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## **Holocaust and beyond: calamities as historical crisis or global change in world order policy modelling?**

*Holocausto e mais além: calamidades como crise histórica ou mudança global na modelagem política da ordem mundial?*

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## Abstract

This paper intends to contribute for the reframe and reconceptualization of the key global changes and to sketch key guidelines to redesign the most advanced world order policy modelling, rethinking the concepts of individual, organization and life, from the point of view of general science of complex system. Then, at first, the text aims to analyze how western civilization has been profoundly and irrevocably changed by the Holocaust. After, the text presents four comments or theses on the paradoxical dilemmas emerging from all the foregoing reflections on the Holocaust and, then, lists some trends of man and society in calamity situations.

**Keywords:** complexity; complex systems; holocaust; crisis; global change.

## Resumo

*Este artigo pretende contribuir para a ressignificação e reconceitualização das mudanças globais e esboçar as diretrizes fundamentais para redesenhar a mais avançada modelagem política da ordem mundial, repensando os conceitos de indivíduo, de organização e da vida, a partir da ciência geral dos sistemas complexos. Então, em primeiro lugar, o texto tem como objetivo analisar como a civilização ocidental tem sido profundamente e irrevogavelmente mudada pelo Holocausto. Após, o texto apresenta quatro comentários ou teses sobre os dilemas paradoxais emergentes de todas as reflexões anteriores sobre o Holocausto e, em seguida, enumera algumas tendências do homem e da sociedade em situações de calamidade.*

**Palavras-chave:** complexidade; sistemas complexos; holocausto; crise; mudança global.

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## 1. Prolongue: a letter<sup>3</sup>

8/1/03

My dear Andy,

Please forgive me as I hereby inflict upon you this bundle of my “serious” writings. Fortunately, compared to the kind of serious scholarly-philosophical works you are usually dealing with, my stuff is light and easy.

---

<sup>3</sup> Leon Rappoport(1932-2009) was Emeritus Professor and past Head of the Dept. of Social Psychology of the Kansas State University; Manhattan Campus. Where Andrea Pitasi served as Visiting Professor in September 2001 in the very time of the Attack on America. Rappoport was a very sophisticated intellectual and scholar strongly inspired by postmodernism and he dealt with both global impact topics such as genocide and holocaust but also with softer and lighter topics such as food and humor. From 2001 to Rappoport’s death he and Andrea Pitasi cooperated in several publications Leon considered Andrea a kind of intellectual and spiritual son and Andrea was always proud and delighted to consider Leon his intellectual father.

In fact, as I have looked over most of it, I am immodestly pleased to see that it IS pretty light and easy, and even better, quite nicely readable! In short, and to be disgustingly honest about it, I am quite happy with myself... in the sense that, when reading over much of this work, I find myself really attracted to the guy that produced it... just the sort of fellow I'd like to meet and have as a friend! Isn't this remarkable? And so far removed from the angst, depression and regrets that one has come to expect from all respectable, failed intellectuals of our time, when they look back on their "collected works!"

Ah well, at least I have NOT included the several pounds of my published empirical research papers: the stuff that allowed me to become a tenured full Prof, of social psychology. Some of that actually is not too bad, but its all dated, and all written under the burden of having to get it approved by research journal editors. Nevertheless, I'm impressed by the range & variability: from attitude studies to interpersonal conflict, cognitive development, and a few pounds of psychohistory and Holocaust Studies. The pleasure here is from seeing that I succeeded quite well in pursuing problems and topics that I thought were interesting and worth some effort.

One thing in the bundle I know you will enjoy: my little collection of notes from Paul Feyarabend. You can see from this that he was a truly delightful character. And of course, in looking through this material I just feel blessed, honored and affirmed, that someone of such brilliance and wonderful human passion would seemingly "recognize me" as a... colleague, or fellow "outlaw scholar." I'm sending you my Feyarabend file because I don't see any point in keeping it for myself, and more importantly, because you are the only one I know who can properly appreciate and enjoy it. And maybe even someday pass it on to another free thinking outlaw scholar.

I cant help thinking now what a grand thing it has been to have lived a life that provided me a sense of comradeship with such rare, admirable people like Feyarabend and Pitasi!

Of course, the life is not yet over, but... I'm sure you know what I mean.

