

## Philosophy, Art, Political Sciences

All is art: the art we see as deliberate art, but also science and even our daily being. Art is being, the living in search of an expression for interpretation of feelings. - Interpretations of each individual life are captured in the expressions of language, and through language all the human, all aspects of human life are governed by and reflected in social practices, in people's life in the commonwealth.

The book reveals the connection of art with the evolution of the physical and chemical through biological to the mental and language - all related in the binary struggle between pain and pleasure of which art is a reflection, and a quest to overcome. This binary friction occurs in all aspects of life from the smallest cellular processes to the grand combats between men on earth. In art through language, expressions, the battle between pain and pleasure is brought from the biological organism to the mental plane. - The mental is later than the biological, and language is the latest stage of development; language as of yet underdeveloped, not fit for feelings; language restricting thinking - what can be thought of - and knowledge - what can be known. Language is our challenge.

Art is the answer. Art is the great laboratory of mankind; art for art's sake the only true means for exploring the limits of the unknown, an assault on the frontiers of the unthinkable, the unknowable. Therefore a breakthrough in art, a breakthrough in expression, is a breakthrough in science, and this is the only true progress we can ever hope for.

JON HELLEVIG ALL IS ART

JON HELLEVIG

# ALL IS ART

- On Social Practices and Interpretation of Feelings
- On Democratic Competition

RUSSIA ADVISORY GROUP

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*Book I*

**All is Art**

**On Social Practices and  
Interpretation of Feelings**

*By Jon Hellevig*

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*Book II*

**On Democratic Competition**

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## **The Greatest Thing**

There was a boy  
A very strange, enchanted boy  
They say he wandered very far  
Very far, over land and sea  
A little shy and sad of eye  
But very wise was he

And then one day,  
One magic day he passed my way  
While we spoke of many things  
Fools and Kings  
This he said to me

The greatest thing you'll ever learn  
Is just to love and be loved, on earth\*.

*(Nature Boy, Eden Abbez)*

*\* With an adjustment*

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## For the background:

### Language is interpretation of feelings

I claim that language fundamentally is about interpretation of feelings. Building on Antonio Damasio's presentation<sup>1</sup> I place language after emotions and feelings at the top of the development of the human biological homeostatic system. With language the human strives to give expression to infinite needs to interpret feelings. Language is hence an interpretation of feelings, and as an interpretation there is nothing firmly given about it; the words of language have developed arbitrary to express the feelings; in a historic process words once used form a platform for future use, but in the historic process language develops randomly, but always building on previous use, on the social practices that language captures. All science builds on the wrong idea that knowledge can be expressed in an exact manner in language. Too many even think that there are some truths to be found in language, but the truth is in the feelings, and language is only the tool for expressing the feelings, or more correctly: giving expression to the interpretation of the feelings, and that is an infinite endeavor, a never-ending story. Language is what sets apart humans from animals – in good and bad.

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<sup>1</sup> I refer to my discussion in *Expression and Interpretations* on the evolutionary developments of emotions and feelings basically building on the presentation by the neurobiologist Antonio Damasio

Language itself is the purest competitive system of all – in fact all forms of life are but mere perceptions on the practice of language from a certain point of view. The unity of manifold, is not a physical unity, it is rather the holistic web of perceptions that reduce all aspects of human life to language, to words, to aspects of feelings, to the binary mode of pain and pleasure.

One has to move beyond language to see that the philosophical problems disappear – and beyond language we have feelings. Scientifically feelings are connected with psychological, and biological problems, or whatever we want to call them, but certainly not philosophical ones.

Language only delivers the expressions of feelings, the expressions of the interpretations of them; language creates the different perceptions on life that affect feelings, and the feelings that affect perceptions on life; understanding this we should now be able to realize that the 'true workings of language' consists of interpretations of feelings, and hereby there are no intrinsic rules or anything of the kind we could refer to or that would guide the process, there is but an endless competition between all the infinite variances of perceptions that people form under the influence of feelings. With language we can only roll from one interpretation to another, and there are no truths to be reached on the road; instead it is better to see language as a method. It is

basically a market method or a competitive method, an open system where all language use affects all other use. Therefore in proper philosophy there are no rules, no laws that we could discover and explain, and thus all that we can do in terms of philosophy is merely point out when words are arranged so that nonsense follows and confusion reigns.

The expressions of language are developed from people's experience. Language depicts first and foremost what people have seen. The most basic words and expressions stem from the most elementary forms of life, the life connected with the physical nature, the thingly nature. Languages have not developed much past a description of the basic experiences of life. We are trying to express, and we have a need to express, complex, delicate feelings with a language that merely fits for describing the world of things. The usage of the thingly concepts for describing feelings is what sets up traps in language. - In communication this fallacy has resulted in a disastrous failure - Meaning has been turned upside down: Protection has been converted to hatred; love to possession; faith to repression, knowledge to superstition; personality to exclusion; you to many; I to we; care to distance... Whoever conceived the story of Adam and Eve eating from the tree of wisdom and being expelled from the paradise captured a very relevant notion. This is the insight on how language – for the fruit of knowledge

is language - when misused, out of context, becomes a corrupting force, the arch reason for misery – the tool for intrigues; conceits; superstition; deception; fraud, mass-hatred; war. By combining words in a cunning way the bad have captured power from the innocent; and they have privatized natural needs for explanations of eternity, the world and the skies under own private label religions.

Language is hence all there is to philosophy. Elements that have earlier produced a lot of philosophical nut cracking simply disappear. We will see that metaphysics and the game of formal logic turn out to be antiquated activities similar to alchemy – that is to say all of metaphysics save the part of which deals with the beginning of life, which is better to be left to the realm of religion

### *Notes to the pedagogue:*

After this lesson you will master the new words of critical language theory: 'thingly' for showing what is wrong with the contemporary way of thinking and speaking; 'thingliness' – ditto; and 'thingling' – which is a diminutive for all our sacred concepts – and especially for the most sacred one of them all 'language' (compare 'lordling' a diminutive of the mighty personage of a lord). When we turn concepts around we turn thinking around.

*Book I*

**All is Art**

**On Social Practices and  
Interpretation of Feelings**

*By Jon Hellevig*



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## Foreword:

[I led a completely abnormal life just like everybody else, and then all of a sudden I got the idea that I should find out and write...

And now exhausted, frustrated and delighted I am busy writing a book on social practices, the theme sounds odd and dull, and I doubt that I will be able to inspire more excitement in anybody than the theme promises. But, I cannot help it, I need to write. – A research fellow once asked a Russian professor “Should I write a book or not?” The professor replied “If you can refrain from writing, then do not write; if you cannot refrain from writing, write.” This is the same advice I received myself upon consulting my inner feelings. I had to write.

My aim is to explain the idea that *social practices* are the basis of all that humans know and what can be known. – There is no other intelligence, knowledge, than that which is in our traditions, social practices passed on

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<sup>1</sup> The word human connotes a sense of spiritual superiority, kindness, graciousness – goodness, a capacity to discern what is wrong from what is good. This is the very source of the perplexity, the fatal confusion, for as of yet humans do not know good from bad.

<sup>2</sup> Hellevig, J. (2006). Expressions and Interpretations. Our perceptions in competition. – A Russian Case.

from people to people, generation to generation, through the medium of language, by language, in language. Social sciences and philosophy, all the distinctly human<sup>1</sup> - the fundamentals of cognition and human society are but reflections of the social practices, of what people do and have done.

Those who accept these ideas would find themselves compelled to reject a great deal, if not most, of the doctrines of the universities of today. - This article is intended as a summary of these ideas, in short it is about *human knowledge*, and the other side of the coin: *human ignorance*. Both these are functions of individual *interpretations of feelings* and language that represent *social practices*.

In breach of the academic rituals this book is not crowded with references to past authorities and eloquent quotations of one or another mediocre mind, for this is a description of *scientific reality*, and therefore the style of *social science fiction* of the universities will not do. I may add, though, that in my book *Expressions and Interpretations*<sup>2</sup>, on which this presentation is based, I have with source references described and documented the mental ladder which I climbed, the journey inwards to these feelings, the feelings that now are laid bare. In general, I refer to the ideas of *empiric reality* as they have been exposed and conceptualized, for example, by David Hume and Ludwig Wittgenstein. It would be impossible to

produce a proper list of all my references as such a list would have to include the majority of all people past and present, who have more or less consciously – and, more, unconsciously - contributed to experience, to these social practices the way I argue. – Throughout the history of ideas, on the contrary, but naturally, and regrettably, the weirdest ideas, and those in whose imaginations they were generated, have been heaped with fame and recognition, while those who rejected those most weird ideas – rejecting them simply by living the lives they lived (and sometimes even active in voicing and demonstrating the rejection) - have no place in science (only the artists versed in their very own genre of social science fiction are celebrated in the Academy). And yet a rejection of an idea is as much an idea, as the initial misformulation. These rejections, as all human actions, are reflected in the social practices. - I side with those, the great majority of people who throughout history functioned as the competitive censor, rejecting whatever the prevailing ideologies of the day happened to be, or i.e. *the superstition of the day*.]

## **All is Art, Social Practices, and Interpretation of Feelings**

*Art for art's sake.* Art is the great laboratory of mankind; art for art's sake is the only true means for exploring the limits of what can be known, an assault on the frontiers of the unthinkable, the unknowable. Therefore a breakthrough in art, a breakthrough in expression, is a breakthrough in science, and this is the only true progress we can ever hope for.

*Social practices.* All human, all aspects of human life are governed by, and reflected in social practices, in people's lives in the commonwealth. What is considered good, and what is considered bad, is exclusively a function of social practices. Social practices is what people do together and all knowledge, all ideas, all science is but a reflection of these practices. These practices are carried in language, which is the supreme manifestation of all social practices. Language comes about through the efforts of one and many individuals - all of us - expressing feelings, exploring the possibilities to express the feelings, opinions, to be understood.

*Expressions and interpretations.* At the final analysis the life of a human is an interpretation of one's own feelings performed against the background of social practices. From social practices the individual human catches reflections, echoes, reverberations of other

lives, past and present. These reflections penetrate the body, and in there these reflections are processed, in there, in the body, the human interprets what he experiences. Then the interpretation is expulsed to the external, there to receive an expression in language. Through his expressions the individual human contributes back to the social practices, gives his input to the eternal reflections, to expressions and interpretations.

*Knowledge.* Knowledge is produced by one human in partnership with other humans, past and present, through expressions and interpretations, as if by the touch of an invisible hand. - This is the insight that there is no human intelligence in any one particular individual. – Humans do not possess any intelligence but can make use of the intelligence cumulated and floating in social practices.

*Language, the human.* Language is the basis of human society. Without doubt a biological animal can think without language, but it cannot think about anything *social* – which is *human* – without language. All that is distinctly human is a product of language, the exclusive condition for society. The human is the social, and language is what forms the human.

*The human, the social.* This story about social practices and interpretation of feelings tells about the relation between the *individual human* and the *social*, the

commonwealth of all. But *exist* only *humans, individuals* - *the social* does not exist, and did not exist, and never will. – The *social*, is a word - a concept only – and we use it simply to name the common heritage of past and present generations. The *social* is a perception, a perspective on what individuals do together united through social practices, through language, for *in reality* only the individuals *exist*. But, then again, the reality of the individual is governed by the social, so to say, filled with intelligence, data, which in turn is a reflection - nothing more – of bygone life and generations of experience. All encoded in language. And language is what sets all human in motion, what makes the world go round, round...

*Merger of the external and the internal explanations.* With this understanding of language as interpretation of feelings and knowledge as social practices we have closed the loop between the two extremes by which humans have sought to explain what governs life on earth: the beliefs in external suprahuman agents and the belief in an internal agent. **Thus this philosophy of social practices and interpretation of feelings is a merger between the two opposed ways of contemplating life:** *those* ideas from the beginning of time, those ideas of the **external forces**, the deities, which conduct life and portion out knowledge – **and** - the ideas of seeking an **internal** origin for knowledge: *'the soul', 'the mind', 'the reason'*, these words originally describing human faculties,

innate capabilities and powers to think and act as a human, but converted in the perversion of scientific thinking to connote a kind of an entity purported to reside inside the body but separate from it; like 'the soul' that can take leave from the body at death - and sometimes earlier than that - and migrate into another body; or 'the reason' located inside the human brain, hailed like a thing, a physical organ, but never seen by anybody. But by now, with this new philosophy, we may appreciate that *the internal* was not the 'reason' 'the mind', nor 'the soul' – nothing of the sort that can be grasped with a linguistic analogy to the nature – but *the biological process that was set in motion through the binary struggle between pain and pleasure, the penultimate manifestation of the process which are feelings*. These are the feelings that, the creative man, *homo artisticus* is dying to express.

We now see that the *external forces* were but reflections, the condensed ideas of the *eternal interplay between all expressions and all interpretations*. We have understood that these expressions and interpretations form traditions, social practices, in which we determine what is good and what is bad, what is to be treated as knowledge what is to be rejected as such. And we have understood that the supreme form of the external is language, language reflecting the current balance between all social practices. – And we have understood that *language*, this supreme form of the external, simultaneously is the supreme form of

the internal, *the ultimate manifestation* of the internal, the expression for feelings (a language of thingly words which are, as of now, mere feeble imitations, faint reverberations of what we all have to say). Thus language is what connects one individual with others, the internal with the external, feelings with expressions, and forms a human out of biological flesh and bone. - We have understood that the external and the internal are in constant association where the one feeds the other. And we see that there is nothing more to human society than this. We see that knowledge is not a faculty inside the human, and nothing administered from the outside, but simply a reflection of human efforts - human, all too human.

*Interpretation of feelings, dreams and daydreams - life*. Freud wanted to interpret dreams. But why should we be more concerned with interpreting dreams than other aspects of life? We have a whole world to interpret, a whole life to interpret – we have to interpret being, that is, our feelings. – When attempting to interpret dreams we are still in the vicious circle, entrapped by language. In dreams - as well as in daydreams, life - the mind is fed with the same images that we deal with when we are awake, and to which we assign a meaning when awake; it is a mistake to think that in dreams we were to penetrate the meaning of symbols with any more insight than when awake. In dreams we are still on the surface, maybe like a surfer who is carried by waves, not in control but riding on top of them, until

he falls, and is washed away by the waves...and then just as he is about to drown he wakes up.

*Psychoanalysis and art.* The only hope for lasting mental health, individual and collective, is mastering a language of feelings. – This is not a quest for any one single individual, it can only be a movement forward by generations and generations to come. The key to the secrets of this language of feeling is in art, in the expressions that we explore and adapt through art. Art for art's sake is like the test laboratory for finding out the secrets of the transmutation of feelings into expressions, into language. In deliberate art the artists are like the pioneers who illuminate the path into the hidden world of feelings, and they are the ones that will carry the treasures of expression to the external. - Clearly art for art's sake is the most important human activity. No experiment is more fundamentally scientific than art for art's sake for the sake of reaching for what is beyond. Reaching for the beyond, reaching for the limit, a limit that we cannot trespass, all we may hope for is to expand the frontiers.

*Pain and pleasure – Art and the biological.* A discussion of art and aesthetic feelings returns us back to the physical, to the biological, into the human organism, where the eternal struggle between pain and pleasure gives rise to feelings, and creates the evolving impressions of good and bad. Art is a reflection of

this never-ending struggle in the binary mode of pain and pleasure, the essence of being, what gives life and takes life; this binary friction occurs in all aspects of life from the smallest cellular processes to the grand combats between men on earth. In art through language, expressions, the battle between pain and pleasure is brought to the mental plane.

*Pain and pleasure – language – human.* I see pain and pleasure as the basic drivers of human life, and all life in general. This as all life *through evolution* - from the physical and chemical, to the biological, through the animal to the human – *and in the present* is but a manifestation of the battle between pain and pleasure. I believe that the forces of pain and pleasure have set biological life in motion which through evolution led to the living organism developing the fine-tuned homeostatic system of regulating an animal organism; and it is in this animal organism where emotions and feelings were set in motion; and this development meant the breaking through, the becoming of the mental, and eventually in evolution it is this mental - seeking for means of expression - that evolved into language; and it is language - this external manifestation of the struggle between pain and pleasure raised to the level of the mental - that brought the human into being (the *homo artisticus*, or *homo sapiens* as they used to call him).

The human being is thus the result of the process

where the mental manifestations of bodily processes in form of emotions and feelings managed to cut loose from the body; I see this as the *mental* hatching out from the shell that contained the animal within the limits of a body which is like a shelter (or a confinement, depending on how we see the various aspects of humanity) protecting that innocent animal life; the mental - born in the warmth of this womb where emotions and feelings linger and brood is slowly cracking this shield protecting the body that shelters the animal; breaking the thingly shield of the body like a nestling cracks the egg-shell to crawl out of it to embrace life.

