeds of opportunities, must be matched by the emergence of a new paradigm, which means a new, more appropriate way of seeing reality and seizing possibilities.

This new paradigm conceives the world as made of small interconnected cooperating voluntary communities instead of big monolithic separate monopolistic blocks (the territorial nation states) in opposition to one another.

It is based on the concepts of:

- micro: through communication, space becomes smaller and time shorter; people can virtually be almost anywhere in space (ubiquity) in a fraction of time (instantaneousness). Miniaturization of components and downsizing of instruments go hand in hand with increase in power and scope for each human being. Many individuals already have at their disposal tools that not even the rich and powerful possessed not so long ago.

- poly: the empowerment offered by new small devices at incredibly reduced cost leads to a multiplication of decision centres, to a diffusion

of knowledge and power that gives birth to a polyphony of voices, in a vast universal network on a worldwide scale.

- continuum: this polyphonic universal reality can be seen as a continuous network of communities in which sounds (languages), colours (bodies), tastes (attitudes), etc. mingle and blend like on a spectrum of gradation and variety. For this reason, the entities composing a networked world are not any longer to be seen as opposing dualities within distinct borders but as interconnected cooperating pluralities (rich entities) on a borderless continuum.

In brief, the world is becoming a planetary polyphonic network of parallel micro-societies, a continuous variety of hamlets inhabited by cosmopolitan individuals and communities, in touch with one another and in charge and care of their own reality.

## THE NEW REQUIREMENTS

The passage from big monolithic clashing blocks to a continuum of small polyphonic interconnected entities demands the fulfilling of some requirements and their continuous refinement.

These requirements can be summed up as:

- variety: as smallness feeds plurality so plurality feeds variety. The variety of situations and entities replaces uniformity and is accompanied by the need for versatility.
- versatility: this means flexibility and adaptability in responding to a rich and diverse reality. It replaces rigidity and is accompanied by the need for velocity.
- velocity: this is promptness of intervention, especially to avert a disaster or to avoid a nuisance and to solve a problematic situation without being hampered or blocked by irresponsible procrastination or meaningless procedures.

These requirements of variety/versatility/velocity are not and cannot be met by statism and its bureaucratic way of thinking and acting, based fundamentally on exactly opposite principles, that is to say:

- uniformity instead of variety
- rigidity instead of versatility
- rituality instead of velocity

The new requirements, emerging out of a new paradigm, demand and foster a new scenario.

## THE NEW SCENARIO

An imbalance has become more and more visible towards the end of the 20th century. On the one side we witness the ever growing power of individuals to express, explore, exchange (talk/travel/trade) autonomously and universally whilst, on the other, they are still subjected to strains and strictures imposed by the state rulers and their bureaucracies. This cannot last.

A new scenario is already beginning to appear.

This new scenario is based on and fosters:

- dis-intermediation: direct access / action replaces filtering and delegation;
- de-hierarchization: knowledge-rich doers / actors get direct access to the information and become decision-makers;
- de-massification: personalization and customization advance as individuals and communities take the leading role instead of classes and masses;
- de-concentration: diffusion (of people, ideas, utilities) becomes possible at no extra cost and without disadvantages or diseconomies;

- de-centralization: there are no central nodes as the network becomes more important than any specific point;
- de-compartmentalization: artificial borders recede and finally vanish;
- de-territorialization: the monopolistic sovereignty of a large territory becomes impossible and obsolete;
- de-monetization: national state currencies disappear and are replaced by electronic compensation units.

All these aspects of the new scenario are part of a shift in power that has been going on subterraneously for quite a while.

The result of this shift is **Polyarchy**.

## POLYARCHY

Polyarchy is the organization/ diffusion of power in the age of universal electronic communication and ubiquitous cybernetic regulation.

While capitalism was based on machinery (capital) and production, and statism on employment (labour) and consumption, Polyarchy is based on activities in which human beings rich in knowledge and wisdom interact with artefacts endowed with data and information, promoting the freedom and well-being of individuals and communities.