And now a final plea! Please do not burden yourself with any feeling of obligation to read all the stuff. It is, as they say, "just for fun," and it would pain me to think of it as being heavy work or obligation.

Ciao!

Leon

## **2. Brief introduction**

In August-September 2001 I served as visiting professor at Kansas State University (KSU), Manhattan Campus, invited by professor Richard Harris with whom we were working about media effects. In those great days, I met Leon Rappoport, full professor of social psychology and past department head. Over 6 feet and four inches tall this New Yorker in his late 60s early 70s looked a bit like a Star Trek character with no hair and long, thin ears. The first time we met he invited me for a coffee in the bowling and cafeteria building of the campus. We spent hours talking about postmodern social sciences and global changes. We enthusiastically kept in touch after I left Kansas in the immediate post 911 days. Though the years we collaborated in some publications and on August 1 2003 Leon Rappoport sent me the letter in the prologue which up to now is the most important and most beautiful one I received in my life. To diffuse and develop Leon Rappoport's writings and thought is a key point in my academic agenda. A book of selected writings of Leon Rappoport is in progress in collaboration between Andea Pitasi and Ronald Downey, Emeritus professor at KSU and probably Leon's best friend. They shared both intellectual research and fishing week ends. Leon unfortunately died in 2009. It was not a sudden death but was a very short illness which killed him and he did not have time to revise his writings. The version in my hands was typewritten and featured by handwritten footnotes thus the systematization of his writings is not very difficult but not too easy either. My purpose is to diffuse and develop his key intellectual vision at large so that further scholars will find their research on Leon's epistemology and theoretical postmodernism. I wish my service as editor will be effective to reach this goal and facilitate young students and scholars to enjoy the company of Leon's thought.

## **3. Four theses on the Holocaust as historical crisis**

We have no particular desire to use the Holocaust as a platform for announcing new prophecies of future disasters; the conclusions suggested by our analysis can be judged on their own merits. It does seem important, however, to end by emphasizing again our view of how western civilization has been profoundly and irrevocably changed by the Holocaust. The Nazi

genocide not only took innocent millions of lives, it also consumed the structures of thought and language by which lives had previously been lived. By virtue of the Holocaust, such words as innocence or guilt, reason and unreason, and the like, have lost their intrinsic meaning. They remain with us now as operative, denotative concepts that mean only what we want them to mean insofar as we have the wit, will, or power to impose our definitions.

It is for this reason, more than any other, that scholars and artists have produced so much about the Holocaust that adds up finally, to so little: The instruments of expression and the conceptual "tools" of rational analysis are inadequate. Words, symbols, images, and the numerical aggregates of quantitative social sciences cannot adequately abstract and convey human experiences that lie beyond historically evolved limits of meaning. Trying to do this is like trying to describe the workings of a computer with the language and logic available to Shakespeare. The more strenuously one struggles whilst such tasks, the more likely it is the more they will be confusing, frustrating, and ultimately false. Here too may be found important sources for the controversy and polemics that invariably surround scholars and artists who engage the Holocaust. (Let anyone produce anything substantial on the subject, and almost immediately ten critics spring forward to condemn both the work itself and the character of the author.)

Discussing how it is possible for language to provoke political violence and rage, Hannah Arendt has suggested that "Words can be relied upon only if one is sure that their function is to reveal and not to conceal, it is the semblance of rationality, much more than the interests behind it, that *pro rage* (italics added)." This particular theme – the semblance of rationality that language may impose on experience – is well recognized as a fact of political life where, indeed, language is frequently and deliberately perverted to suit special interests, and where the result may include a generalized falsification of life experience as Herbert Marcuse suggests in his elaboration of the Marxist concept of false consciousness. A similar viewpoint is expressed in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, where Paulo Friere argues more directly and generally that when human beings "name the world" by labeling and identifying their experiences with words, they are also transforming the world because of the imperatives toward self-reflection and action that are inherent to all authentic language.