Thus language is the expression of the mental manifestation of the biological struggle between the forces of pain and pleasure; but ours is not a mature language, rather a language like a clumsy duckling unable to fly but holding a promise of becoming the beautiful swan that will fly through the limits of what is known, through the unthinkable, to new heights of cognition on the wings of a language yet to be set in motion by finding the expressions for those inner feelings that give wings to our thoughts. (If it was not for the constant suffering that language leads us to I would instead have given the romantic simile of language still being like a budding flower).

*Jealousy, born of the body*. Interestingly Marcel Proust - whose art in all its aspects is a demonstration of the binary struggle of pain and pleasure in all the infinite variances – also identified our human feelings as aspects of this biological struggle; placing jealousy as a counterparty to pleasure - the pleasure of love, the painful aspect of the same feeling - he said “jealousy is born of the body; jealousy is pleasure’s unacknowledged daughter”. Proust said that “jealousy was born long before intelligence; so they have never met, and intelligence can offer it no sort of consolation”. Thus as jealousy is a manifestation of bodily pain and pleasure “the mind is weaponless in the face of jealousy as it is in the face of sickness or of death”.<sup>1</sup>

We will have to wonder how it is that the present practices of academic sciences are still allowed to hold the status of an official body of truth, while it has been shown time after time that the infinite variances of truth of life (thus truths of science) are demonstrated in art and literature - as for example in the carefully documented studies of the human behavior in the work of Marcel Proust – and whereas academic sciences, as a result of the traditions - building on the perversions of Plato whereby the real

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<sup>1</sup> “On La Bonne Hélène” in “Marcel Proust On Art and Literature” pp. 294 - 297



and the apparent were turned upside down - have nothing to offer but schematic simplifications (or downright fraud) of the phenomena of life, where all the infinite variances of life have been reduced to a few surface notions baptized in concepts and assigned a significance based on what has from time to time happened to be the fashionable trends in the *Sciences of the Academy*, this genre of art which we really should give the more fitting name: *social science fiction*; for academic science is nothing but a lasting artistic movement which we have to identify the way we identify other forms of art. - What we have to understand is that the work of Proust in all reality is what is social science; for real science can be only that what is revealed about the general – the scientific - through an honest and profound contemplation of particular human behavior, and this can be reached only through a deep penetration into human expressions and interpretations, to the sources of pain and pleasure within the body, to the roots of the mental manifestations of the origins of life. - If anything, I hope I could contribute to a merger of the grammar of life and literature with that of academic sciences, to inspire scientist to descend en masse from their ivory tower of science, that secluded place distantly removed from the practical problems of life, that place that affords the scientists the means to engage in the most perverted form of art which they shield from all criticism by calling it “science”.

*Art – interpretation of feelings.* Art is a search for the proper expression for interpretation of personal feelings. – Here again we note how it is that all being can be seen as processes where the feelings of an individual are related to the expressions of others – those expressions that we may call social practices. According to this idea the mental in the individual remains empty - lacking meaning and marked by the absence of all human qualities – and without means to develop, as long as there is no contact with other people. It is the same with art: art is a search for proper expressions to individual interpretations - interpretations of individual feelings; these feelings and the expressions we attempt to discover through searching the internal, but even this search of the internal we can undertake only through properly accounting for the external; this search is an inward projection of the reflections of the external, the social, language; these are the same expressions and interpretations of social practices, of all our being, which is art. While all being is art what sets the deliberate forms of art apart is a conscious attempt to find better means to express, find expressions which penetrate the surface of reality, expression with which we can plumb the depths of feelings. We could think of the artist - the scientist of the mind – while exploring the inner self facing a similar task as a physician or a radiologist conducting medical imagining of the inner anatomy, movements and functions of body parts; the artist is confronted

with the challenge to grasp the same movements in the emotions and feelings of the body, to obtain a picture, a diagnosis, of his inner feelings, and then to interpret and project the findings in images and expressions of art, literature, painting, dance...

We could even extend the analogy to picture the development of art in parallel with that of medical imagining where doctors have moved forward from the early methods of placing the ear on the chest to try to detect the body sounds (as long as the artist's ear is on the heart this method works quite well in art and social sciences as well). The various styles and canons of art are like the instruments and new methods of medicine: the stethoscope, the medical acoustic device for listening to the internal sounds in a human or animal body, which enabled to detect heart sounds and sounds of breathing; further developments of the device that enabled to catch faint reverberations of the sounds in the intestines and the flow in the blood vessels; then the x-rays, gamma rays, high-frequency sound waves, ultrasound, and magnetic resonance imaging. These various techniques of medical imagining compound to possibilities to produce internal images from varied angles with different aims giving a visual representations of all the body parts, tissues, and organs, how they look like and how they contract and distend on and thus to produce a more truthful picture of the body. – With the various forms of art we similarly aim at catching

all the infinite variances of human feelings, and to eventually find the expressions that will give humanity peace. In his search the artist who is seized by the overwhelming idea to transgress the present reality gives himself fully over to art and converts his own body into a solitary laboratory of pain and pleasure, in his search half consciously, half unconsciously inflicting himself with the most inhuman pain – for pain is his method. There is no anesthesia to temper the pains of the artist, and there is no avoiding of the splinter wounds that the artist unwillingly – because the artist can not stop before any force - inflicts on those that stand in the way of the new expression.

*Proust on interpretation of feelings.* All in Marcel Proust's<sup>1</sup> work is about interpretation of feelings, both in action and in theory. Proust did not define the artist's task in these words, but he used a similar image when he said that the 'function and the task of a writer are those of a translator'; this remark came after him saying "the essential, the only true book, does not have to be invented by a great writer – for it exists already in

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<sup>1</sup> I refer here and in other instances to Proust without paying any attention to the form in which he gave expression to his opinions, not finding any point in trying to differentiate when he talks in his own name or through his fictional narrator.

each of us – it has to be translated by him”. Proust talks about this same task of interpreting – translating – the feelings that we all carry with us in every living moment.<sup>1</sup> In “Against Sainte-Beuve” Proust had expressed the same idea saying “Great literature is written in a sort of foreign tongue. To each sentence we attach a meaning, or at any rate a mental image, which is often a mistranslation. But in great literature all our mistranslations result in beauty”.<sup>2</sup>

In *Time Regained*, the final volume of *In Search of Lost Time*, Proust is at times explicit about his literary and artistic creeds. In there I find a lot of support and parallels for the philosophy I try to convey in this present book. The meaning of Proust’s *Search of Lost Time* is to be found by reading the book from cover to cover, from the first to last volume; it is therefore that I am reluctant to point out specific sections of the book, nevertheless there are on pages 297 through 300 of *Time Regained* such a concentration of observations that pertain to the ideas of interpretation of feelings that I wanted to draw special attention to these. – “How could the literature of description possibly have any value, when it is only beneath the surface of the little things which

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<sup>1</sup> Proust, M. (2003). *In Search of Lost Time Vol. VI: Time Regained*. Modern Library, p. 291

<sup>2</sup> Proust “Against Sainte-Beuve” in *On Art and Literature* p. 267

such a literature describes that reality has its hidden existence”; only “the lie” called “reality” produced in the mind by “the chain of all those inaccurate expressions in which there survives nothing of what we have really experienced”; “the greatness of true art lay elsewhere” i.e. in the interpretation of life (interpretation of feelings), in “that reality which it is very easy for us to die without ever having known and which is, quite simply, our life. Real life, life at last laid bare and illuminated in literature, and life thus defined is in a sense all the time immanent in ordinary men no less than the artist.”<sup>1</sup> – Proust says that this life is “immanent” in all men, not only the artist, for Proust’s conception of art was that *all is art*, and that it takes a special human being, the deliberate artist, who sets everything aside in order to retrieve that art immanent in men, in the ordinary life, to interpret the feelings inherent in every man, and to translate that into the expressions of art. – It is through “art alone” that we are “able to emerge from ourselves, to know what another person sees of a universe which is not the same as our own and of which, without art, the landscapes would remain as unknown to us as those that may exist on the moon”. It is an interpretation of the artist’s own feelings, but also the artist’s interpreting the feelings of mankind. – “It is the task

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<sup>1</sup> I have edited the quote slightly to allow for a smoother incorporation in the present text

of the artist” to undo – tear down - the conceptual reality created by habits, concepts, science...all that are products of contemplating nothing but the external, and to “make us travel back in the direction from which we have come to the depths where what has really existed lies unknown within us”, this is the “struggle to discern beneath matter, beneath experience, beneath words”.

In “Against Sainte-Beuve”, the drafts in which Proust had practiced his style and literary tenets he spoke in terms of interpretation of feelings telling that in a book “there must be depth”, it “must have come from that region of the inner life where the creation of works of art becomes possible”, and there we have to “go down into that deep inner quietude where thought chooses the words which will completely reflect it”, and which thus are “born of the spirit”. The writer that undertakes this journey into the depths of the dwellings of the inner spirit will “write without respect of persons and for the sake of what is deep and essential in oneself.”<sup>1</sup>

At one point Proust even uses the vocabulary of interpretation of feelings when he says “the objective value of arts counts for little; what we have to bring to light and make known to ourselves is our feelings,

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<sup>1</sup> Proust “Against Sainte-Beuve” in *On Art and Literature*, p. 271

our passions, that is to say the passions and feelings of all mankind”.<sup>1</sup>

*Art, language, symbols.* All expressions, all art is symbolic communication; the finest little expression is symbolic. All language is art, all being is symbolic. All thinking, all cognition is symbolic. – All symbols are meant to represent perceptions - perceptions in competition - Art, language, consist in an attempt to translate feelings into expressions, which *consist* of an *infinite number* of symbols, nothing but symbols, symbols which evoke the image of memories and things; thingly symbols calling feelings into the mind, calling feelings into question.

*Pain and pleasure always intertwined.* Having established that all in life is a function of the two binary oppositions pain and pleasure, we have to make a disclaimer and stress that it is never a choice between the two; pain and pleasure always come intertwined one in the other, as aspects of one, this is why every attempt to get to the roots of the problem is doomed, but not vain, for each hero of art will help us to fine-tune our senses to see a new aspect of life. And each will bring us closer to the feeling – (for we cannot exclude this kind of progress after all) – which is to be found beyond pain and pleasure, integrating all in one, in love.

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<sup>1</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*, p. 316

*Love and trust.* Thus I propose to think of art as a quest of finding an expression to match the interpretation of feelings; the feelings of pain and pleasure ... But beyond pain and pleasure - at the end of the road - there is a catch, which is love. I would think that this if anything is the only meaningful purpose of life, to enter a quest to capture the inner feeling of love and armed with this love from within to reach out to love and be loved in return, or just love in return... And I find it exhilarating to think that this indeed is also the most scientific endeavor that life has to offer to a human, and mankind.

Chagall said: "In our life there is a single color, as on an artist's palette, which provides the meaning of life and art. It is the color of love." – *In language* the color of love is the interpretation of the ultimate feeling, the one above the others, the truest, most genuine, the one that is beyond the binary struggle of pain and pleasure, love.

This is how the innermost meaning of deliberate art and our living art of everyday – being - coincide yet in this one aspect, in this foremost aspect of art, in this ultimate manifestation of life, in love. – It tells something about science, reason and good manners that only the lunatics seem to be conscious of this, only those who full of joy like newly weds fly with the cows and the trees, with the cocks and the herrings above the rooftops of consciousness to the music of

the inner fiddler of feelings.

And I am not trying to be romantic about this, just scientific – scientific in the sense of not saying anything metaphysical – scientific in the sense of anchoring our statements of reality in the biological and physical facts – just stating that beyond good and bad, beyond the mental confusion, beyond the biological, and produced by the biological, there is the mental reality which is love.

The forms of art called religion – in their non-political original forms – are attempts to catch this feeling of love, to understand this feeling and to multiply it.

Love is the ultimate feeling, feeling which we want to capture, or rather *recapture* – for this is what we are doing, trying to recapture a feeling, a feeling we have glimpsed, sensed for a while, a fleeting while, a feeling of which we have seen the heels and nothing more, always on the run, on the run in search of a lost feeling, for I believe that the dilemma in life is that truth lies in the future, but love, hope and trust are in the past and we are in a continuous quest to reconnect with that feeling in the future. And this is why I think that, in fact, the search of lost time is the search for the future, and of love. And we will understand that love too is a feeling, not a possession, and since it is a feeling it can indeed be found, found and regained, regained and retained, retained and relived, relived,

felt, and lived over again - within oneself.

But could it be that *trust* and *love* - again - are aspects of this same ultimate feeling, aspects of *one* entangled in our perceptions (confusing the one with the other), and that trust is the version which is for us to have and enjoy in relation to the ones we long to love, could it be that it is a form of love free of all will to possess, free of all competition, free of jealousy and comparison.

Trust is more than any possession and all possessions in one, and the peculiarity with trust – free of all competition and any comparison – is that you can multiple it in all infinity and share it with any number of people, in principle, for all you need is just to find somebody that wants to earn your trust, trust and be trusted in return. – I think we need to explore the essence of the feeling of trust in the same way that love has been examined in art and literature, if I were to learn the English language well enough, then I would myself attempt to write in prose such a book on trust.

In this book... I want to spell out my conviction that all *human life in society* is based on *social practices* i.e. traditions carried on from person to person, from generation to generation. - And hereby I stress that *all human life* can only be *life in society*; human life stems from life in society, and no life can be sustained outside of society.

I have a goal...I wish to help to bring about a fundamental change in how to perceive *knowledge*, *science*, and *human cognition*, the basis of human commonwealth, of humanity. I claim that all what humans have achieved - or what they wish, or what they think that they have achieved - is based on social practices, and nothing more; social practices are the achievements, and nothing more can be achieved (*and all is art*).

Not in any one single person...There is no wisdom or knowledge inherent in any one single person; all wisdom and knowledge is available only in social practices. And this is equally the case with 'ignorance' and 'misjudgments', for they too are all aspects of social practices. Ignorance and wisdom are inseparable aspects of the human mind, there is not the one without the other. – They are aspects of social practices, but these social practices should not be confused with anything that exists or that could possibly exist, they are no entities, no things, no materia, they are no things, they do not exist. We are dealing only with aspects of the non-existent – we

react to this insight by saying “This does not really make any sense”, because we think that our language is sensible! Social practices are but *thingless reflections of past experience*, embedded in language.

*Knowledge.* Knowledge is knowledge of social practices, therefore knowledge is not objectively correct nor laudable or loathsome. Knowledge is simply what we have learnt, been taught to accept as knowledge.

*Language.* Social practices reflect what people have done in the past, and what they do today, nothing else. Social practices are carried from person to person and generation to generation in language, and language is the highest *form – the supreme manifestation* - of social practices. – There I used the word *form*, I wanted to avoid it, but that is the way *we speak – or use language*, as it is said. - We only have this *grammar of the language of things*, suitable for things *not for feelings mental*. Ours is a language fit but for describing the things of nature; to speak in terms of the physical reality; to describe things and their movements, subordinating feelings to the same rigid mechanical rules of the mind, as if feelings too were things governed by the laws of gravitation. – If we want to stick with the laws of physics then at the very least language should be put under the theory of relativity. - This grammar, this language of ours, prevents us from dealing with feelings, to tell what we think. This grammar keeps us from voicing the inner, the feelings. We long for another language, for another way of speaking, a

language of feelings; a manner to speak which we still do not master, but which will have to learn. We take on feelings armed with abstractions, and we think that abstractions form a part of our arsenal but they don't. What we think of as abstractions are but the mental forms of things forged in the hands of the mind into the moulds of the thingly thinking. With language we are like Don Quijote fighting perceptions, windmills in the mind. *Language, the thingling of thinking*, leads us in a vicious circle; all our abstractions in themselves are but the words for things and their movements recast in a new role where they please but do not fit; pictures created in the ‘mind’ as if by pulling out traits from the original ‘thing’. As of today we view reality through these thingly images that crowd the mind and take refuge in language.

*Language.* Knowledge is embedded in language, and nowhere else. Void of language each generation would have to start life from scratch. Language is what sets humans and animals apart, in good and bad. – In this connection I think it is noteworthy that interestingly enough Albert Einstein had dwelt on the association between social practices, language, and knowledge as evidenced from these following quotes from *The World As I See It*, a selection of Einstein's letters and other writings: “The greater part of our knowledge and beliefs have been communicated to us by other people through the medium of a language which others have created. Without language our mental

capacities would be poor indeed, comparable to those of higher animals; we have therefore, to admit that we owe our principal advantage over the beasts to the fact of living in human society". – "When we survey our lives and endeavors we soon observe that almost the whole of our actions and desires are bound up with the existence of other human beings." <sup>1</sup>

*Social practices.* The words *to reflect* and *reflections* are those best suited, or so it seems, to demonstrate the notion of social practices. Social practices are reflections of what people say and have said, but rainbow-like they are nowhere, except in our minds, embedded in language.