Polyarchy, advocating voluntarism (freedom) against dirigism (restriction of freedom), does not mean a return to original capitalism, for many reasons, moral and historical; the simplest of these being the fact that some of the main components that produced capitalism (e.g. mechanical devices) are no longer there. We have gone, in social and technological terms, far beyond capitalism as a mechanical physical world has given way to an electronic virtual one and the central place occupied once by capital (stock of machines) has been taken by ideational activities (flux of creative ideas).

As statism had replaced capitalism, so Polyarchy is replacing statism which was/is the organization/concentration of power proper to a world dominated by bigness and brutishness, run by a bureaucracy that impeded variety, abolished flexibility and quite often obscured rationality.

Polyarchy is the organization proper to a cybernetic world made of:

- nodes (individuals, communities)
- nets (networks of communication, coordination, cooperation)
- paths (plurality of means of connection and forms of expression).

It is based on the empowerment of individuals and communities on a scale never before attained in human history.

While statism relied on the division of power between élites, in a centre, within the state, Polyarchy is based on the diffusion and multiplication of powers to individuals and communities, everywhere, without the state.

In fact, Polyarchy, fostering the ever wider and deeper spread of technology (e.g. communication) and consciousness (e.g. participation), challenges the very idea of centre and periphery and certainly its crystallization.

Through the multiplication of centres, Polyarchy aims at overcoming two historical divisions:

- the centre-periphery division (also known as the town-country division): each community becoming an active node (a centre) in the network
- the dominant-dependent division (also known as the manual-intellectual division): each individual becoming a protagonist (an actor) in the community and in the network.

Whenever and wherever compulsory and crystallized divisions of this type survive in the future, this would point to the persistence of statism, even if disguised by new phraseology.

Besides this focal point represented by the multiplication of centres (voluntary communities), Polyarchy is based on specific:

- principles
- protagonists
- processes.

## PRINCIPLES

Polyarchy advocates the following basic principles:

- autonomy: individuals and communities should be free to do everything that is not expressly declared and ascertained as damaging another community or other individuals. This is in contrast with statism in general and the authoritarian state in particular where, through a proliferation of prohibitions, restrictions and impositions, we had reached the point where all that was not expressly allowed was forbidden.

- equity: while equality could mean uniformity, equity aims at fairness amongst individuals, which means acting in a reasonable, equitable, honest way.

- care: state welfare is replaced by individuals and communities caring for each other and propelling each other towards self-reliance instead of being pushed towards dependency. Leaving aside exceptional cases, the roles of caring and cared for are not permanently confined to the same individuals, as is the rule under bureaucratic statism, but are interchangeably played by everyone.

The putting into practice of these basic principles requires the proliferation and consolidation of new active protagonists as opposed to the many withdrawn and indifferent figures vegetating under statism.

## PROTAGONISTS

Polyarchy is the result of and will result in:

- polyvalent cosmopolitan individuals
- multi-cultural, multi-ethnic communities.

These two protagonists give life to a dynamic reality made of networks of:

- cooperatives of production and distribution;
- civic bodies (agencies) to provide for basic services (e.g. maintenance of roads) and to implement basic regulations (e.g. food safety).

The distinction between individuals and communities has nothing to do with the old ideological (i.e. fake) opposition between private and public that originated as the contrast between people deprived of access to state sinecures (i.e. the private person) and people granted them as state privileges (i.e. courtiers, sycophants, etc.).

Also the distinction between national (native, local) and foreigner (alien, stranger) loses any juridical relevance and becomes meaningless as everybody is free to move everywhere without any barriers being imposed by the states to impede/restrict their movement.

In fact, with the extinction of the state and of its bureaucracy, these false distinctions and hostile oppositions disappear and are replaced by the interaction of free individuals and voluntary communities on a network continuum: from a maturing individual to a fully developed individual, to many individuals, to a small community, to many communities, to a world community made by a world of communities.