These perspectives on language, as well as others in the same vein that may be found in the writings of Sartre, Adorno, and Merleau-Ponty, all circle back to the central theme we have noted in connection with Wittgenstein; namely, that reason and ethics must remain independent of language or else run the risk of being distorted or "bewitched." The historical crisis of the Holocaust, therefore, is a crisis of moral meaning for our civilization, because the traditional linguistic forms for expressing the meanings of morality – are unable to speak about it, but such discussion is itself inadequate "to convey what we mean! If we are correct in our judgment that" existing language is simply inadequate to the task of expressing the significance of the Holocaust, then our own use of language in this analysis must also be thrown into grave doubt. It may seem, consequently, that we are ending up trapped in an impossible paradox, and this is in some degree quite true. Not for nothing has it been noted the outset of this chapter that scholars who gaze into the face of the Holocaust are likely to be turned to stone! Yet the mode of investigation and exposition finally adopted by Wittgenstein for his work on ordinary language may be applied to good purposes at this juncture. Consider the following exercise.

During a good part of the several years spent working on this book we, like many of the victims trapped in Nazi camps and ghettos, probed various sources of thought concerning morality, searching for a definition firm enough to sustain exposure to the Holocaust without melting into an arbitrary dribble. We finally settled on this statement: "Morality is the ability to act on the conviction that there are some things worse than dying." And later we added a corollary: "A-morality follows from the ability to act on the conviction that there are some things worse than making other people die." It was only much later still that the false nature of such definitions became clear, for if psychiatry and modern psychohistory reveal anything, they reveal this: If a person can be convinced that they might willingly sacrifice themselves for some higher value, moral or otherwise, then they are usually willing, and perhaps eager, to sacrifice others." Thus one can discover very concretely how language plays tricks, for the strongest imperative toward moral action that can be expressed may also serve, with slight alterations, as the strongest imperative toward a-moral action!

The critical analysis of language briefly illustrated above all of course begun to emerge as a matter of philosophical discussion long before the Nazi genocide program existed. It is the evidence of the Holocaust, howev-

er, that forces recognition of the concrete horrors that can flow the magic of language. Inhuman horrors only implied by pre-Holocaust philosophy became terribly well-established via the Holocaust and have been further confirmed, if that were necessary, by events of the more recent past showing that people anywhere in the world can be assigned the game approximate non-person status as the Jews under Hitler.

It seems just possible, finally, to end with four general comments or theses on the paradoxical dilemmas emerging from all the foregoing reflections on the Holocaust. First, when the inadequacy of language is understood by virtue of the Holocaust, it can also be understood why no systematic language processes presently available can be employed to "understand" the Holocaust. Present-day criteria of understanding would require that the Holocaust be reduced to a manageable object of history, but this cannot be done because the traditional practices of naming and labeling whereby human events are dominated by intellect—abstracted and converted into the tame "objects" of history—do not work. The language magic performed by construing human experience in terms of conventional history, sociology, psychology, economics, political science, or even plain personal or journalistic narrative, poetry or fiction, simply fails to work on the events of the Holocaust. The rabbit will not come out of the hat because the rabbit is too big. Besides, it is more of a tiger than a rabbit and its very appearance chokes off language by provoking speechless feelings of primal horror.

Second, in recognizing the limits of language one is also forced to recognize the frightening limits of the civilization that the language expresses. Our civilization with its "prevailing structures of law, religion, and science is manifestly unable to impose any consistently benevolent order or meaning upon the human potential for destruction. Human being-in-the-world, insofar as we can grasp it and manipulate it with the tools of thought available today, is not at all a settled question. The Holocaust shows that despite all pretensions to the contrary, we humans are our own worst enemies, for the most sophisticated advances of civilized thought are invariably convertible into tools for destruction.

Third, the Holocaust demonstrates the inadequacy of the orthodox Marxist conception of human affairs. In his famous eleven theses on Feuerbach, Marx is generally said to have surpassed Hegel by developing the position that material conditions of life are prior to thought; that conscious

awareness and ideas emerge in response to objective social and economic conditions. Useful as it has been for all sorts of important social analyses, this theory of dialectical materialism has little or no meaning so far as the Nazi genocide program is concerned. (Viz: communists, socialists, and other Marxists both Jewish and gentile, were just as shocked and surprised by revelations that Nazi oppression had turned into extermination, as were capitalists.)

If anything, the events of the Holocaust force one back to the epistemology of Hegel rather than Marx, because Hitler's inspiration to destroy the Jews had no substantial materialistic foundation. Physical extermination of the Jews served no class interests and was even antithetical to the accumulation of wealth and power that might have been achieved had the Jews simply been exploited in accord with the more traditionally "rational" forms of anti-Semitism.