*Intelligence.* There is no intelligence in the human individual, all intelligence to speak of is in the cultural heritage, in the social practices, those that reflect people's experience in an infinite regress back in time. – It is as if people would be the processors of information in a dispersed system that knows no limits; people processing the accumulated information encoded in language, and then anew making the processed information available through language to all other humans, anew and anew, to anybody and nobody particular – to all humans processing the data over and over again.

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<sup>1</sup> Albert Einstein, *The World As I See It*, p. 8

*Language again, again* like a rushing stream feeds social practices, like water feeding the wheel powering the machine, milling the meal, rotating life... Expressions spin the wheel of social practices; blasting against the wheel, pressing - with the weight of expressions - the wheel in motion; words like water swashing, splashing, spattering around; water and words, motion - violent at times - turn the wheel around. Waves hurling spouts of spray in the air, surging and dashing a drop splits astray, hits a blade on the rim of the wheel, bounces back, and up in the air catches, enfolds in its balm a ray of blue light, like an eye the pearl in the drop reflects the light from the far away sun, whose beam powers the earth, sets the world in motion, lifts the water up in air, drops it down, then takes it through the mountains off to the river, flowing down the stream, feeding the wheel, powering the machine, milling the meal, rotating life... In a unique moment the drop was lit, catching and holding in its womb the ray, the meaning of life – and the wheel spun on, swallowing the drop and its light in the machine, feeding life with the expression of that drop of water and the whole ocean empowered by the sun, like the expressions of our language radiant with feelings of men and women living and dying like those drops, turning nothing to deeds, rotating life. --- I do not know where that outburst came from, I simply wanted to express the idea of words, language and social practices being in constant motion where one affects the other in eternal motion, but I had in



mind another analogy, one more fitting to the poetry of this age, I thought about the world wide web, the Internet, which could serve as a simile in view of it encompassing all these same elements in which we can mirror the notion of social practices. In the Internet, strictly from a functional point of view the information is nowhere, and yet everywhere, and – as long as people have the economic means to use it – the data of this world wide web of belief is within the reach of everybody. Just like language, which is nowhere, and yet everywhere. Similarly we access language in the web of social practices, the carriers and embodiment of knowledge, knowledge encoded in language, representing the supreme form of social practices.

*Knowledge and information.* Knowledge and information consist only of condensed reflections, reverberations, expressions, of feelings bouncing from one person to another, from somebody to anybody, to who knows whom. Knowledge, information, is nothing thingly firm, nothing given. - *Knowledge is nothing more than yet another round of expressions and interpretations.* – But the same goes for misjudgments and ignorance, misinformation and disinformation – in short for all sorts of erroneous beliefs; knowledge corresponds to ignorance, and they are both merely aspects of one; it is a matter of taste which labels we assign to the one and the other. And this holds true with all in life, infinite variances, infinite aspects that we

fail to consider while we consider only one at a time. – Western science is in fact a poetic exaltation of wisdom, utterly absent from its actual subject matter, to the degree that nobody has even considered that ignorance and misjudgments are integral parts of what they call science, and this must be the supreme form of ignorance.

*Knowledge – language – deeds.* By doing, acting or representing, the abstract *knowledge* - reflections from the eternal interplay – is brought, through the medium of language back into nature, in form of physical actions, deeds undertaken and things affected.

*Cognition – becoming aware, thinking.* We can now discern the *elements* (again this thingly word) that *take part* in the process of cognition (producing knowledge). These are the individual who interprets his own feelings; whereas, his feelings are influenced by the expressions that he has heard (or seen, *remember the broad definition of language*); the individual communicating his interpretation of feelings to the external, to other people, with expressions; everyone interpreting the expressions of others; but, in between the initial expressions have traveled through language, and do no longer represent the expressions of the feelings of anybody singular, particular; thus, when the individual interprets his feelings social practices both affect the interpretations and come out from it i.e. people communicating their bodily needs and

feelings - opinions, wishes, needs – produce the social practices.

This way there is a continuous interplay between the expressions of feelings of one individual and the social practices of all the others, the reflections of all expressions, past and present. This is what I want to stress as the framework – the playground - of human life, the connection between interpretations of feelings stemming from each individual and the interplay, the social practices, the reflections of expressions of everyone.

We should now be able to grasp ‘knowledge’ as a mere reflection of what in society has emerged as knowledge as a result of opinions - feelings, perceptions - in competition.

*Memory.* I think that discovering ‘memory’ - finding out what it is all about, how it functions - would be the most rewarding piece of information about human cognition: what is the biological memory, or rather the biological processes that occur in storing, producing, memory?- Could it be that there is no storage – that the word ‘storage’ is just a leftover from the thingly language? Could it be that memory is just the avant-garde of the same processes that produce evolutionary adjustments, that the organism just has a way of reacting to sensory impulses, so that each time a new impulse comes it is compared

with the previous impulses, and that this biological comparison would immediately, and continuously push the body to produce images, perceptions, which in the imagination of a person come out as memories. And perhaps language, because of the added level of abstraction, causes certain kind of processes to be activated or dominant. In this hypothesis even memory would to a great extent be outsourced in the social practices, in language. - We need to keep in mind that ultimately all cognition is based on interpretation of perceptions which are always more or less fallible.

*Social practices and interplay of feelings.* This idea of combining social practices with the eternal interplay of personal expressions and interpretations contrasts markedly with the way the need to explain life and knowledge has been addressed throughout history<sup>1</sup>. In the earliest times, it seems, that explanations were sought for in external forces: trees, plants, and animals were credited with powers to direct human faith, life on earth, the universe. Mountains, lakes, seas, landmarks in nature were assigned these powers; the sun and stars, celestial bodies, were assigned this divine role. Later special entities, human-like gods, were attributed these powers. Such beliefs followed naturally from practical thinking, practical human

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<sup>1</sup> Knowledge about the physical nature; nature vs. society; behavior and social practices

logic in contemplating the world, reasoning from what could be known, from what could possibly be known with the means then available. - I believe that traditional beliefs build on the idea that these external forces, deities, were in some way reflections of the human self. In this sense, it seems, humans back in those times ultimately thought - as I do now - of the world as a projection of the self (the Ego) to the universe, which is like interpreting the universe from point of view of personal feelings. - The idea of interpretation of feelings as the paradigm might therefore represent this same eternal and ultimate idea. We merely return to this idea after clearing away the debris, the building blocks of social science fiction, two thousand years of wrong questions. From underneath the layers of misconceived philosophical problems; misconceptions; linguistic confusion and delusion we return to the eternal, the mysterious, what we cannot know. – The cardinal mistake which led to the social sciences of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the mingling into one bundle the conception of the material nature (natural sciences) and the mental and spiritual (what we today call social sciences, philosophy, and religion). And while on that, even worse, taking the flawed understanding of the natural sciences as the paramount knowledge, starting to think that all that is the case is *something thingly*, and that every *thing* is a *thing-in-itself*.

*Interpretation of feelings.* Interpretation of feelings has

a biological foundation, it is the biological struggle occurring in the binary mode of pain and pleasure. Gradually, in the course of evolution, this struggle has been brought to the mental level, up to language. - A human is constantly interpreting himself and the environment, the world. These interpretations cause biological and physiological changes in the body; furthermore these interpretations cause the expressions of emotion and feelings in animals and humans alike, that is, in thinking beings. – [Surely both humans and animals are thinking beings, but what sets humans apart from animals is precisely language, speech. This is what humanity is all about, learning to speak] - Animals communicate acoustically, through emitting sounds with a symbolic meaning. Would it be possible to define what separates animal communication from human language; what would be the characteristic, decisive, differences between these, where should we draw the line? – Or perhaps the mere attempt would be a language-game in itself? – I thought that perhaps in an attempt to grasp the difference we could point to ‘abstractions’; supposedly the difference would be in the capacity to communicate abstract ideas, but then I recalled that any idea is an abstract idea. – Then maybe the difference is in the flexibility of the humans to express in language ideas without any restrictions? Supposedly there are no restrictions that prevent us from expressing just any ideas, but this is so *in principle only* for there are restrictions, practical ones,

that prevent us from achieving this: We humans lack experience, training, to express ourselves, to express opinions, express feelings. The human heritage is still so poor, so weak; forms of life, the stage settings have altered, we dress as if we were modern men, but our language, the language of things, is still back in the stone ages; I doubt that we could today express the mental any better than people could those thousands of years ago – maybe the other way around. We have the language of things, stone, copper and bronze, we need to melt this language, make it fluid, cast it in the mode of feelings, those infinite variances. We need a new grammar for interpreting life, the beginning, the eternal, the infinite - and love.

With the idea of feelings we connect the mental (abstract) with the natural reality, the thingly core of cognition - The thingly core is the body that produces the feelings. - I stress: the expressions of the feelings that we hear and see are only feeble copies, faint interpretations of the original, the inner. - There, in the body nature produces the social, the human – the human: these expressions, the language which is the human. – Nature *produces* language. From this statement it is evident that the core of cognition, the limits of what can be known, lies in a contradiction in terms. For expressions are not things (which I stress time after time), expressions are not material, they never existed, not even when they ‘were produced’. – This is what we need to

explore: to establish this connection between the mental (non-existent expressions) and the biological organism (the biological surroundings where the physical actions take place and from where the mental originate). This is our challenge: to acquire a grammar and a vocabulary to speak of the mental, the non-physical, feelings, the infinite and the eternal. Expressions come out through physical means, but they themselves are not physical. The expression is an interpretation of feelings. This is the dilemma which prevents us humans to understand the universal, the beginning and the end<sup>1</sup> . – What we cannot touch, thereof we have to speak - in the language of art.

*Reason.* The roots of modern science derive from the Greek cultures of the times of Plato and Aristotle. – While Plato and Aristotle are admired today for their supposedly great work, I find it much more extraordinary how these two men managed to silence for a couple of thousand years the remarkable traditions of Greek thinking of their predecessors and contemporaries. In Greece two thousand five hundred years ago almost all of what I now try to convince people of was already known, and it could have found the proper expression back then, endless sufferings ago, were it not for the preposterous authority that these men had managed to seize and

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<sup>1</sup> This confusion between what exists and what does not exist is the very linguistic problem that Wittgenstein pointed out to him.

their work has been credited with. Through Plato and Aristotle mankind made the most fatal wrong turn ever. – The problem is not even in, as such, what they said – although that was all mostly wrong (and totally wrong what comes to Plato) – but the very fact that a healthy pluralistic tradition abound with wisdom (at least of the relative sort) was succumbed to the authority of two vain and mediocre thinkers, one a propagandist and the other one the archetype of the high school headmaster. – In contrast to these two we have the presocratic traditions from Parmenides to Democritus, and the formidable traditions of thinking known as sophism – labeled as *sophistry* by Plato, the master of turning black in to white and sense in to nonsense. This sophistry and the rhetoric method was the *competition of arguments*, not only in form, but also in fundamental understanding of relativity of science. How much better off we would be if instead our historic models for science would have been men like Democritus and Protagoras! This is the biggest lost opportunity ever, lost for ever for those who came before us.

The work of the Greeks first documented trends in rejecting the ideas of the suprahuman agents directing life on earth and representing knowledge. Building on these traditions book-learned men started to credit the *human self*, a thingling inside the brain, as being the ultimate source of knowledge. In modern days, with the traditions called enlightenment, these

teachings led to a belief that the human is equipped with a ‘*reason*’ which they described in a mechanical fashion as if it would be a *faculty* or even an *organ*<sup>1</sup>. Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804 years), the German professor, laborious in then prevailing traditions of alchemy, is known for having greatly contributed – in the disguise of philosophy - to the spread of the superstitious belief in the legend of reason, a legend which brought humanity from catastrophe to catastrophe in the years that followed.

The notion ‘reason’ developed originally as a figure of speech in the discourse of haughty men of the elite looking at life from the perspective of their privileged positions in society. Perplexed by their fortunate circumstances compared with that of the masses, they could not understand and really believe how they were so smart, and thus they were determined to find a cause for their lucky supremacy, they had to identify the factor that could explain it all, but looking around in the world they found nothing, and so only their wit could explain their good fortune, and this is what led them to the -for them - only plausible conclusion: they were endowed with the special gift of *reason*, the thingling in the brain, their birthright that set them apart from the rest of humanity; the explanation, the final solution and the symbol for their wit. – This is

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<sup>1</sup> A belief that is still very popular among the linguistic alchemists like Noam Chomsky and Stephen Pinker

how the figure of speech, *reason*, developed, like a cancerous growth, a mental tumor, to become the base of the scientific creed, the superstition that obscured the enlightenment.

The artifacts of philosophical nonsense were felt far beyond the Academy of Science, the horrors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the Age of Superstition – radiated from reason, and it was with this reason that the evil was armed by Kant and the likes. They overturned what little had been achieved by then in teachings of love and compassion and replaced it with the legend of reason, a monstrous claim made by sorcerers disguised in the wig and robe of scholars, enlightened with their fixed ideas. Then, having established *reason* as an uncontestable philosophical truth, these monsters and their followers were free to go on and claim just anything in the name of this reason, which served to cover up all their mistakes. They could do it, because their inhuman and cruel nonsense was certified by the Academy. This is how reason, the product of vain ignorance of the leisured class, paved the road to hell culminating in the Second World War, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Auschwitz.

Failed and full of horror, cause of endless human suffering, the traditions of speculation under the brand of reason anyhow contributed to pushing the search for knowledge inside the human. Now the human mind was thought to be the center of

the universe. – In a way it was, but only in a form of a mirror - infinitely many mirrors human beings as *mirrors reflecting knowledge* from one individual to others in this big joint venture that we may call social practices. And this mirror was neither reason nor the mind – if by that is meant a thingling in the brain – rather it was *the heart*. – *The heart*, a symbol I prefer for the cognitive apparatus, which is the whole human organism. All we know are but reflections between hearts, past, present, and future...

*The transmutation in reverse, from reason to thinking.* Stripped of philosophical hype there is not much left of *reason*, now ordinary thinking no more. I will illustrate this by showing how reason is returned to ordinary thinking in an inverted process, taking linguistic alchemy backwards – performing the transmutation in reverse. After all this reversal of nonsense is the only direction in which we can possibly hope for any successful transmutation to occur. We take a piece of ordinary nonsense, add our knowledge of natural science, and that of grammar, dissolve the nonsense in its constituent parts, and establish the correspondence between symbol and thought. Next we dress the statement in more simple words, rearrange the words and...Voila! We've converted nonsense into sense. This is how we reverse linguistic alchemy, two thousand five hundred years of elite err.

For our experiment we quote from the Wikipedia, the Internet sites with all the latest on social science fiction. There we find our test sample. As a background for understanding the test situation we read “*Reason has traditionally been claimed as distinctly human, and not to be found elsewhere in the animal world. However, recent studies in this area show that, in lower levels, animals are capable of some rational thinking.*” – What strikes here is not the claim that animals would possess this legendary *reason* (i.e. ‘thinking’), but the statement itself, that now in this 21<sup>st</sup> century this story is treated as a scientific discovery, that *animals can think* would be a discovery of sorts. Why on earth would anybody with a sound mind have to back up that claim with “recent studies”? What this piece of news means, in fact, is that some life-estranged scientist has come to the startling conclusion that *animals can think*, and that he prefers to call thinking ‘*rational thinking*’, which he equates with ‘*reason*’. Then what is the difference between ‘*rational thinking*’ and ‘*ordinary thinking*’ - or are we supposed to call the latter non-rational thinking? – Quite the opposite, from observing animal behavior we would rather conclude that their actions seem much more in line with what a wise man, the ideal man or woman (here I feel a special urge to stress the equality between genders) would do in the given circumstances considering the physical abilities. And isn’t that what we should call *rational, to act in the best possible way in any given circumstances*. I guess that most people – at least those

that have not been illuminated in the sacred belief of science – would agree that we can certainly not say the same about people when we observe how they act in public and private. – Now to the test itself. Further on in the quote we read: “We reason when we conclude one thing on the basis of something else.” – In order to try to grasp the meaning of this *scientific* statement we first have to translate it into the ordinary language. Hereby note how we proceed by *eliminating* the *concept ‘thing’*. After this elimination the statement could read like: ‘We reason when we [draw a conclusion] [based on] [preceding data]’. Now we have a statement translated into ordinary language, free from the confusion introduced by the scientific way of speaking (our method is that of interpretation: *replacing one expression with another*). From this presentation in the vulgar language we see that we can go one step further and just state: ‘Reason is drawing a conclusion based on information’. Furthermore we note that in accordance with our linguistic traditions the sentence would sound prettier if we change the grammatical category of ‘reason’ from nominal to verbal, from ‘reason’ to ‘reasoning’, then our statement reads like this: ‘Reasoning is drawing a conclusion based on information’. Our final move is undertaken upon realizing that the word ‘thinking’ may replace the word ‘reasoning’ which brings us to the statement: ‘Thinking is drawing a conclusion based on information’. Now we see that all what is left of the initial, alchemical, proposition

is a purported definition of what ‘thinking’ means.  
 – Personally I am not quite satisfied with that definition of thinking. I am a bit concerned with the idea that a conclusion necessarily *must be* drawn. Can we not think without bringing the thought to an end?  
 – Or perhaps, maybe, this is the very human fallacy that ‘reason’, in fact, aptly describes i.e. *the human urge always to rush to a conclusion*, even when there are no real premises for it? And therefore, maybe we should after all leave ‘reason’ to describe human thinking, this natural perversion.