These rich and various interactions between protagonists (individuals, communities) animate the dynamic processes of Polyarchy.

## PROCESSES

Polyarchy is based on self-regulated, multi-regulated processes, at various interconnected levels.

In contrast with statism, which relies essentially on top-down decision-making processes, Polyarchy is built on reticular flows (information, decision, action) in which there is no visible centre or acknowledged fixed top.

The different hierarchical levels of bureaucratic statism have to be disposed of for the general principle of autonomy (self-rule) to be implemented. This principle simply advocates that those affected by the regulation should also be those who make the decision concerning the regulation.

Furthermore, polyarchic entities, like biological organisms, react on a permanent basis and in real time to imbalances (by feed-back) and, as thinking organisations, forecast and anticipate ways to solve problems (by feed-forward planning).

Reality is so dynamic that the state static way of solving problems through *post-factum* administrative or legislative measures that take

ages to propose and produce (let alone to implement) appears more and more to belong to a past era.

Now, the sclerotic administrative paraphernalia of statism must give way to the cybernetic processes of Polyarchy. They consist in the development of autonomous nodes interconnected by reliable nets through fast and flexible paths, where the variety (of situations) is matched by versatility (of actions) coupled with velocity (of decisions).

Polyarchy is the proper way for communicating/coordinating/cooperating in the age of the networked society, when inner moral principles replace once again outer imposed princes and principals and the human being is not any longer a cog in the machinery of the state, performing the same task time and time again, but the protagonist of a new inspiring play on the world scene and in world history.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The *Zeitgeist* of the 20th century has been the myth of the state, the protector, the dispenser, the *alma mater* of the angst ridden masses. The angst has disappeared and the myth is falling apart. Only the state survives, by inertia.

But still, an intense struggle is going to be fought between the state and human beings/communities advocating Polyarchy. State bureaucracy will keep trying, till the end, to strike and fight autonomy with all sorts of old ideological weapons, shouting their litany against individualism, "private" interest, and anarchy. It is the same old game: to fabricate and spread hatred and fear; to promote and feed irresponsibility and foolishness.

It will find the usual band of old cronies, the authoritarian communist, the self-deluded liberal, the fake anarchist, the angry trade-unionist, the nation-loving patriot, all under respectable banners (anarchy, ecology, internationalism, anti-authoritarianism). Under these disguises they will try to pass and impose the usual stinking bag of monopolism, protectionism, paternalism, in a word, state strangulation. And, as usual, they will do this in the name of those they pretend to defend

(the working class, the people in the developing countries, etc.) but whom they actually corrupt morally and oppress materially.

Human beings and communities need to be/become conscious of this ideological trash in order to unmask what lies behind it, i.e. the arrogance, greed and abject parasitism of the state.

We have to build our way out of the dead end triangle made by bureaucrats and politicians, degenerate and servile intellectuals, fake and corrupted welfare recipients. We must put an end to parasitism and pillage and replace it with production and participation in the enjoyment of goods and services conducive to ever more widespread well-being.

The territorial nation state is decaying rapidly and we can already smell its incipient decomposition in the many cases of sleaze, corruption, misappropriation, injustice and violence that have been, and more and more are part and parcel of, the daily life of these huge parasitocracies. We must be careful about what replaces it because parasites have many tricks up their sleeves and they can invent many ways to keep people subordinate, morally, mentally and materially.

The master-slave, egoism-altruism dynamic goes on forever. The pursuit of emancipation and liberation is a never-ending commitment.

Even Polyarchy is not the definitive solution. It will be only a period in history. Globalism and localism might very well change meaning, giving way to further dynamics.

Probably the multiplication of centres will not be enough and there will be a move from Polyarchy to Panarchy, when every single individual and small voluntary community will aspire to become more and more a protagonist, a flourishing centre in its own right. History carries on until the end of time.

**Human Beings and Communities of the World  
Awake, Associate and Act**

World Wide Wisdom  
Oxford - Saint-Imier - La Coruña - Milano  
2021