One need only consult the many biographies of Hitler, and most especially the recent-psychobiographies produced by Binion and Stlerlin, to see the remarkable extent to which his entire career, and the genocide-program most of all, was a triumph of the mental over the material. The inspiration to eliminate the Jews makes sense as an atrocious ideal because it can be fitted to the robust German tradition of romantic idealism. But the fact that such, an effort could be put into practice and attain a very high degree of success cannot be grasped either by recourse to romantic idealism to dialectical materialism.

In short, when the concrete reality of the Holocaust is considered in relation to Marxist theory, the result leads only to yet another blind alley of interpretation. This provides further impetus towards the view that what must be scrutinized are not theories contained within the framework of western civilization, but the basic structural units of the framework itself... law, religion, science, and the language by which they are codified and given meaning.

Fourth and last, there remains the deep and hardly fathomable question we have posed concerning the limits of language and thought. That is, all the issues involved in the failure of meaning that becomes concretely perceptible – indeed, unavoidably so – through confrontation with the Holocaust. If the concluding themes expressed in this chapter are even approximately correct, then the crucially important idea emerging from our search for meaning in the Holocaust is that it has no meaning; no meaning,

at least, that can be conveyed by any form that is currently intelligible or acceptable according to prevailing standards of western civilization. Instead, it can only be said that all current instruments and vehicles of meaning in our civilization appear dangerously false or inadequate because they cannot accommodate the Holocaust.

Consequently, at a time “when our civilization desperately requires whatever knowledge can possibly aid its development towards a more human direction, the historical crisis revealing its most dreadful flaws remains unknown. In this connection, our situation is like that of some primitive tribe that has allowed an essential portion of its territory to become a mysterious, forbidden zone of superstitious horror, good only for frightening children, telling fantastic stories around the campfire, and justifying maintenance of the mysterious powers given over to shamans.

What more can be said? At this juncture, having gone so far as to suggest that the reified thought and language framework of our civilization cannot sustain the full substance of human activity that has been stuffed into it, we have entered the realm of sociocultural cosmology; we are dealing now with a human culture problem roughly equivalent to the black hole theory of the universe. Wittgenstein's famous comment: “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent,” points to the sociocultural black hole as well as anything in the history of western philosophy. And eastern mystics confront it when they ask “What is the sound of one hand clapping?” Mystical? What, then, is the sound of an Auschwitz gas chamber?

Yet this is not truly the end of it because nothing in our human universe stands still; if the Holocaust blocks language and thought, then language and thought may evolve itself past that blockage. One significant indication that this is possible may be detected in the multi-dimensional language presently emerging under the rubric of psychohistory. Scholars and artists alike can only interpret human affairs according to the language forms provided by human experience. The Holocaust extends human experience beyond previous limits, and there has already begun to grow up around the Holocaust the still-immature new language of psychohistory. In our view, the chief reason for this; development is quite plain: when considered solely in terms of the conventional language of either history or psychology, the events of the Holocaust remain as lifeless and uninformative as musical notes that are written but not played.

Music, indeed, is the appropriate metaphor on which to model our case for the multi-dimensional language potential of psychohistory. A single note struck off on a piano will have one sound; the same note played by a violin will have another, and if played simultaneously by both piano and violin the note will have yet a third sound, a sound with a tone that is uniquely the product of both instruments and impossible for either one alone. Since the Holocaust was a unique product of distinct historical and psychological forces, any attempt to probe its meaning demands careful attention to both. And when both can be brought to bear on the same issues simultaneously, then, like the simultaneous piano and violin, history and psychology may together produce a new sound: the language of psychohistory.

This language hardly exists yet, but it is developing rapidly, primarily because traditional forms of expression are becoming more and more obviously inadequate. Not only inadequate for the Holocaust, but also for subsequent historical events running the gamut from Algeria, to Vietnam, to Watergate, n of moral emptiness have “been lacking – No student of political and historical western studies on Holocaust can fail - to be impressed by “its descent into little more than The historical crisis of the Holocaust, therefore, is ultimately visible as an all –pervasive moral shock delivered to the central nervous system of western civilization. That civilization still stands, but the inner structural damage done to its fundamental systems of law, religion and science has left them drained of their former vitality. The language and thought capacities required to confront this dangerous condition ruthless calculus” of power, wherein such phrases as “balance of terror” and “body count” have become household words.