*Linguistic Alchemy and Ultimate Stimuli.* At the peak of linguistic alchemy these philosophers similarly to the claim of the alchemist about possessing the ultimate secrets of how to turn lead to gold, declared that they were privy to the self-evident truths, axioms and principles. No gold became of lead, and human feelings will not turn into truths; no philosophical formulae<sup>1</sup> will capture life. Axioms and principles, laws of life...that this nonsense should become self-evident is all the self-evidence we can truly hope for. – Even truth is relative. All is relative, not only in physics...but in human society as well. – Ultimate axioms, ultimate principles are but hallucinations of social science fiction, nothing more. – But there is something, which in fact is the ultimate; the real

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<sup>1</sup> I was delighted to by the detail that according to etymology ‘formulae’ originally stood for ‘words used in a ceremony or ritual’ (see [www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com)); this is the use to which we shall deport them back.

ultimate is in the body, in the human organism - within the biological. There we find the *ultimate stimuli* that incite the human quest, the basic binary mode of pain and pleasure – the eternal adjustment to pain and pleasure; to repel pain, to reach for pleasure. All in life stems from this struggle in the binary mode of pain and pleasure. This goes on in the animal organism, the human organism, and through the course of evolution it was passed on to human emotions and feelings. At this present point in evolution the quest for pain and pleasure is conducted on the level of language. The biological animal evolved from this same balance and counterbalance of pain and pleasure, rotating around and intertwined in what we could call emotions, which in a higher level of refinement maybe thought of as feelings, and now these feelings struggle to break through the body to become expressions, eventually reaching sublimity in language. – Not in our language, though, only in a future language of feelings.

*Language, the social extension of the struggle between pain and pleasure.* In language, the eternal struggle between pain and pleasure is reflected in the social competition of arguments, in pleads for pleasure and aversion of pain. – Ideally the social extension of this *binary* system of pain and pleasure should be reflected in our social practices as a fluent balance, a harmony in language- but for now we only have this work in progress. Our language, the way we speak, the way



we express ourselves is still far off the point of harmony, crude and harsh like blocks of stone, harsh like a Flintstone bat, fit for flinging and crossing the head of a random enemy in lieu of a more suitable expression for the occasion, while for the real feeling – the one we failed to express, the one we needed to interpret – we would need something more than the bat, a language of feelings giving us the capacity to express complex thinking, like shades of color; tunes of music; dimension; and depth – (and even these words whereby I describe the diversity we need are all derived from the language of things, words used to describe things and their movements, something physical – perhaps the word ‘tune’ is different, one for feelings). We need to acquire a way of speaking which will incorporate a thousand more subtle aspects to fit between the bat and the swing on the head, softer and more subtle expressions, multifaceted, multidimensional, nuanced ways of speaking. – The blocks of stones have to be grained to sand, the sand melted and made transparent like glass, the sand mixed into plaster from which we sculpture new expressions in the mind, a new thinking, something that would aid us in interpreting feelings and the infinite variances of life.

In language we are trying to find a balance, and reach beyond the struggle of pain and pleasure. In language the biological needs for adjustments to pain and pleasure are not reflected as they should, and from this our failures, failures of humanity throughout

history, throughout times. Language fails us, the language of today fails us, but this is not the end, where we stop others will carry on, and eventually a language of feelings will replace that of this present language of things.

*Inventions.* I stressed that knowledge, all we know, and all we can know, is a reflection of people’s life in society, reflections of communication. Knowledge - not to mention the special kind of knowledge which they call ‘truth’ - does not stem from any one particular person. – Even what appears to be a decisive contribution of one, is but a small adjustment to social practices, immeasurable to human mind. Knowledge embedded in social practices is brought to light sooner or later, if not by one then another. *The inventor* gives but a finishing touch to an old idea, an old practice; the inventor interprets the old knowledge in a new way. He points to a new aspect, and turns the question around. All changes, all inventions, all discoveries, come about by *one* adding a bit to the work of many, all a result of cumulative social experience. Infinite variances, infinite stimuli, are behind all change. Only in human mind does all get boiled down to causes and effects, to the credit of particular men and particular actions. – Inventions are seen only in retrospective.

*Knowledge is the use, the practice.* Do we have any good reason to think that the achievements in natural

sciences are any more advanced than those of social sciences? - By all means, no! – How is scientific knowledge reflected in life? – Scientific knowledge is reflected in the threats to the ecology, environment and the threats of complete destruction of life. – Knowledge is the use, the practice, doing. There is no theoretical knowledge, only speculation or practice. – ‘Science’ is not implemented, applied – science is the reflection of what is applied, what people practice, do. – We have to reject the image of this *thingling, science*, being something great, something fixed outside of men, hidden and waiting to be discovered, instead we need to fully understand that science is a human endeavor, a quest – a way, the way, as the Chinese said. - It is an aspect of our activities, of our social practices, of what we do together, one and each with the other, do and did, now and then. And this brings natural sciences back to the realm of people, natural sciences are interpreted, and misinterpreted by people. And this explains why even natural sciences are not much better, even when they start from something real, from the physical reality of nature. For knowledge of natural science is also at the end of the day its application – (‘science’ and ‘the end of the day’ – what a scary association) - and application brings everything back to the infinite distortions human mind is capable of achieving. The scientists, of all people, are the least analytical, as they, availing themselves of opposites, reduce all to a few aspects, and ignore the infinite variances of life. But we can not avoid these infinite variances, for

they are part of life, part of the the reality outside science; in reality nothing is fixed, nothing is ready, only endless questions calling into question, a path with an infinite number of cross roads and just as many wrong turns. The limits of natural sciences are set in human practices, the limits are in knowledge, and knowledge is but a reflection of those same human social practices, of language. Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Auschwitz, Beslan, Iraq – wars; pollution, contamination. global warming; hunger, poverty, propaganda...Humanity does not have a good track record.

## Science and Art

Albert Einstein who revolutionized natural sciences also penetrated in his personal thoughts to the fundamentals of human cognition knowing, as he said, that “the fairest thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion which stands at the cradle of true art and true science”<sup>1</sup>

The difference between art and science, if any, can possibly be found only in the arrangement of words and their purported meaning. In science the arrangement of words and their meaning have to be open to a serious scrutiny, while in other forms of art words are used to express feelings without an attempt to establish an exact correlation between signs and meaning. In deliberate art obvious metaphors abound and direct meaning may well rest hidden from the spectator, the reader. In art the aim is to create a feeling, which comes about through a combination of all the elements of the artwork, small elements that add aspects to the feeling like the shades of color in a painting. The work of art becomes a microcosm for the narrative (within the bigger narrative which is our life and the conceptual reality it offers), and the whole of the narrative conveys the feeling, or the various aspects that add to the feelings, and that is the message of art, something that cannot be said in other words, because the work of art was the expression of the very feeling.

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<sup>1</sup> Einstein, *The World As I See It*, p. 5

Here I want to recall to my aid the words of Marcel Proust who expressed this same idea with scientific precision and unfailing beauty like this: “when all is said, it is only the inexpressible, the thing one believes one cannot succeed in getting into a book, that remains in it. It is something vague and haunting, like a memory. It is atmospheric...it is not in the words, it is not said, it is all among the words, like the morning mist at Chantilly”<sup>1</sup> The artwork itself as a holistic one conveys the idea that the artist nourishes.

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<sup>1</sup> Proust “Against Sainte-Beuve” in *On Art and Literature* p. 153. It is interesting to note that Ludwig Wittgenstein had expressed a similar idea as evidenced by a letter he had sent to the publisher of his first work, the *Tractatus*: “the point of the book is ethical. I once wanted to give a few words in the foreword which now actually are not in it, which, however, I’ll write to you now because they might be a key for you: I wanted to write that my work consists of two parts: of the one which is here, and of everything I have not written. And precisely this second part is the important one. For the Ethical is delimited from within, as it were by my book; and I’m convinced that, strictly speaking, it can ONLY be delimited in this way. In brief, I think: All of that which many are babbling I have defined in my book by remaining silent about it.”, in Ray Monk’s *Ludwig Wittgenstein – The Duty of Genius*, p. 178. – This idea is also to his famous statement from the preface to the *Tractatus*: “What can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence.” – In *Culture and Value* (p. 16) Wittgenstein said: “Perhaps what is inexpressible (what I find mysterious and am not able to express) is the background against which whatever I could express has its meaning.”

The artist's tool is the paintbrush which he uses to bring out the infinite variances of life, aspects of humanity and the nature. His narratives are full of colors that come in all shades of life, to reach the right tone he might have to travel half way around the world, and turn grammar upside down, tear words to pieces, rearrange them, and employ them in a new way, and he may claim that he expressed himself, and we believe him if we sense the proof in a feeling that his expression has touched somewhere deep within ourselves. – But in the art of science this liberty shall be restrained. In reality the language of science is needed for the special purpose of translating art into transparent statements, to voice in a clear language the knowledge produced in deliberate art and in our everyday art of being, i.e. in life at large. The objective of science should be to translate the manifold of feelings into the minimal common denominator that all can transparently agree upon, or by the very least reach an agreement as to what the purported meaning is supposed to be.

The results of science cannot be implemented, nothing about science can be implemented, in science all that can be implemented are the conditions for competition – the conditions for freedom – for science, too, is best seen as a constant *competition of arguments*. This is a competition - or rather a game - where a new argument, whatever its merits, is like a drop in the ocean, or perhaps a wave at best

–(Amplifying this figure of speech from a drop to a wave I was inevitably led to think about a tidal wave and then a tsunami, and so I thought that war is like an argument the size of a tidal wave, and that nuclear war is an argument like a tsunami, and yet there are people who are willing to resort even to these kind of arguments, arguments born in an evil mind, born of an evil language). – In science there can never be a decisive new argument that would break the spell of the web of belief which in all its fundamentals is nothing but different manifestations of superstition. Nothing new - no one argument - can ever impress the community of scientist to the point of making a difference, and all the arguments that trickle down beyond the community of the learned are at best received as anecdotal data without any other value than the face value of the name the piece of knowledge is assigned. Nobody – except perhaps a few artists - will draw any conclusions from the new argument they heard, and that is in the very best case when something indeed was heard.

Beliefs - separately and collectively - change only gradually, over time, with the current of life and the evolving social practices. It is not by the arguments, nor by the theories, nor by discoveries that changes in beliefs come about, but only through integrating new knowledge – and its alter ego misconception - in language. It is only in language – i.e. in social practices – that new ideas are received and developed,

accepted or rejected; utilized, used and misused. And this is what makes the modern notion of science so problematic. On an analogy with the natural sciences, and by an artful manipulation of language, scientists claim the *discovery*, *invention*, and *existence* of one or another *theory of social sciences*, but in reality - beyond the language-games of social sciences - a theory is nothing but an argument among other arguments. This is also why - after eloquent public discourse on the beauty of one or another most final, ultimate theory the proponents grow impatient due to their failures to convince everyone else of their 'universal truths', and weary of futile argumentation, intent on action, they resolve to cut the nonsense, sharpen the knives, load their guns, and proceed from *vision into action*, to the final forms of persuasion, to the mental violence called propaganda, and eventually the final argument of killing and destruction in the name of a God, Marx, Superstructure, Fatherland, Ancestor Land, Democracy and Freedom of Speech (in the present day the two last ones are the most popular causes for mass-murder).

In the scientific competition of arguments, in the discourse, certain types of arguments are branded 'scientific'. These 'scientific arguments' are those that are put forward in accordance with the prescribed rituals of the Academy; this Academy like a castle beyond the reach of humans, whose emissaries guard the kingdom of science and its most sacred treasure,

*reason*. This is why the dealers of the Academy, the universities, serve a special role in conserving the prevailing superstition, even the organizational structures are molded on an analogy with religious communities. The European universities emerged from within the structures of the Catholic Church and replicated the church in all of their essential characteristics – basically simply replacing God with Science. In the Academy like in the old Church to become a scientist – to receive a license to say - an adept through carefully rehearsed initiation rites, is accepted as a member to a kind of sacred concilium of scientists. Mastering the canons of the Academy, and upon submission to the codes of due respect, the adept is proclaimed 'doctor.' In the Catholic Church a 'doctor' was an eminent theologian 'religious teacher' who was declared to be a 'sound expounder of the church doctrine', who, consequently was appointed for the task of *indoctrinating* the followers. In the European universities, by an analogy to the Church, the academic doctors took over the function of the indoctrination of the docile students - now in the scientific creed.

The tradition linked with the use of the word doctor goes even further back to connect directly with the wizards, sorcerers, healers and medicine men, the professions on which our contemporary professors are modeled on, although ours seem more calm, laid back, less of the jumping around, less screaming in

public, chants, charms and smoke screens on paper only, now only words, an artful, delicate manipulation of language. - I make this comparison by no means *only* with irony in mind, rather I sincerely consider that we would all greatly benefit from understanding that the well-polished doctrines of the modern professors are but the latest brand of superstition.

‘Science’ is what those with authority proclaim to be science, similarly like ‘god’ for any given religious community is something that the religious authorities declare to be so. – Science and religion, both are deep down nothing but competition of arguments. But it is competition on a distorted market restrained by authority, and hidden underneath endless layers of superstitious beliefs. Beyond the superficial forms of science and the faces of professors that radiate an appearance of intelligence there is in reality no fundamental difference between modern day social sciences and all other manifestations of primitive thinking through history. Sorcerers, wizards, medicine men, professors, they all represent the same traditions of an elite claiming possession to knowledge hidden from ordinary humans – knowledge, a picture of a thing in the mind, but invisible in reality, unattainable for the uninitiated.

We now need to picture science, not as something (not a ‘thing’ at all), nor as a body of mysterious data, or ultimate secrets, but as the current ranking of the

arguments pertaining to those arguments they call ‘scientific knowledge’. Science is whatever is accepted as science. – And the rules, the borders delimiting science are drawn in language, in the language-games of science.

The little progress there has been, the rise of pragmatic philosophies - a pragmatic world view - is not primarily a result of the new teachings but simply the result of increased competition, more freedom, individual liberty and opportunity to doubt and voice the doubt, for notwithstanding my aforementioned pessimistic notes on the grip of scientific superstition we now evidence a sinking trend in the standing of the formal teachings and the position of the Academy.<sup>1</sup> Professors and their beliefs are still hold in reverence in form even when losing in substance; in substance, in actual life, in practice, the formal teachings are running out of steam, losing relevance, not through conscious opposition but simply as a result of the lives that we lead. All the information needed can be found on the Internet, in the bookstores and in the libraries. Apart from

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<sup>1</sup> But as the one goes another comes. Academic science is losing ground, but another monster, more powerful and cruel is emerging, more absolute and totalitarian than anything mankind has experienced, the propaganda machine is on the rise like a balloon on the horizon, taking over reality with the images it blows up and press on the mind.

providing facilities for experiments in natural sciences the importance of the universities is being reduced to serving as points of social gatherings – in fact very much like the churches – and a place where to broaden one’s horizon to become as they say a well-educated and cultivated person – civilized - but if this is what we want, and indeed this is what we should hope for, then for this to happen the curriculum of the universities should be turned upside down, all the positivistic knowledge that they purport to teach – that is what they indoctrinate students with – which is 90% of the contents of the university programs, would have to be reduced by the half and instead there should be a return to a kind of curriculum they had in the French and the British universities at the eve of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where emphasis was placed on history, literature, arts, and languages – and even physical education or just sport should form part of the mandatory program - all what in reality would give people the tools for managing life, business, science and progress.

With a deep sigh of relief we may proclaim that the prestige of contemporary university teachings is anyway being marginalized similarly the way religions lost ground, the way churches and rituals are still in esteem but beyond the mainstream of life.

In connection with all this, and to round up my assessment of contemporary science, I cannot resist

to throw in my view on the question which is to be considered the oldest profession, for I cannot agree with the claim that the oldest profession was that of the female prostitute. My candidates for the job are these men with a tight moral dress wrapped around a body of charm, nonsense and lies, the con men and fraudsters who with their antics tricked themselves into authority, the wizards, our professors wrapped in a different garb. And the second oldest was that of the warrior, the professional killer. The third, the judge, who introduced a bit of common sense to the confusion created by the former two, and the poor woman, she was the victim of all these men.

## All is Art

Beyond the language-games of science there are other arguments, arguments that pertain to a much deeper, fundamental, understanding of life, arguments for a more accurate and deeper description of the inner workings of life. Such arguments do not meet the sacred criteria of science. These arguments I have in mind are the expressions of art in all its manifestations, in all the infinite variances, expressions of feelings reproduced by artists, expression of men and women in their daily life, in the living art of social practices.

The human being is driven by a feeling of art, artistic creativity. In his art he gives an expression to his feelings, his feelings in competition, competition continuously within and beyond, in the internal and the external. - Above I already referred to Albert Einstein on his thoughts on the relativity of language, knowledge, and social practices, and here again I feel that a reference to his ideas will help me to stress the point, to stress the primacy of art and interpretation of feelings over science (i.e. this special form of art), Einstein said: “Feeling and desire are the motive forces behind all human endeavour and human creation, in however exalted a guise the latter may present itself to us”.<sup>1</sup> – (‘Feeling’ and ‘desire’: desire is the quest for pleasure, and pain is what we pay for it).

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<sup>1</sup> Einstein, A. *The World As I See It*, p. 24

All is art, even science *itself*, is a form of art, a special genre, formalistic, dull, and rarely sincere, but art all the same. – Art is not what is defined as art, but all, all our being, everyday actions and activities is art. Upon reflection this is understood, but in the mind – the scientific mind – there lives a perversion which arranges reality in different terms. In the mind, under the influence of the language of things, the grammar of thingly perceptions deforms reality, become reality and take over reality. As a result an imperishable wall between reality and belief has been erected in the mind. This wall captures perceptions, makes snapshots of them, stores the snapshots, and converts them into a thingly reality, where all gets classified, divided into categories, and defined. Defined – definitions, the most sacred activity of science and the most dangerous. Definitions are what the mind craves for, it can never have enough of them, this is the intellectual feed that the body is dying for, a craving which is like a built in feature of the biological organism. But this feature, this fallacy, is precisely what we have to free us from, free ourselves from the captivity of definitions, classifications, the whole grammar of language of things, instead we have to learn to see the infinite variances, infinite aspects of life – dimensions, depths, relations – all at once, all in the same, all as aspects of one.

The very existence of a human is a lifelong artistic expression; life in all its manifestations is art. When



we speak we give an artistic expression to the interpretation of our feelings. Each moment of life, of being, of behaving, of saying and being silent, is an act of the human art. Some are more explicit about their art than others; some make a point of their art, some know they are doing it, some just do it by being. Stressing individuality is an act of art. The styles of art are as many as there are moments in life, each moment carries a new expression; and individuality is the ultimate demonstration of art, a show of feeling.

- Art styles – like all - come in infinite variances

Art is the origin, knowledge is merely what seems like knowledge, a reflection of art, a reflection of being, reflected in social practices. Humans are called *homo sapiens* – the wise man. How misleading! – Perhaps because he is equipped with the darling of science, the thingling called reason ☺ It is no coincidence that this term was first coined in 1802, to inaugurate the two centuries of social science fiction. I reject this concept, *homo sapiens*, for there is no wisdom in man; human wisdom is nowhere else except for in the commonwealth, in social practices, which reflect traditions of eternal time. - In a moment of sincerity even scientist will admit that not a grain of knowledge has ever been detected in the human body, although life outside the body is full to hints to something that reminds of knowledge, this evidence that should have led us long time ago to find the explanation in social practices (perhaps the knowledge that Protagoras

possessed). - In the human there is no wisdom, but a will, a stream of art, taste, creativity, imagination, and expressions. Better call him *homo artisticus* – (or perhaps *homo creatine* for ‘organic base in the juice of flesh’). Behind every act, is a play, a game, a ploy, constant demonstration of creativity and personality, behind every act there are the expressions of art. A biological organism driven by art is what the human is. - The *homo artisticus*, the creative man, possesses no wisdom, but an appetite, a taste for wisdom, which he savors from what others have brought to the table in form of the inherited social practices. – Speaking about *savor* and *sapiens*, interesting to note how through etymology, the history of words, the comedy of cognition is demonstrated. I rejected *sapiens*, but a few lines later I said ‘*he savors*’, and yet both *savor* and *sapiens* are words connected in a common root in the Latin *saporem* (*sapor*) ‘taste, flavor,’ and *sapere* ‘to have a flavor’. For the ancients taste and flavor came first, and it was good taste that came to denote wisdom.

Deliberate art and other human activity are all different instances of art on display on a continuum from everyday sensations - a coy smile, tempting, enigmatic- to the magnificent manifestations of art in the Louvre of Paris. - ‘Continuum’ is a simile I tend to use in order to introduce the idea of infinite variances, that our differences and choices are not bipolar but nuances better seen as different gradations of one, different aspects of the same. But

the continuum only puts us on the right *track* – and here again the word *trajectory* seems more suitable – a continuum serves us like crutches serve a crippled man while we limp on with our language of things, longing for the ability to speak in feelings and aspects. – Here I'd need a simile which could convey the idea of the interconnection, relations, association of all with everything... one which would convey all the infinite variances of nature and thinking, one where all associations are entangled, intertwined criss-cross in infinite variances, and which would show that nobody alone is in control of these infinite relations ... we need to think of a device like a combination of a prism, a kaleidoscope and magnetic resonance imagining system, something that would enable us to see all the complex aspects from the external and the internal all at once, all in one, but any way giving a picture of something crystalline, not a mess, something absorbing light and radiating back, reflections with a glimpse of hope. - We need a language like a prism for projecting the inner life on to the surface, to express the whole spectra of feelings in their infinite variances ranging from the biological pain and pleasure to the corresponding mental aspirations.

Everyone is an artist, more or less conscious in his art, more or less intense in expression. All is art. Science is art, being is art, art in the special aesthetic meaning is but one of the manifestations of art.

Therefore we should not take seriously the division of all the manifestations of life in these three forms as if they, in reality, would be separate sections of life, thingly entities that we can have or not have, that we use or do not use, that some have more and some have less of. – No, all is art. There are only different manifestations of art. Let's call them: art as being; science; and art in its contemporary meaning which I like to call *deliberate art*. Deliberate art is what a person, classified as an artist (at the very least by the artist himself) consciously does in order to produce objects or engage in performances which are intended to be aesthetically *pleasing* – or rather aesthetically *striking* (I caution against the idea of stressing aesthetics as something *pleasing*, and I will return to this issue a bit further on in the text where I establish *aesthetic pleasing* as one of the two main aspects of aesthetic feeling, corresponding to the two aspects of pain and pleasure).

*Sport is art.* A sportsman is an artist – without any doubt Ronaldo, the footballer player is an artist, his sport is art.

*Business is art.* A business venture is art, creative art. – An entrepreneur is an artist.

*Dancing is art,* not only ballet, ballet is big art - everyday dancing is art. People are good at expressing themselves in dance - certainly much better than in

speech - they do it on a continuum from good to great.

Sometimes everyday art is more pleasing than deliberate art, and often it is only afterwards that it appears so, after time has elapsed and blurred the mental differences, when the partitioning walls of the mind classifying objects and phenomena have been shaken and trampled down by the eroding forces of time, and when time is regained in the memory that the object evokes in us, in the individual memory of a person, but also in the collective memory of mankind for example when an everyday object from times past, a decade old or thousands of years, emerges as an admired *piece of art* - (Kelsen's theories of law are art; they represent a kind of a comedy in verse.<sup>1</sup> - The EU draft constitution is a work of art, it is a tragicomedy.<sup>2</sup> We may laugh now, but it will not end well).

*Religion is art.* Religion is the art of trying to explain the eternal, the mysterious, the beginning, and the end. (I think that the *soul* could be seen as a projection of social practices, of *the external mingling with the internal*).

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<sup>1</sup> For a criticism of this peculiar form of art I refer to Expressions and Interpretations, chapters 12, 17 and 18

<sup>2</sup> For a criticism of this peculiar form of art I refer to Expressions and Interpretations, chapter 24

*Deliberate Art – Usefulness?* The Wikipedia quite aptly represents the average Western popular perceptions on science, an ample source to draw from. This is how they define art: “Art is a result of human creativity which has some perceived *quality beyond its usefulness*, usually on the basis of aesthetic value or emotional impact”. - *Quality beyond its usefulness* is claimed as the distinctive trait that sets art apart from other manifestations of human life. But, then how should we treat artifacts from times past and cultures that appear exotic to us? For don't we admire them as art while they originally were conceived for everyday use only? It is only for us that these objects lost their usefulness and were turned into pure exhibits. Could it be that this way of thinking, the way we perceive objects and life is a modern form of a collective decease, a defect caused by the scientific mind, a defect that leads us to attempt a segmentation between beauty and life, feeling and being – withdraw art from life, first in the mind, and then in practical reality? This places us in a vicious circle, whereby we in fact convert the confused perception of art – thinking of art as a special section of life, separate from the daily life we lead – into a virtual reality. In earlier times, in more natural cultures, there was not this rigid partition between deliberate art and the aesthetic values of everyday life, there the aesthetic considerations were more fully consciously present in all aspects of life. – In fact Andy Warhol, among others, has with his Pop Art demonstrated that there

is this aesthetic side to all also in our contemporary life, but this does not mean— or should not be taken to mean — that all that is *aesthetic* is beautiful. Then we could for example look at Warhol's art as an aesthetic demonstrations of what in our contemporary life is ugly and debasing to the senses (although this is perhaps not what he meant, or at least not what he consciously meant).<sup>1</sup>

It is only recently that 'art' received in our cultures the meaning 'deliberate art', that is art conceived for a special aesthetic purpose. The distinction between scientific type of knowledge (logos) and knowledge in form of artistic narratives, often referred to as poetics (mythos) was made in the Greek traditions of the times of Plato and Aristotle but it was only around the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Europe) that science became gradually delimited, carved out from art, as a thing in itself, as a body of truths of an imagined better quality than truths of other sorts. Until then *art* had stood for human workmanship in general; art, science and handicraft all fell within the notion of art (from here we have the English academic degrees like and Bachelor of Arts). Naturally — as the critical reader should note - the erection of these mental borders coincides with the rise of science and the scientific mind.

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<sup>1</sup> The omnipresence of art can also be seen in a brighter light from the art that stems from the traditions of abstract expressionism of Antoni Tàpies.

## Art and Interpretation of Feelings

Art is a search for a proper expression for one's own interpretation of feelings. — Here again we note how all being can be seen as processes where feelings of an individual are related to the expressions of others — those expressions that we may call social practices. According to this idea all in the individual remains empty, cannot develop, without a contact with other people. Same with art: art is a search for a proper expression for one's interpretation of feelings, which can be found inside but only through the reflections of the external. — And it is no different with the expressions and interpretations of social practices, of all our being, which is art. What sets deliberate art apart is a conscious attempt to find better means, find expressions which penetrate the surface to plumb the very depths of feeling.

With the philosophy of interpretation of feelings we have turned the cognition around and acknowledged the primacy of feelings - the inner is the fundamental, from which all else is derived. And now we may also appreciate a work of art as a projection of those fundamental inner feelings; art as a reflection of human feelings, feelings that in the process of evolution are breaking through the hard core of cognition.

Aristotelian philosophy proceeded from the idea that

*'pleasure is the final cause of beauty'* – which is a movement from the object inwards, as if the object would exist independent from its creator. – I propose the opposite direction, from feelings to the object, where *the final cause of art is an interpretation of feelings*. – We could also say that the old academic - Aristotelian - theories were mired in the *thing fallacy*, the conception that there was a thing, object of art, in which 'beauty' had been incorporated as a property, while I want to propose to view art as a feeling, as a process, precisely as all in life, starting from the biological processes of pain and pleasure. We have to reject the idea that 'beauty' - a thingly perception, nothing but a word - would have the capacity to serve as a cause for anything. - I feel it spoils the text having to state that, it sounds so banal, and so self-evident - how banal all the self-evident is – but even so I decided to leave it here, because this is the fallacy, this is the simple delusion that contemporary cognition is built on. - From our new vantage point we shall cease to seek *a* cause, especially *a – one – cause, but many causes* which we'd rather call *stimuli* - associations and stimulations in infinite variances. – Beauty, which they thought of as a thing-in-itself, was but the expression incorporated into a thing or a performance, the concentrated expression of the stimuli that led to the feeling of beauty. – In his art Proust by all means demonstrated that true art could not be found on the surface of the object but only behind the image, that is in an interpretation of feelings, in the feelings that the

artist had expressed – or rather: wanted to express. Thus for Proust art meant a relation, a mental action, from mind to mind, from the artist's mind into the spectator's mind, and from the spectator back in an effort to decipher the original feeling which now was destined to be forever tinted by one's own. And hereby I have no doubt about how Proust conceived 'mind' as a metaphor for all those mental bundles we carry inside us as feelings; we may rest assured that he by 'mind' did for sure not mean the intellect. "I had realized before now that it is only a clumsy and erroneous form of perception which places everything in the object when really everything is in the mind"<sup>1</sup>- We know that Proust in all aspects of his art followed the insight he had gained that "beauty does not lie in objects"<sup>2</sup>. But this demonstrates also Proust's fundamental understanding about the philosophy of human life and society, that nothing of what is in the human mind is an object – a thingly entity – and that all we have to go about are merely our ideas, thoughts, desires... feelings we project in objects. And this is why Proust could never bring up one aspect in a person without immediately bringing up another one, or two, three other aspects, even contradictory aspects, which all served as building blocks to construct a piece of art out of every person he chose to touch upon, or rather the persons he

<sup>1</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*, p. 323

<sup>2</sup> Proust VI p. "Chardin" in *On Art and Literature* p. 334

chose to create. And this is why Proust alerts the reader to the risk of “placing features” - which we really only create in our mind - in a face of the persons we encounter in life when “instead of nose, cheeks and chin there ought to be merely an empty space with nothing more upon it than a flickering reflexion of our desires.”<sup>1</sup>

Pleasure is not the cause of beauty, but finding *a true interpretation of feelings* is *pleasure*, or perhaps we want to say *satisfaction*, which is an expression which satisfies the underlying feeling, and in this sense *pleasure* could also be thought *as the satisfaction of the feeling of pain, disgust (aversion and repulsion)*.

I have equated being with interpretation of feelings, and art with being, science with art, and cognition with interpretation of individual feelings mirrored in social practices. All are aspects of one, therefore they can be presented in any order or any association, and other words can be thrown in to depict the same issues, we may replace *being* or *art* with *language* or *knowledge* and so on in various combinations, but always we return to the same basic idea of expressions and interpretations – *being, art, science...* are expressions and interpretations reflecting feelings of one in a social context.

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<sup>1</sup> Proust, In Search of Lost Time, p. 527

## Aesthetic Feeling of Pain and Pleasure

“The beauty of images is situated in front of things, that of ideas behind them”<sup>1</sup>

The discussion of aesthetic feeling returns us back to the physical, to the biological, into the human organism, where the eternal struggle between pain and pleasure gives rise to feelings, and create the evolving impressions of good and evil. Art is a reflection of this never-ending struggle in the binary mode of pain and pleasure, the essence of being, what gives life and takes life; this binary friction occurs in all aspects of life from the smallest cellular processes to the grand combats between men on earth. In art through language, expressions, the battle between pain and pleasure is brought to the mental plane.

I referred above to my conviction that human life is the present culmination of an evolutionary process set in motion by the forces of pain and pleasure where the biological led to the animal, where the struggle between pain and pleasure from emotions and feelings developed into the mental and yet to further perfection in the human, where the mental struggles to take expression in language. –Language then is for me a reflection of this same binary struggle between pain and pleasure, but language, the latest stage of over all evolution, is itself only starting to develop.

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<sup>1</sup> Proust, In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained, p. 355

Pain and pleasure are the two fundamentals around which all aesthetic considerations also evolve around. Traditionally aesthetics is discussed only in terms of the one, pleasure, which is coupled with the considerations of *beauty* and *the good*. But adopting such an approach we deal only with one side of the continuum of art and aesthetics, while the *ugly* and the *evil* – the aspects of pain - on the other side of the continuum are disregarded (in theoretical thought). To understand art and aesthetics we have to bring in the whole continuum of pain and pleasure in the discussion. I do it by talking about *aesthetic feeling*, which I divide into two sub-aspects of *aesthetic pleasure* and *aesthetic aversion* – [As there was nothing suitable on offer in the relevant literature I resorted to this term *aesthetic aversion* to correlate with *aesthetic pleasure*, certainly other terms can be proposed in place, perhaps *aesthetic disgust*]. – By these considerations I connect art and aesthetics to the fundamental philosophy of interpretation of feelings, stressing that art like all is a quest and manifestation of interpretation of feelings – and this leads us back to expressions and interpretations, perceptions in competition, and all that we may consider *knowledge*, and all the considerations in regards to good and bad, right and wrong.