Whether or not a new, enlarged capacity for conceptualizing the human condition can be found in the burgeoning language of psychohistory is an open question. It is at least a beginning, however. Psychohistory has provided ways to begin sifting the ashes of Auschwitz in search of a human meaning for the catastrophe of our century.

### **3.1. Notes by Leon Rappoport**

1. George Steiner expresses the personal dynamics of serious feeling reactions to the Holocaust by non-participants in an essay describing his fears for his children “A sort of survivor,” in Language and Silence, New York: Atheneum, 1967; in a very different vein, Amos Elon has described

the ambivalent feelings of Israeli youth toward their Holocaust heritage (The Israelis: Founders and Sons, New York: Bantam Books, 1972; the most extensive and valuable discussion of this general point, however, appears in Lawrence Langer's The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975).

Some personal eccentricities known to us are also noteworthy: One young scholar at an East Coast university gets occasionally drunk on brandy and pounds the floor in time to recordings of SS marching songs. Another older professor who fought in Germany as a young American soldier keeps a captured luger in his desk for use when toying with the idea of suicide. A third writes anonymous accusatory poems, and yet another has become a fanatic partisan of the state of Israel who claims to feel disgust at the mere sight of a Volkswagen.

2. There is an extensive clinical literature on the psychological effects of Nazi camp experience. See for example, A. Russell, "Late Psycho social Consequences in Concentration Camp Survivor Families" American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 44, 4, July 1974, pp. 611-619, P. Matussek, Internment in Concentration Camps and Its Consequences, New York, Springer-Verlag, 1975.

Much of present sociology is illiterate. It is conceived in a jargon of vehement obscurity. George Steiner, Language, and Silence, p. 19. Thomas Szasz has made similar arguments in the context of modern psychiatry, most concisely in the preface to his book The Second Sin. Language is considered in more specific detail later in the present chapter.

In his authoritative Political Theory (Princeton, 1959) A. Brecht stipulates that towards the end of the 19th century the moral force of law had begun to decline drastically under the impact of analyses by G. Simmel and H. Rickert (pp. 136-211). These philosophers demonstrated that value judgments distinguishing between what is and what ought to be, were simply arbitrary. And Simmel's fundamental argument was that "The logical inference from what is to what ought to be, is false in every case." (BRECHT, p. 211). By 1914, moreover, according to Brecht the philosopher of law G. Radbruch could argue that all concepts of law and justice were essentially matters of politics: "... philosophy of law is necessarily political philosophy, and vice versa. So perfect is this ultimate identity that we are justified in speaking of 'political and legal philosophy' in the singular form." (BRECHT, p. 138).

A more contemporary formulation of these ideas appears in the work of Hans Kelsen, most notably in his book The Pure Theory of Law first published in 1935. If the nation of justice must be eliminated from "positive law" according to Kelsen, because it is a value not a scientific concept open to empirical investigation or determination. "Legal science" cannot be concerned with matters of ethics and politics because these matters are irrelevant to "pure knowledge." (See H. Kelsen, "What is justice?" Law Quarterly Review, 51, 1957.)

5. See Leon Poliakov, The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe (tr> E. Howard) New York, 1974; also Robert Pois, who discusses implications of the Poliakov work in connection with the rise of German romanticism in his article "Historicity versus History: Some reflections on the philosophical implications of the Holocaust." (unpublished ms. available from the author at the University of Colorado.)

Another relevant source is Daniel Gasman's The Scientific Origins of National Socialism: Social Darwinism in Ernst Haeckel and the German Monist League (American Elsevier Inc., New York: 1971). Haeckel and his science-oriented colleagues of the league were specifically concerned with correcting or eliminating the Jewish racial characteristics they had "objectively" identified as sources of corruption in German society. Haeckel himself never called for actual physical destruction of the Jews but the idea of using physical force against them appears in the writings of at least one Monist League author named Heinrich Pudor.

6. Hitler's anti-Semitism is widely acknowledged to have its origin in the death of his mother who was treated for cancer by a Jewish physician. R. Binion Hitler Among the Germans New York: Elsevier, 1976, and H. Stierlin, Hitler as a Bound Delegate of his Mother, Journal of Psychohistory, Vol. 3, No. 4, 463-499, Spring, 1976.