Aesthetic beauty corresponds to the favorable, the wished for, pleasure. - Aesthetic disgust corresponds to the aversive, to fear, the feeling of repulsion, pain - anguish, desolation, woe; gloom, melancholy;

distress, discomfort, discontent...

Art is the medium for seeking an interpretation of the feelings of pain and pleasure – the attempt to discern good from bad, evil, beauty and...all crowding the same spot in all its dimensions, in the mental and deep down in the physical, in the body. - Aversion and disgust, the desirable, the beautiful and ugly, mingle intertwined in the same expression.

In art we deal with the mental aspects of the unknown, and the mysterious, which cannot be known – whereof we must remain silent, but silent in science only, for in art we must speak, we must explore the boundaries.

Art strikes as profound art - art which we are willing to laud as true art - when the artist has with his expression wounded the mental shield protecting and conserving our perceptions from each other and from our own critical analysis. This is when we sense that the artist has entered into the deep waters of exploring the hidden feelings, when he has gone far beneath the superficial, external, the obvious, and reached a thought lingering out from an emotion situated at the depth of being, and then emerged from there with a new insight which he now puts on display, expressing to us something which has previously been beyond the reach of what can be fathomed or understood.

Profound art means a breakthrough in the assault on the limits of language, pushing outwards the limits of what is known and can be known. This is why art is the vanguard of humanity, the function of which is to break the dichotomy, diffuse the line between pain and pleasure; penetrate the mental shield of perceptions. It is the story of learning to depict the feelings of pain and pleasure, to catch them in one moment, in one instance, as aspects of one and same (Proust: “An image presented to us by life brings with it, in single moment, sensations which are in fact multiple and heterogenous”<sup>1</sup>). And yet from these aspects - when we have learnt to see them as such, as shades of a fleeting movements – we have to reconstruct a new sense of a whole, something that could resemble a truth, but a truth which will never be the same absolute one, only the one we have reconstructed, but this time through the precision offered by a microscope (or telescope as Proust preferred to say, even in this we see the contradiction of aspects, two seemingly so far away from each other images as the processes of looking through a telescope and looking through the microscope are connected at the end of the loop in the same kind of understanding of life and the fundamentals that we need to discern in order to comprehend life – maybe the microscope could be seen as the image for interpretation of feelings and the telescope of comprehending social practices, at least the former is what I take Proust to have had in mind).

<sup>1</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*, p. 289

An aesthetic feeling – like all in life – is a two-way street, simultaneously stirring a feeling inside and contemplating an external expression, or perhaps just catching a faint glimpse of a sudden and cursory impression which enters the unconscious and connects with the feeling. Thus the aesthetic feeling is aroused when two feelings coincide, when two interpretations of feelings find a match in an object, a work of art. These two feelings are the artist’s original feeling of which he gave an expression in his art, and the spectator’s feeling when he experiences the work of art, when the expression corresponds to a budding feeling in need of an outlet for expression. – In an essay on Chardin – one of the greatest of the 18th-century French painters – Proust writes in reference to the spectator and the artist “your pleasure and his are so inseparable one from the other that if he had not been able to credit yours, you would not credit his, and if he had chosen to become absorbed in feeling and conveying his, you would inevitably recant from yours.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus we should embrace the point of view where we see a work of art as a manifestation of the artist’s interpretation of feelings, which he has projected on the object, and an aesthetic feeling (pain or pleasure) which comes about when the spectator’s interpretation of feelings match the expression incorporated in the work of art (art as an association

<sup>1</sup> Proust “Chardin” in *On Art and Literature* p. 325



between two feelings: the artist's and the spectator's). – For me it seems that Proust indirectly refers to these same considerations when he criticizes the tendency of discussing art as “a thing” which is the same for him and other “art lovers” at the expense of suppressing ‘the impression that the work of art gives’, this impression is the vestige of the artist's feeling which has through the expression on the piece of art been conveyed to Proust; the “inexpressible” is precisely that element in the work of art “that we sought”, but for the very reason of it being *inexpressible* we “set it aside” and suppress “the personal root of our own impression”.<sup>1</sup> – We see that at issue here is a process where subjective feelings intervene twice, first in producing the object as a projection of the artist's feelings, and secondly, in viewing the object from point of view of the feelings of the spectator.<sup>2</sup>

Art beyond pain and pleasure is love. To dwell on this idea I refer back to above discussion of love and trust; in brief to the ideas to think of art as a quest of finding an expression to match the interpretation

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<sup>1</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*, p. 292 (cfr.)

<sup>2</sup> Of scholars that I came across Susanne Langer is closest to formulating the idea of art as interpretation of feelings which can be exemplified with a quote from her work: “The primary function of art is to objectify feeling so that we can contemplate and understand it. It is the

of feelings; the feelings of pain and pleasure ... but there beyond pain and pleasure - at the end of the road - is a catch which, is love. I would think that this if anything is the only meaningful purpose of life, to reach for this love within and beyond oneself, to hold out one's hands and touch love, to give and receive. And I find it exhilarating to think that this is indeed also the most scientific endeavor that life has to offer to people, and people to life.

I find that most of the ideas that I consider original have been expressed before, somewhere by someone, and therefore the novelty of ideas is not to be sought in the individual statements but in the arrangements of the arguments, and the stress, the importance that is assigned to the various arguments. By such a rearrangement and the assignation of new importance to the separate arguments a new framework for thinking can be brought about. I said this in order to prepare the reader for my referral to the artistic movement called expressionism, which

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formulation of so-called ‘inward experience,’ the ‘inner life,’ that is impossible to achieve by discursive thought, because its forms are incommensurable with the forms of language...”, in Selden, R., *Theory of Criticism* pp. 317 and 318. It is interesting to note that it has been said that Langer's views on language are not far from those of Wittgenstein's; this again showing that to understand the fundamentals about cognition one has to understand the fundamentals of language.

in my view tells this same story in the very language of art, the language of feelings, which opened the mind to a new kind of philosophy, to new views on science, and which together with other artistic movements opened people to see more of the infinite variances of life. (I would even ask if there is much sense in trying to draw a strict border between Impressionism and Expressionism if not considering the differences in technique?). – The story that the expressionist first expressed in deliberate art has subsequently penetrated language and cognition, and this has opened new horizon in people's mind, and it is because of this that we now can in ordinary language express similar ideas as the painters did before us in the language of the paint-brush.- Expressionism has been described in similar terms as the idea of interpretation of feelings; it is said to be about '*subjective feelings* that are raised to the level of explanation of the *objective observations*'. This conveys the correct idea as long as we understand that *objective observations* are in fact *subjective perceptions* – perceptions distorted by the past and present. (I would even reject the word 'observations' as sounding too objective)

All art is expressionism. The division into various styles is all an attempt to try to convince – by the power of authority (which we reject *a priori*) which expressions would be the most suitable for conveying feelings. This is a futile debate, potentially any style will do, all that counts is that the expressions are true

projections of feelings. No rules, no limits, exist nor can they be imposed. – But there is one rule, inherent in all art, and again in all life worth to live, this is the rule that true art, and a decent life, is penetrated by the most sincere and honest expression of feelings. In art this means that the artist says what he truly wants to say, independent of all other considerations, with as many words as he needs, or with as few as will do, or with pictures, music, acting – with any means, and in any fashion.

## Deliberate Art – Feeling, Vision, and Skills

There are three aspects to art (in the various degrees of intensity this holds true for deliberate art as well as all other forms of art): ‘skill’, ‘feeling’; and ‘vision’, all three aspects are present in a work of art that will be apprehended as profound. - Without the one the others will not emerge or fail to manifest (and in that case the best we can hope for is to produce science). I think of creativity and imagination as yet additional aspects of art, driving forces behind art. – Once in a while I feel the urge to stress that all the words I list, categories and concepts - like skill, feeling, vision, creativity, imagination – even they are no entities, nothing given, merely names for different perspectives, various angles of perception; these words carry a similar meaning for most who know English, and therefore they help us to focus on the essentials, and thus are not meaningless like the glass of a microscope that helps a person to see the object that the microscope is focused on, while there is no capacity of seeing in the glass itself.– [But were we to be able to tune in our words for absolute precision, then we would not need these different categories or aspects for describing the elements of art, for then we would see only a binary friction between pain and pleasure, and understand that it is art which comprises all living. - I am trying to fathom my own idea that all is a result of a friction of some infinitesimally small things, but not the things in themselves, but the

movement, the friction, and then I say that things through this movement produce the mental, which does not exist. - The movement, which is no thing, produces the things, which produce the mental, which again are no things, but not the movement either. And yet I believe it makes sense].

‘Feeling’ and ‘vision’ correspond to ‘talent’ in the sense Proust spoke about these in “Against Sainte-Beuve”<sup>1</sup>. He said that talent is “the artist’s good sense” and that this is “the only criterion of a work of art’s spirituality”. He further refers to talent through “originality” – i.e. there is ‘talent’ if there is ‘originality’ – and ‘originality’ he refers to “sincerity” – i.e. there is ‘originality’ if there is ‘sincerity’, but then he superimposes ‘pleasure’ on both the former qualities: “pleasure is perhaps the criterion of true talent” – but this is not just any pleasure, but *the pleasure of the writer*.

We can sense the need for all these aspects to be simultaneously present when we consider a truly skillful work of art which does not lack in anything but feeling, or in anything but vision, or in anything but skill. - A perfect copy of a great painting, even an impeccable original imitation of extraordinary art, may fail to arouse an aesthetic feeling, and frequently it so happens in the eyes of a trained spectator. Same

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<sup>1</sup> Proust “Against Sainte-Beuve” in On Art and Literature p. 272

is true for song; someone sings in faultless control of tone, melody and rhythm, technically perfect, but it may well be so that no deep-penetrating effect was conveyed to the listener. These are demonstrations of perfect skill, but wanting in feeling and thus do not yet amount to true art in the aesthetic meaning.

Vision is the ability to comprehend the external, life around oneself, and to connect that with an extraordinary feeling of creative imagination – or the creative process that we chose to call *imagination*. Vision emerges when imagination penetrates the gate of consciousness and thrusts in the whirlpool of feelings, searches among the treasures of the biological emotions, and captures a rare, precious feeling, holds on to it, folds the emerging expression tightly in its grip, dives headlong through the whirlpool, and resurges to the surface, to the external with its booty, the unique feeling, the one destined to be immortalized in an expression of art.

In visual and performing arts, in music, the artists freed from the constraints of words, much more at ease, more facile even with mediocre skills come out so much more gentle, soft, vivacious, demonstrating infinite aspects of feelings. With the means of literature it is an uphill struggle to find the expressions to match the feelings, to find the genuine expression. It is only with exceptional skill and talent that anything decent at all can be produced, and even then in most cases

with a shelf-life for the literary product of just a few decades or a century at best (unless the brand is not exceptionally good so that an author in history books is declared a master – like all those philosophers that we are supposed to admire for the single reason that they have commanded a strong following in earlier times and thus established themselves as the brand names of philosophy). Skill - lack of it - restricts all forms of art, but the shortcomings are felt in writing more than in any other activity – maybe therefore the few extraordinary talented writers become so beloved to us, for having raised to heights so far above all the others. And how could it be any different, for writing is not even supported by any adequate means for it, we do not possess a language for feelings, ours is a language of things, rigid and stiff; we lack a language that could be called to our aid for describing what we want to say deep down in the heart – and if the reader now thinks this as too romantic a notion, then I may remind that the same goes for the brain (to take this more scientific image of cognition), for similarly as we cannot voice the feelings of the heart we cannot voice the feelings of the brain, i.e. opinions (if one prefers to call feelings by this word). – The problem is that we cannot even make ourselves understood on an elementary level beyond the narrow constraints within which traditions, social practices, guide our cognition. When we write we are like patients suffering from chronic back pain, forced to restrict all our movements to the minimum, but longing to

do so much more, bend the back, turn the neck, stand on the tip of the toes to reach out for a fruit dangling ripe on a branch far above the head, jump, reach, catch, fall down to the ground, twist around in pain, shake the head, flip around in somersault, stand up and continue the walk... and the same when writing: having a myriad of thoughts in the head but being utterly unable to voice the thoughts, the feelings. We dream of breakdancing with language, but all we can do is stand up, move our arms up and down, and to the sides, and lay down...or like a 44-year-old man suddenly forced to join the dance with younger staff at the annual corporate New Year's party, making a fool of himself were it not for the amounts of stimulants consumed and the politeness of the youth. - There is so much more that needs to be said, but all we can do is to bite the lips and suffer the pain, the pain of not being able to say – the pain of yearning to reach that sweetest of the fruits dangling on the highest branch far above our heads, and far above our conception of reality.

Proust was well aware of the infinite problems that will have to be overcome in writing, the problems that he so miraculously conquered and so managing a breakthrough in art, and a breakthrough in language, but before he could do it he had to deal with each of the hurdles one by one. I quote this following paragraph to illustrate how conscious he was about this problem: “When we write we fall in with certain

old-established usages, and perhaps the thought of describing the look of something that has made an impression on us is one of those things, like cooking meat or wearing clothes, which would not have occurred to anyone if civilization had taken a different course”.<sup>1</sup>

Feelings are by the very essence infinitely more complex than the language that expresses them. In writing one aspect cancels out the other ones, whereas in living forms of art all can be said in the same moment, in the same movement - a manifold of dimensions in the same expression. One way of countering this dilemma was shown by Proust – I dare say that most would agree that he has been quite successful on that. It was his style of writing long sentences joining different - often opposed - thoughts in one sequence of thoughts. This is how he brought to written language the air of how we in fact think, and how we should think, all the time considering various aspects pertaining to one issue, and by presenting these in the same sentence we should not think in terms of mathematics and assign the various components of thought with pluses and minuses of various degrees and then to attempt to sum all the components where the pluses and minuses have cancelled each other out, on the contrary, the aspects for and against, left and right, blue or red, plus or

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<sup>1</sup> Proust “Against Sainte-Beuve” in *On Art and Literature* p. 75

minus, all have to stay in, stay in our thoughts where we have to make room to accommodate them all at the same time, and as it were in the same cell. It is also from science and mathematics – and the military (all the hierarchies) - that we have the perverted idea that sentences should be short and rigid, that two words meaning the same (as they take words to ‘mean’), having the same significance, or expressing the same idea, should not be repeated – but I think they should, they should so always when the author feels that the additional word brings an additional nuance, a new connotation to the idea. This is indeed part of the problem, of what restricts thinking, this habit – this perceived rule - of ridding oneself of all the infinite variances of thinking and concentrating all in a few words and sentences short as military commands, reducing all to a few superficial aspects, when in reality you need to express infinite variances in one thought, and often to achieve this you need to resort to longer sentences, sentences where one aspect adds or takes from another and where all the colors or shades of thinking will be manifested in one. – But then again a long sentence is not an end in itself, when it works brevity can be more powerful, when the writer with a few words directs the cognition towards a feeling that he hopes to awake in the reader, and he succeeds in this if he is a master in the art like Franz Kafka and Hermann Hesse were. - And then there should flourish a combination of brevity and elaboration, symbols creating the mysterious, the enigmatic, or

the familiar – in writing any means, any style and any combination of them justify the end, the end of rendering a truthful interpretation of feelings.

## Symbols

Art - language - consists of an attempt to translate feelings into expressions, which *consist* of an *infinite number* of symbols, nothing but symbols, symbols which evoke the image of memories and things; thingly symbols calling feelings into the mind, calling feelings into question. – [This preceding sentence shows how difficult it is for us to free ourselves from the captivity of the language of things. It disturbs me to say that ‘expressions *consist*’, which is a proposition as thingly as they come; or that there are ‘a *number* of symbols’, as if they were things that can be numbered; and ‘*infinite*’, which is clearly meant to break the thingly spell, but in reality only serves to aggravate things.]

All expressions, all art is symbolic communication; the finest little expression is symbolic. All language is art, all being is symbolic. All thinking, all cognition is symbolic. – All symbols are meant to represent perceptions - perceptions in competition.

Metaphors, signs, tropes, similes, figures of speech... these are all words for symbols, and it does not make any difference how we from time to time want to call the idea. Unfortunately, though, there is a literary and philosophical tradition consisting in an attempt to do precisely that, to classify symbols under these labels, as if symbols like thingly entities could lend

themselves to such an endeavor. These traditions remind of the false signposts that mislead the mind to take a wrong turn at every decisive juncture.

Not only should we refrain from trying to – when pretending to be scientific - differentiate between various uses of symbols, but, even more, we should comprehend that there is no difference between symbols and other words, or symbols and other images – the use is the symbol; what is stressed, or perceived as stressed, against the context, the background of the work of art, that is a symbol.

A word and any other symbol, an image, serves a function, and becomes one – a symbol - only in a context - and any occasion can be the context - the background against which the use of the symbol has a meaning, for example wearing a red jacket when everybody else is dressed in black and white, the red jacket comes to symbolize a meaning, something in that specific context, perhaps a protest, perhaps a marketing of sorts for a product or for the piece of art i.e. the person in the red jacket.

When we speak about symbols we in fact only mean that we have tried in a specific context to convey a specific – symbolic - meaning with one or another sign (a meaning which is stressed by choosing an expression that stands out).

A symbol does not have an objective meaning independent from the context. Like the letters ‘A’ and ‘B’ and ‘C’ words and other symbols do not mean, represent, anything they are means for an attempt to create a meaning. The words ‘apple’, ‘go’, ‘and’ are as much of symbols as the letters ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘P’, or the smiley ☺. – If I take five letters and arrange them as this: M-A-T-C-H then the word can carry a meaning, it could mean e.g. any of following: affirm, agree, assent, concur, conform, correspond, fit, harmonize, jibe, match, square, suit, tally bout, contest, engagement, event, game, meet, race, rivalry, sport, test, trial, adversary, analogue, antagonist, approximation, companion, competitor, complement, copy, correlate, counterpart, countertype, dead ringer, double, duplicate, equivalent, fellow, like, look-alike, mate, opponent, parallel, peer, replica, ringer, rival, spitting image, twin. – I said “could carry a meaning”, but where was the meaning? All we got was a list of other symbols. These words are listed in a dictionary<sup>1</sup> under the entry ‘match’; some of the words may be considered as so-called synonyms to the word ‘match’ but I think that would be *stretching the meaning*, I’d rather claim they are merely words, other words, other symbols; words that we may consider to be associated with the one that we looked up, but this association is all we gained. In our minds we may assign these words any meanings, but on a closer

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<sup>1</sup> www.dictionary.com

inspection we will notice that each word by itself does not mean anything special. Each of these may in turn evoke a memory in the mind of something they are associated with, and this occurs only in the human memory (in the subjective memory of a particular person, at a particular moment). What would the word ‘race’ mean if we would look at it outside a given context? Again, it could mean anything to anybody, to prove my point I could threaten to copy another long list from the dictionary, which would take us to yet another round of words, and so on... Words can only refer to other words and memories, and it is only through these references that we create a meaning for the fleeting moment, or rather an association, an interpretation at best, an expression for a feeling. – But now I rearrange the letters like this M-T-C-H-A, then no meaning emerges, not even potentially. – This is in fact the case with all symbols, all words, e.g. the words listed above, if we flash any of the words separately without a context the words do not convey any meaning, or perhaps the meaning of showing that there is no meaning. – A ‘meaning’ is always unique for a moment, a memory part of a moment rushing through the memory.

A symbol by itself can only purport to have a meaning, which is in fact a subjective property in the mind of the person who evokes the symbol in his expressions, or the one who interprets it. Even the one who originally uttered the expression will have



to rethink the meaning when he contemplates the expression anew... Only a combination of symbols may convey a meaning.

Art - all human - can build only on traditions which also create the trap most artist fall into. Symbols penetrate cognition and become embedded in the cultural heritage, in the traditions. Symbols are elements of cognition; cognition takes form in symbols; traditions - cultural heritage - transmit symbols, and traditions make up the web, the web of beliefs which form the background against which a symbol can receive a meaning, if any. Traditions are reality, danger and opportunity all in one. The problem with symbols is that they tend to acquire a life of their own. In a sense symbols become listed in a mental catalogue from which they are later called in to fill their role in art in a process which resembles that of recycling of waste or perhaps the second-hand usage of garments.

There is nothing but symbols that we may call to our aid in an attempt to express feelings, symbols from our past, but these symbols, these means of expression equally form the prison where the artist is locked in, and it is the walls of this prison of symbols that the artist has to tear down in order to break free. - The artist has to liberate himself from the spell of symbols. Symbols are like road-blocks stopping the free passage of new expressions; and bearing in mind

that the expressions are only the vessels, the carriages for interpretations of feelings, we understand that there it is the train of His Majesty the Feeling himself which is being denied passage by the arrogant symbols representing the mob that has usurped the power in the realm of cognition.

By different stress and different combinations of symbols we try to find the right shades for depicting our feelings, the infinite aspects of feelings. This is the challenge of art, the artist cannot merely copy the symbols second-hand, he has to bring out his own palette of symbols, those shades that express the feelings unique to him. "The truth is that there is only one real freedom for the artist: originality."<sup>1</sup>

All words are symbols for things or past ideas. All forms of art makes use of symbols; the challenge in good art is to make use of only the those symbols proper to the task of reproducing the special feelings under labor. Art is an attempt to master the symbols in communication; to refit and adjust them, to find new ways to express with readjusting the symbols, to express what has not been expressed before. The artist should resist the usage of worn out symbols, but his dilemma is that at the same time he knows that he does not have anything else to get him by. For the right expressions the artist has to search in what

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<sup>1</sup> Carter, W.C. Marcel Proust: a life p. 377.

Proust called the artist's "inner book of unknown symbols", symbols that nobody could help the artist to decipher "for to read them was an act of creation" which the artist is left to undertake in solitude. It is his instinct that leads the artist to the beginnings of these symbols dwelling in the deep sources from where feelings spring up, and it is only with instinct that the artist tries to drink from this spring to quell his thirst for expressing the inexpressible; a thirst that at the bottom of the heart is unquenchable, which is an idea that the overwhelming majority – more correctly 'all but a few' – resign to live with and enables them to more or less consciously furnish themselves with excuses for inaction, excuses for a life of deception instead of caring for quenching this thirst, this fire, this "instinct that dictates our duty while the intellect supplies us with pretexts for evading it".<sup>1</sup> - An artist becomes an artist through listening to his instinct; and this instinct leads him to unexplored sources which others in this life have not seen, but which they long to see, and where they want to be lead into; and to lead the artist will first have to resist, to resist his contemporaries and to resist his surroundings, and therefore all true artists belong to one and the same artistic movement, which is La Résistance; the artist always resisting, even resisting the temptation to resist.

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<sup>1</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, pp.274

## Language, Language, Language

Language is the immaterial source of intelligence; all knowledge one can think of has been passed on from people to people - through generations, times and cultures. But whatever we are to consider as knowledge, this knowledge pool we have, is like a ball in the air, and nothing more, nothing firm in our hands, not even in books. – But not only one ball; we need to expand the simile and think of thousands of balls in the air, one ball for each word, or for each expression, and mankind like jongleurs trying to keep all the balls in the air, in vain. Thousands of words, expressions, balls, bouncing back from one to another in the air, and then some falling flat on the ground, in oblivion forever, taking with it a piece of knowledge which was stored in that expression. - Here we have no reason to count on the survival of the fittest. Some of the hidden treasures of the language of the old Egyptians encoded in the hieroglyphs have been uncovered. When we ponder this miracle we should not forget that almost all the other languages have as such forever been lost to our eyes and ears, but that they on the other hand lay preserved in languages – in all languages spoken in the world - as memories of generations of life from times eternal up to ours, that all kinds of habits and manners, the typical causes for joy and for suffering, the models for shrewd and cunning thinking, the ideas to help our neighbors in their suffering, help the sick and the poor, and the

schemes of how to enrich oneself, that they are all encoded in language, a language which is like an encyclopedia on human history that we all carry with us and which we consult in deciding our very *modern* actions – for to us they seem modern, for us certainly much more modern than the life preceding ours by half a century, although in reality in the history of life this difference is no longer than that of a blink of an eye. While those languages, those manners of speaking, have been lost - the same way ours will be lost - they are all reflected in the present as aspects of bygone life, as part of our very daily being, and our dreams in the nights, something of all that has been is living in us as part of our present reality of this day, reflected in the way we live, in the way we speak, and in the way we act.

Language is nothing but a function of the people through eternal time mingling with each other through love and through hatred (those same two eternal aspects of pain and pleasure); for this is how in language, in social practices, opinions, words and feelings come about, get their color and their texture, this is how the thinking of today is created, shaped, refined and degenerated, this is how we are what we are today, all but results of random contacts, strangers meeting strangers, communicating with each other, loving and hating, in good and in bad it has been – and in good and in bad it has been passed on to us.

We should understand that this history carried forward in language– in language which is like the Great Book of Human Heritage – is all we have in terms of knowledge, and that knowledge is nothing else than the condensed expressions and interpretations of what quite ordinary people have thought and said through history from the beginning of time. And that this language creates the real *virtual reality* people live in, for all we do and think come to us programmed in language, and it is the codes of language (the broad language of all expressions, not only words) that we use to create visual, auditory and other mental simulations of reality which we display in our body and mind, and then wishfully take it to mean the intelligent thinking we humans are so famous of – judged by our own very human standards. – These computer-based technologies that they call *virtual reality* are just one additional layer to these endless simulations, and they differ very little in the technologies from what is customary; we are already as such living in a simulated world, what more simulations do we need.

Above all we should understand that all that is known is known in language, and all that can be known will be in language, and language – and thus knowledge – comes about by each human giving and taking expressions and interpretations to and from this pool of knowledge, which is language.

Also we should understand that language is nothing great, and far from perfect, language is only as good as the manners in which people have spoken, as good as their traditions, and that's all. - Some aspects of language are horrible, something we should defend ourselves against, and defend others against, and defend humanity against; protect against that what in language destroys healthy thinking, protect against the grand delusion, the thingly fallacy, the perversion of treating words, all of them at once, as if they were things of sorts; the way of assigning them a physical role in the mind and its grammar, to speak of them in terms of things and their movements. This delusion is based on an even bigger delusion - a meta-delusion, a fallacy of higher degree - the mother of all delusions, the habit of regarding *language itself* as a thing, the Thing of the Things, Res Rerum. - But no more is language a thing than any of its words, language is only patterns, the word we have assigned to denote these patterns of speaking, expressing, manners, behavioral patterns, activity, something we do – but not a thing, not by any means. – There is no language, and I call upon whoever disagrees with me on this to come forward with his evidence, show language, dead or alive, but as a physical, chemical, biological mass – for surely a thing must consist of the materials of nature – and what comes from the human while not being a thing is a process, manner, tradition, an activity of sort.

There are no languages; there are only more or less

similar manners of speaking, family resemblances, similarities and dissimilarities, as Wittgenstein said. Languages are not 'things', rather languages represent traditions, thousands and thousands of years of imitation. Past language, past manners of speaking serve as the foundation for the present way of speaking, the present always building on the past.

Languages do not *change*, *there are no* languages that could either change nor remain constant, what changes is how people behave, how they imitate, what they remember.

Language is not an entity but reflections of all accumulated joint experience of mankind. The closer people are to each other physically and mentally the stronger the impression that they speak the same language. When we use figures of speech like '*speaking the same language*' we suggest the idea that there is an assortment of languages of which 'the same' is one. We do not speak a language, we speak in a similar fashion, correspondingly we walk in a similar fashion but we do not *do the same walk*, or *use the same gait*. - Speaking is like a fingerprint, totally unique to each individual, although all fingerprints look like fingerprints. – But even the image of fingerprint will not do, for speaking unlike fingerprints is nothing fixed, but manners in constant flux; one can never dress one's thoughts twice in the same expression (but with the fingerprint it is different, like any good detective knows).

There is no English language, there is only the manners of speaking like they do in England, or in America, or in Australia, or in Texas, or more precisely in England the different manners in which they speak in the North and South of England, and all over in between: in Yorkshire, Lancashire, East Midlands...or more precisely like they speak in the South East: Estuary English, or the different sounds from Tunbridge to Tonbridge and from Margate to the Medway, or the Cockney of London, and the Queen's English, and the BBC talk...or like Mrs. Jones speaks as compared to the way Mrs. Bloom speaks, or the way Mrs. Bloom spoke 30 years ago when she had just arrived as a young maiden from Australia, or the way her daughter, the punker speaks. – And there is this Euroenglish in which I write. There are millions of ways of speaking and writing, but not a single language.

Hence it is wrong to say, for example, that 'French is a beautiful language', instead one should say 'the French have inherited from their ancestors a beautiful way of speaking'. Well, of course, for convenience of speaking it is perfectly fine to stick with the first statement, but for the convenience of thinking, and science, we have to remember that in fact the second statement is true.

Infinite variances affect language, that is, the way we speak: memory, creativity, contacts with other

people, cultural and social influences, behavioral and organizational patterns etc. No two persons speak the same language, ever. Similarities, and dissimilarities, in language habits cause the idea that there would be a common language, and this idea of a common language like every sacred idea is in the mind converted in to the idea that language is like a thingly entity, with fixed properties, correct or wrong, black or white. From this thingly hallucination springs up, in all countries and cultures, the language-police, those immensely distressed people silly and driven to despair in their angry quest 'to save the language', to preserve the thing, the perception that they in their feeble minds have converted into an idea of a thing, a thing which they like in any religious frenzy claim to have a vision of, knowing, as they think, the sacred properties of language, of the thing - which they have never seen - or how it looks like in reality, in a reality they have carved up for themselves in their minds. They speak as if they would be privy to the physical, chemical and biological constitution of this thing, for certainly they must agree that a thing has material properties, and certainly they must agree that whatever is claimed to be constant has to be a thing, by definition. - To a great extent language, in fact, is the battlefield between these forces of authority and those of freedom. – Here I am willing to agree with the feminists who claim that language conserves and reflects social control. But while recognizing this it should be kept in mind that this way of speaking is,

in most cases, not something that an individual is in control of. Although, on the other hand conscious manipulation of language abound, an evil habit much more widespread and deliberate than we would guess. Some very real living people, biological beings, are employed in the daily business of manipulating language in order to subjugate people to the kind of thinking they and their masters adhere to. Thus, for example, most journalists make a living out of professional perversion of language with the objective of serving the political or commercial agenda of the owner of the media outlet, or somebody else under whose influence they operate. With an increasing world-wide concentration of media control in fewer and fewer hands, the subjugation of media language to the causes of propaganda is taking on unheard of proportions. Today we are far beyond the level of 1984, the scary predictions of George Orwell. He could not have even imagined the shrewdness of our present day propaganda manipulators, he foresaw a gradual development of an openly totalitarian state in control of people in all aspects of lives, including speech, and through speech thinking. But those that subjugate our Western societies of today to this propaganda - the few people, the groups that pull the strings - turned out to be more crafty than the most cunning manipulators that Orwell could think of. They have built a totalitarian propaganda machine in the United States and the European Union while retaining a façade, a smoke screen of democracy

and liberty. Today it is not like Orwell predicted that the State would control people through media propaganda, but something twice as scary happened, like a scenario from a horror movie, it is the media that has stepped in the role of the ruler, while retaining the aura of being courageous champions of liberty and freedom of speech, it is the media owners and their lackeys, the journalists that stand behind the perversion of language and thought as means to totalitarian power over minds, people and nations. – “All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others”, Orwell said. The Western media of today has it: “We have freedom of speech, the owners of media just have more freedom than others.” – Hand in hand with the development of this new form of covert totalitarian political propaganda people have been placed under the yoke of the commercial propaganda, marketing and advertisement. – Today the biggest threats to mankind, to democracy, to peace - to all humanity – stems from the concentration of media power in the Western world in the hands of a few corporations and people and this covert totalitarian propaganda which they together with specialized propaganda lobbies exercise over the world – in the disguise of the most innocent rhetoric of democracy and freedom appealing to the most sacred values of the European herd.

The idea of language as a carrier of social practices is connected with understanding that all human cognition

is based on mental interpretations of complex reality. - We may call these mental interpretations 'perceptions'. In perceptions even abstract ideas are converted in the mind into thingly entities on an analogy with the things of nature. Perceptions are like standard set pattern interpretations of reality – that is *symbols*. A set of complex actions of behavior, or behavioral patterns are identified, *simplified*, framed and converted into new conceptual abstractions, perceptions. Thus a perception, a mental image created in the 'mind', is converted into *conceptual reality*. Furthermore the perceptions get baptized in language, assigned a name, the concept. Next the concept is 'filled with content', assigned a meaning. This conceptual content includes all of the subjective moral values that suffocate being, and is formed as a result of conscious and unconscious consideration of all vested interests that people inhabit (the moral). A perception (and the corresponding concept) leads us astray and induces us to think of them as thingly entities, instead of seeing them just as different choices on perspectives on how to look at life. This is how we come to think of various social practices, aspects of life, as such *thingly entities* as '*law*', '*economy*', '*democracy*', '*science*', '*religion*' etc. While in reality they are only names we have assigned to those aspects of life, to those aspects of social practices. These social practices are carried, and conceptualized in language. And in fact all social practices are but language-games, and even languages are language-games:

habits with set patterns but without strict boundaries, and no rules except the ones perceived to exist in the social practices themselves.\* – Language is simply the most general and fundamental of the social practices, the supreme game.