7. Michael Polanyi provides a very general discussion of this issue in his book Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958. After noting that a dehumanized "objective" science can allow humans to dominate nature, he concludes as follows: "Then man dominates a world in which he himself does not exist. For with his obligation (to nature) he has lost his voice and his hope, and been left behind meaningless to himself (p. 380)." Similar views are expressed by the philosopher of science Ian Mitroff in the conclusion of his work The Subjective Side of Science (New York: American Elsevier, 1974, p. 271):

“We have developed the kind of science (Apol-lonism) that knows how to reach ‘the starry heavens above.’ We have yet to learn how to develop the kind of science (Dionysian) that knows how to reach ‘the moral law within’.

See also Floyd Matson, The Broken Image (New York: Anchor Books, 1966). The theme recognized in various ways by an increasing number of writers is essentially this: human affairs conducted according to a dehumanized science must ultimately reduce people to objects. Thus “The acceptance of living beings as machines, the domination of the modern world by technology, and the mechanization of mankind are but the extension and practical application of the mechanistic conception of physics (Ludwig von Bertalanffy Problems of Life, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960, p. 202).”

8. Janik, A., and Toulmin, S., Wittgenstein's Vienna, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973. T. Hughes H. S., The Sea Change: The migration of social thought, 1930-1965, New York: Harper and Row, 1975.

10. Probably the major academically respectable exponent of this general view point today is the philosopher of science Paul Feyerabend. In Against Method (NLB, London, 1975), he argues that all progress can only be understood as an expansion of human consciousness, and this being the case, any idea can only be evaluated by contrasting it with other, different ideas. One example he provides is that there is no “reason1” why serious consideration of Voodoo witchcraft by modern medical experts should not facilitate progress of medical knowledge. To the extent that such consideration is ruled out by established medical research methodology, the exclusion is arbitrary and tends to impose conformity to the status quo while having nothing whatever to do with “the science” of medicine.

Feyerabend’s general view of scientific knowledge is given as follows: “Knowledge so conceived is not a series of self-consistent theories that converges towards an ideal view; it is not a gradual approach to the truth. It is rather an ever increasing ocean of mutually incompatible (and perhaps even incommensurable) alternatives, each single theory, each fairy tale, each myth that is part of the collection forcing the others into greater articulation and all of them contributing, via this process of competition, to the development of our consciousness. Nothing is ever settled ...” (Against Method, p. 30).

11. Concerning both social science studies and works of art relevant to the Holocaust-, Lawrence J Langer “has summed up their ambivalence as follows: “There is something disagreeable, almost dishonorable, in the

conversion of the suffering of the victims into works of art, which are then, to use Adorno's pungent metaphor, thrown as fodder to the world ("der Welt zum Frass vorgeworfen") that murdered them." The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975, p. 1.

12. Hannah Arendt, On Violence. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1970, pp. 65-66.

13. R. Binion, Hitler Among the Germans, New York: Elsevier, 1976; H. Stierlin Adolf Hitler: A Family Perspective, New York: Psychohistory Press, 1976.

#### 4. Calamities, historical crisis and global change

Rappoport states above that "the reified thought and language framework of our civilization cannot sustain the full substance of human activity that has been stuffed into it, we have entered the realm of sociocultural cosmology;" and he also adds "The historical crisis of the Holocaust, therefore, is ultimately visible as an all-pervasive moral shock delivered to the central nervous system of western civilization. That civilization still stands, but the inner structural damage done to its fundamental systems of law, religion and science has left them drained of their former vitality. The language and thought capacities required to confront this dangerous condition ruthless calculus". Rappoport is right by stating that thought and language must somehow evolve to make sense and go beyond the crisis generated by the Holocaust, nevertheless it is important to consider that systemic sociology had already dealt with micro scale human generated calamities through the writings of one of the most important systemic sociological thinkers ever. As a matter of fact In 1942 Sorokin wrote " We live amidst one of the greatest crisis in human history. Not only war, famine, pestilence and revolution but a legion of other calamities are rampant over the whole world. All values are unsettled, all norms are broken. Mental, moral, aesthetic and social anarchy reigns supreme" (SOROKIN, 2010, p. 308).

Then he lists the trends of man and society in calamity:

1. Increase of emotional instability;
2. Increase of mental disturbances;
3. Increase of the death rate also among the civilians;
4. Biological heritage of the population will not change;

5. Voluntary and /or compulsory migrations will dramatically increase;
6. Likewise vertical mobility;
7. Flattering of the social stratification pyramid;
8. The inner mechanism of social position allocation will be temporarily damaged and modified by increasing randomization;
9. The whole pyramid of social inequalities will remain fluid;
10. Disorganization and remodelling of the greatest institutions;
11. Increasing state control;
12. Suffering and decrease of well being except for few nouveaux riches;
13. The idea of calamity will be the focus of cultural and artistic life;
14. Fine arts will become somber, melancholic and pessimistic;
15. Uncertainty, insecurity and suspense will rule million lives;
16. Diffusion of an apocalyptic mentality;
17. The bulk of the populations will be split into two parts: "sinners" and "saints";
18. Likewise cultural life between between destructive immobilism and creative work (SOROKIN, 2010, p. 308-317).

My opinion is that in our current times Sorokin's trends are rampant and that a revised systemic theory of action might be the key to profile the emerging global players in the wider horizons of socio-economical development as systemic action might easily free ride especially across Sorokin's 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th trends generating evolutionary fluidity.

Thus my scope in this paper is to redesign and epistemologically reconstruct the link between Sorokin's calamity model and Kuznets' development one.

Sorokin's trends need to be reframed in Kuznets' business cycles to clearly understand the shifts of systemic action between calamity and development. These shifts tendentially generate much more dissipative trends towards calamity than neghentropy cycles of development. Entropy rules. Nevertheless, focusing on very abstract and conceptual categories, the entropy influence can be dramatically downsized and the shaping of development cycles facilitated. From this perspective, an accounting on suffering (SARGIACOMO; IANNI; EVERETT, 2014) can be pivotal and strategic to select the differences which really make the differences in the turning point/Kehre (SCHUERMANN, 1987 also for the key concept of Gegnet as

limitless opening to the possible) between calamity direction and development direction.

Sargiacomo correctly points out the relevance of assessing the socio-economical magnitude of calamity. Conceptualizing and operationalizing this kind of magnitude is a key challenge for social and management studies, nevertheless the fact that magnitude and suffering are linked is a very normal unlikelyhood.

In theory, human centered sociology might state that a high level of human suffering might be the main stream to the turning point from calamity to development but it is not so for some key reasons:

1. The traffic jam paradox: the individual tools to relief from suffering have neither linear nor relevant impact on the systemic relief from calamity;

2. On a micro scale, escaping from suffering does not necessary imply escape from calamity and start of a development process. Escaping from suffering on a micro scale essentially means stopping the hurting and to restore the pre-suffering status: No evolution or development expected;

3. It also depends on what the social historian of Economics Carlo Maria Cipolla called the four basic laws of human stupidity (CIPOLLA, 2011):

3.1. "Always and inevitably, everyone underestimates the number of stupid individuals in circulation" (CIPOLLA, 2011, p. 19);

3.2. "The probability that a certain person be stupid is independent of any other characteristics of that person" (CIPOLLA, 2011, p. 24);

3.3 A stupid person, is a person who causes losses to another person or to a group of persons while himself deriving no gain and even possibly incurring losses" (CIPOLLA, 2011, p. 38);

3.4. "Non stupid people always underestimate the damaging power of stupid individuals, in particular, non stupid people constantly forget that at all times and places and under any circumstances to deal and/or to associate with stupid people infallibly turns out to be a costly mistake" (CIPOLLA, 2011, p. 56);

4. Entropy rules thus likelihood is calamity oriented but conceptual systemic and global convergences can facilitate development oriented turning points.

These are the key reasons while a sociological approach to the development/calamity shifts, requires a macro, systemic, conceptual, convergent and big data based working style totally indifferent to human centered

ethological instincts and moods. As a matter of fact, these instincts and moods make the human being completely indifferent before epochal and global changes and thus totally irrelevant and uninteresting for sociology. Human beings are sleep walkers (in the meaning of H. Broch's *Die Schlafwandler*, 1888-1918) across time and space, thus there is no way to interview a sleep walker to make sense of what is going on around him/her.

Let's draw a key distinction: macro, systemic, sociology, is focused on epochal and global changes, differences which really make the difference thus it considers totally meaningless to study human beings (meant as "life") to understand the emerging shapes of world orders ("more than life"). Nevertheless, this humanless epistemology does not imply a rejection of Humanities.

Humanities are excellent content providers to sketch and draft brilliant intuitions about epochal, global changes thus Humanities are key resources to design a macro and systemic sociological research. As Kafka is a prologue to understand Luhmann (ARDIGÒ, 1988) and Pirandello to understand Goffman (FACCIOLI; PITASI, 2000; PITASI, 2008) a good novel can be a key prologue to shape and construct a good sociological theory (BERGER, 2011) Suffering and other human expressions do not found and neither explain the systemic shifts between development and calamity. To be explained, these shifts require conceptual and convergent theorem shaped systemic models.

Let's sum up the key topics of Simon Kuznets (1901-1985) business cycles of development:

1. Secular movements, secondary and cyclical fluctuations;
2. Measurement of national income;
3. Key Features of the socio-economic development (Kuznets, 1990, p. 91-93);
  - 3.1. High rates of growth in output per capita and population;
  - 3.2. High rate of overall productivity growth;
  - 3.3. High speed of structural transformation of economy;
  - 3.4. Rapid change in the structures and ideologies of society;
  - 3.5. Trend of developed countries to expand to the rest of the world;
  - 3.6. Spread of development limited to a minority amounted to ca 25% of the world population;
4. Demographic trends and economic development;
5. Structural transformation of the economy;

6. Influence of technological innovations;
7. Historical trends in inequality between the incomes;
8. Capital accumulation;
9. Consumption structure;
10. Limited international spread of development;
11. Conflicts and economic development.

Systemic sociology needs to be redesigned to manage the exceeding variety of emerging scenarios and high variety and high density complex evolutionary trends in which natural sciences and social ones converge in reframing “natural reality” generating the illusion that development/calamity were not a binary code. Thus focusing on just a few differences which effectively make the difference – as Sorokin and Kuznets both did although in very different ways.

The natural reality is: something meaningless in se (since the first man ever switched a fire on and dressed. See Goudsblom (1994) and systemically relevant merely as a thematic subject of positive and artificial self-referential patterns.

This essay is about a general science of complex systems from an interdisciplinary perspective starting from a social system (system/environment) paradigm to focus on psychic, systems, biosystems and social systems from the key paradigm shift (the fourth one within this approach) to reframe and reconceptualize key global changes and to sketch key guidelines to redesign the most advanced world order policy modelling.

This new design initially implies to rethink three key concepts: individual, organization and life: these three concepts are reframed within strategic policymaking for social global change though the logical shape of a theorem. The individual is a kind of coding and selecting system among others. By evoking Ortega Y Gasset’s distinction between shellfish and castaway, Individuals (which would be more adequate to define psychic systems according to Luhmann’s semantics) are “tautological” and autological thus self-referential and autopoietic castaways in the ocean of undefined possibility.

These individuals operate and live as castaways in the oceans of Gegnet, unde-fined possibility (this is its self-referential circular closing) while persons are mere ethological copies of shellfishes primitively in search of a daily reproduced illusion of stability and “eternity”.

In practice, individuals select complexity in its contingency but are operatively aware that complexity cannot be reduced "for real" while persons model and construct the illusion that their daily taken for granted world is "reality" Complexity enlightens that everything is formally interconnected and interdependent.

Nevertheless, this interconnections and interdependences (the relational side) are meaningless in se if there is no observer (not necessary human) able to draw a distinction (in G. Spencer Brown's terms).

This observer/agent (in Kaufmann's semantics) selects at the double contingency level of (exceeding) variety and density. The vision provided by this essay of a general science of complex systems is a science of exceeding variety and density of selecting systems at an adequate abstraction level to focus on the differences which make the difference in terms of global interconnection and evolutionary terms. Organization is the relentless process of density/variety evolution which founds and shapes self-referential autopoiesis which selects from the outer environment turning noise into meaning and disorder into order, contingently Life is the autopoietic evolution of information thus the evolution of viable shapes to co evolve bio, psycho and social systems according to their structural couplings. Thus life is "blind" and intrinsically value free.

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