### **The Chicken or the Egg - Knowledge from Language, or Language from Knowledge**

Which comes first language or knowledge? This question is unlike the brain-teaser 'what comes first the chicken or the egg', one for which there is no reply, the chicken and the egg come one from the other in a process that is best described as the hermeneutics of evolution; one aspect of the process returns to the other, in infinite regression. – But with language and knowledge it is quite different; language as such has developed in an evolutionary process within the physical organism, this is the same kind of a hermeneutical process, but knowledge – on the contrary - without any doubt is a product of language; language is the habitat and the medium where knowledge thrives. – This is not to say that knowledge would not subsequently affect language. It does affect language, and it affects even biological

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\* I refer to Ludwig Wittgenstein's conception of language-games e.g. in *Philosophical Investigations* paragraphs 66 - 68. I have discussed these ideas more in detail in *Expressions and Interpretations*, see e.g. pp. 225 – 227.

life, it affects both the life and the well being of the human individual and the nature as such – (and I think most will agree that the effects of human language on nature have been quite depressing). – We have to admit that there is one more aspect to this issue, which is the notion ‘knowledge’ as such. What are we to regard as ‘knowledge’? - This question is similar to the critique of the notion ‘a priori’. I claim that it does not make sense to call ‘knowledge’ that what has been incorporated in the biological, thence knowing to walk – or rather being able to walk – is not knowledge, but a physical (biological) capacity. The same goes for the capacity of ‘knowing how to speak’ (being able to speak), this is not knowledge, but a physical capacity<sup>1</sup>. The ability to speak is physical, but the expressions produced are not - they are not, they do not exist; expressions come about by exercising this physical ability. Similarly a spider spinning a web does not have knowledge of web spinning, but an intuitive biological capacity to do it. – Thus I would reserve ‘knowledge’ to describe the human capacity to speculate with the means of language.

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<sup>1</sup> The failure to understand the difference between ‘knowledge’ and ‘capacity’ as in ‘knowing a language’ (or ‘knowing to speak a language’) and “humans possessing the capacity to speak’ (or ‘language capacity’) lies in the root of the wronged and failed traditions of linguistic alchemy proponed by Noam Chomsky, this is to say that this confusion lies on the root to the extent that it is not a question of right out fraud, for to that degree are those theories lacking any sense.

## Language test simulations

I referred above to Einstein’s theorem about language and knowledge, I remind that he said: “The greater part of our knowledge and beliefs have been communicated to us by other people through the medium of a language which others have created.” Now I propose to conduct a test to verify this hypothesis and therefore I invite the reader to consider below a couple of simplified test simulations that are intended to demonstrate that knowledge is exclusively a product of language.

Simulation 1: “We invited to London, England, five persons from five different foreign countries where they in each speak a different language. No one of the languages can be understood by anybody present apart from the speaker himself. All the guests and the host are lawyers. All are placed in separate rooms, from which one cannot see the other, whereas the sounds can be heard from one room to another. - We ask each person to introduce himself by telling what his profession is (and not to disclose any other information). One minute is assigned for each one. – As a result nobody understands anything of what the others say, and cannot understand because there is no common language. Nothing was learned from what the others said (except for some intuitive knowledge which was carried by the manner of speaking, the tone of the voice, etc., and in fact it later turned out



that this had betrayed to two of our simulated test persons that there were lawyers present). – Thus, when there was no common language it was as if there was no language at all, and no knowledge was produced i.e. no one learned anything from each other”.

Simulation 2: “Next we repeat the test with a test group consisting only of English speakers. In this version of the test we may presume that all participants succeed in telling each others that they work as trained lawyers, and thus knowledge will be communicated, and now we see that this means the same as ‘knowledge being produced’. – Now, suppose one of the lawyers told he was a priest; in this case too knowledge would have been produced, but it would merely be the kind of knowledge which we would preferably call ‘disinformation’ (or ‘misconception’) leading to ignorance, or perhaps we would call it a ‘lie’, or something of the sort, depending on the moral circumstances surrounding the statement.”

Simulation 3: “An even more simplistic version of the test would be one that anybody can do: Agree to meet up with somebody; sit in a closed room; shut the eyes; and remain silent for five minutes. – Next open your eyes and start speaking with each others, and you will feel how knowledge starts to flow once language is introduced into the situation. – And now compare the first five minutes of silence with the minutes

that followed: you should be able to appreciate the difference which coincided with the commencement of speech, to realize that knowledge comes with language.

## By Language Alone

All communication, all exchange of ideas, opinions, all feelings are expressed in language. It follows that all problems equally are in language. This was fundamentally what Wittgenstein wanted to say. To him all principal problems were linguistic, caused by “the understanding bumping against the limits of language.”<sup>1</sup>

It is with language that we explain how to build a shelter or a trap, how to treat a wound, how to cook, how to write and how to read. With writing and reading (i.e. the extended use of speech) - human cultures leaped forward – reading and writing enabled communication between people, even with those that were not immediately present, communication at a physical distance, or separated by generations. Through literature people could eavesdrop on their ancestors and learn in a new manner, learn from past experience (even gain a glance at the bits of knowledge which were not passed on by the dominant cultures; a bit of freedom). And with the emergence of writing one could pass on ideas to future generations hoping, like Wittgenstein, that some day, someone would

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<sup>1</sup> “The results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and of bumps that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language. These bumps make us see the value of the discovery.” Ludwig Wittgenstein *Philosophical Investigations* paragraph 119

follow the thread up and down towards knowledge. And now, imagine there would come a time when all those who can speak and read were extinguished without managing to pass on their language to a new generation; in such a scenario people would have to start humanity from scratch, start human cultures all over again. Even if the whole world would stand intact, and all the infrastructure of the world would be left, then still nobody could operate the world. Nobody would know how to build a car, read a book of recipes, or instructions of any sort, tell how to *behave* (*show yes, show like animals show*), no fuel could be pumped and prepared for usage no illnesses could be treated and medicine administered...Clearly all distinctively human is carried in language.

## Wittgenstein vs. Popper – Sense vs. Nonsense

To illustrate the exclusivity of language as that what is distinctively human I want to draw attention to the famous polemics between the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein and Karl Popper, which is depicted in a book called Wittgenstein's Poker<sup>1</sup>. Wittgenstein knew - as I do armed with the grammar of thinking that Wittgenstein had developed - that there were no philosophical problems, only linguistic confusion. This was one of the most important points that Wittgenstein wanted to push through – if not *the* most important (at least it was the most important aspect concerning the essence of philosophy as a discipline). - He said it in many ways in various connections and this is what he wanted to make Popper aware of, but Popper - a hostage of the very same linguistic confusions - refused to listen, refused to think, and instead stubbornly decided to go on with his act the way a comic or a revue artist feels secure on stage and confident of his art as long as the public laughs. Popper continued to insist that philosophy involved “real problems that immediately affected the world at large”, while not understanding that there was no difference in what Wittgenstein said and this statement in regards to these “real

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<sup>1</sup> Eidinow, J., Edmonds, D. (2005). Wittgenstein's Poker. Faber and Faber

problems”, for Wittgenstein did not say that there were no “real problems”, he said *that these real problems are caused by linguistic confusion*, and therefore unless we tackle the linguistic confusion the problems will not disappear. Until then philosophers will be like flies circling around excrement wondering if they should like it or not, instead of considering where it comes from and what it will do for them.

In his work book called the Blue Book Wittgenstein made one of his most decisive statements concerning philosophy, the errors of philosophy, he said: “Philosophers constantly see the method of science before their eyes, and are irresistibly tempted to ask and answer questions in the way it is done in science. This tendency is the real source of metaphysics, and leads the philosopher into complete darkness.”<sup>1</sup> - Interestingly Popper's theories on the method of science were precisely the products of such an attempt to translate all philosophical – mental – issues, with an analogy to the things of the nature, into the language of things where all is expressed on an analogy to natural sciences. (I refer to Expressions and Interpretations were I have in detailed dealt with Popper's metaphysical theories, this peculiar form of art).

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<sup>1</sup> Ludwig Wittgenstein, The Blue and the Brown Book, p. 18. For increased fluency of presentation I have slightly adopted the quote.

Thus Popper remained in the spell of the old traditions of linguistic alchemy - the traditions of freedom to claim - in the name of science, whatever the spittle brings to the tip of the tongue - in blissful ignorance of the physical realities of our surrounding environment (or in other words: Popper remained faithful to those genuine traditions of Western science, the traditions of an artful manipulation of language).

Prior to fully embracing the alchemy of social sciences Popper thrived as a talented historian and secured for himself fame and a solid position among philosophical brand names with his influential book *The Open Society and Its Enemies*<sup>1</sup>, a book about the roots of totalitarian thinking in the traditions of Plato, Aristotle, Hegel and Marx. And cheered on by his success in this one field of inquiry – the history of philosophy – he thought himself to be equally qualified for opining on the fundamentals of cognition, the philosophy of science, while nobody seemed to understand that all that was common to these two fields of inquiry was the word ‘philosophy’. In *Open Society* Popper accounted for the history of opinions ‘who said what and when’, in his theories on science he was supposed to tell what is the essence of science, knowledge and cognition. The connection with these two sides of his work is very slight indeed, yet because of the success in history he was the

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<sup>1</sup> Popper, K.R. (1977). *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Volume I, *The Spell of Plato*

branded authority to speak of theories of science. Again I see fitting to recall the image of the Emperor without clothes, for Popper was the Emperor of philosophy thanks to *Open Society*, but there was no science, all that there was, was an admiration for this brand name, Popper. – This phenomenon ‘Popper’ and his admirers recall to my mind Proust’s criticism of “the established judges of literature” – for here we deal with the ‘judges of philosophy’. Proust said “From decade to decade their wordy battles...their ideas of society, politics, and religion...can assume a momentary amplitude but their life-span is the brief one of ideas which owe their success to their novelty and gain their adherence only of such minds as are not particular about proof”.<sup>1</sup>

Having secured brand recognition Popper was in the position to promote in all earnest his utterly nonsensical theories on the philosophy of science known as theories of World 1, World 2 and World 3<sup>2</sup>. These were sort of science fiction, fairy tales for the academic community. - Popper’s idea was to divide ‘all that exists’ into three domains. The three domains were: “World 1”, containing: ‘the world of physics, chemistry and biology’; “World 2”, containing: ‘the world of psychological states, dispositions and

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<sup>1</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*, p. 296

<sup>2</sup> I have a more detailed criticism of Popper’s theories in *Expressions and Interpretations*, see e.g. pp. 89-101 and 143 and 144

processes' (yes, he said that *processes exist*); and "World 3", containing: 'the sum of the total of the objective and abstract products of the human mind – theories, numbers, and even tools and institutions considered abstractions' (abstractions exist he said!). – We should note how interestingly the word real in his theories came to denote the theories of a "World 3" which contain all abstractions of the mind, like symphonies, numbers, elves and small green elephants - all products of human mind.

Popper argued that "objective knowledge, the kind we find represented in books, tapes, computer memory, has an autonomous existence from the psychological or physical states that produced it and in which it may be represented" - At the very least this would mean that the opposite to objective knowledge, i.e. 'subjective ignorance, misunderstanding', would have an equally autonomous existence. – Sadly enough Popper did not advance in science as much as to grasp the physical reality of things, to understand that language and knowledge are not things but mere reflections of social practices; expressions and interpretations – mere perceptions in competition.

For Popper '*to exist*' was not a biological, physical reality, but a figure of speech, a linguistic conception, a product of scientific fantasy. He rejected the insight that all these ideas – 'the knowledge' as he thought - were merely the traditions of all bygone generations

reflected in language. – But, without language even Popper himself could not have made his noisy claims heard, for in the *real world*, without language, there would not be any Popper to talk about, all there would be left of him and his theories would be a mere dust in the wind, at best. Only language permits us to address, his ideas, yes, the very idea of *Popper*, in good and bad.

## The thingly language

In language - and therefore in thinking - we formulate propositions where abstract notions (basically representing perceptions fabricated in the mind) are given *grammatical roles* to accord with preconceived ideas of ‘things’ as agents or objects. Double trouble starts with confusing between *animated things* such as humans, and *inanimate things*: trees, mountains, raw materials etc. Linguists call it ‘reification’ (assigning a thingly role to an abstraction) and ‘anthropomorphism’ (assigning things, phenomena, and abstractions, the role of a human). – This problem has been recognized, but it has been treated merely as a curiosity, as something mentioned in passing, although this is part of the most fundamental problem of science – or perhaps it is *the* most fundamental problem - and thus the decisive problem for humanity. The real magnitude of the problem has not been understood – it has not been understood that it is an overwhelming problem, an absolute problem, present in every sentence of language. – The problem can be illustrated by considering the previous sentence *itself* (and even the use of the word *itself* is part of the problem; a sentence cannot be *itself*). Consider words like ‘magnitude of the problem’ – how can a problem have a magnitude? – The word ‘understood’ – did anybody ‘stand under’? – I wrote that the problem ‘is present’, but surely the problem cannot *be present*,

things are present, not abstractions.

Misunderstandings are encoded in the very structure of language, in the language of things, the way of speaking where all words are treated on an analogy with the physical nature, as if everything necessarily would have *to be, to exist* – the way to use language as if we were always speaking about things and their movements (as if we were relating events that we see before our eyes). – The dilemma is that there is no way of expressing the non-physical, there is no pure way of expressing feelings. At every attempt to express a feeling it gets clad in the thingly veil of language – only the absurd, the unbelievable attacks the limits of language. – For a more detailed discussion of the thingly language I refer to Expressions and Interpretations.<sup>1</sup> - I note, for example, that perceptions on certain aspects of life such as ‘law,’ ‘economy,’ ‘democracy,’ ‘science’ are given this thingly role in the grammar, and then – really - in the minds of people. – All of us do it, and we cannot fully avoid it, but we should be on our guard, and constantly consider whether we can think of other, better, more natural ways of expressing the thought. Especially when we are formulating the most important scientific statements we need to be particular vigilant to our choice of words.

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<sup>1</sup> In Expressions and Interpretations see e.g. chapter 3 “Philosophy and Language” and chapter 6 “The Thing”

I was reading the books of George Soros - who is known to be an admirer of Popper's art - in order to find out whether there would be a fresh view, a new angle to what Popper had to say - although to be fair I have to admit that certainly I was not expecting any to show up, but nevertheless I was positively surprised reading that Soros's philosophy was not so poor as what the Popper brand he so prominently displays had led me to expect. However, perhaps - after reading the four books - the one lasting after taste I was left with was that here Mr. Soros approached philosophy similarly to the way he had earlier approached the stock markets, identifying the weakness in present day philosophical thinking and then trying to turn these weakness in to his strength and armed with this perceived philosophical instrument he thought he could carve himself a corner in international politics - the way he had earlier so successfully operated in the stock market - and from where to prepare a hostile take over of the world - or if not the whole world, and if not all at once, then at least Eastern Europe and Russia. Mr. Soros failed in the grand scheme but scored some local gains in the more peripheral markets. Mr. Soros failed for he did not understand that cognition of mankind is a near perfect market - not that it is perfect in terms of quality, but it is perfect in terms of all utilizing more or less the same methods of thought and action, in fact the behavior of all is more or less - at least on an average - derived from the same roots of pain and

pleasure and the social practices that have evolved from them. Mr. Soros had in fact stumbled and fallen in the very pitfall prepared by Popper, because it is his ultimate scientific - and utterly nonsensical - idea of falsifiability that had overtaken the greedy mind of Mr. Soros, for he thought that he indeed would be able by a new and cunning way to falsify life - the present ways of social interaction - the same way he had earlier to his immense financial gain proven all the other players on the stock market wrong, but he did not understand that life is not the stock market, life is a much more perfect market. In life there is a multidimensional network of beliefs where there is always a new layer to penetrate and nothing as such can be falsified. This web of beliefs cannot be falsified, only changed, to say it can be mended would already be hoping for too much.- But here, in this presentation, I wanted to refer to the philosophy of Soros for somewhat other reasons. His books provide some brilliant examples of the thingly fallacy, this perversion to assign the role of a human actor to words and concepts, and these come handy to illustrate this thingly fallacy, the problems of the language of things; problems that by the very essence of it concern us all and concerns the way we all speak, and thus the way we think. Below I will draw from the wealth of Soros to show by way of examples what this perversion leads to.

*Soros says:*

“Capitalism *is* very successful in creating wealth”  
– Although for all we know it is people who *create*,  
and not this word ‘capitalism’<sup>1</sup>

“*Scientific method produced* amazing discoveries and  
technologically *allowed* their conversion to productive  
use”<sup>2</sup>– Although Soros should know that *people produce*  
and people *allow*; these actions are not undertaken by  
this perception that Soros calls ‘scientific method’;

“*Open society* has nothing against religion.”<sup>3</sup>– See how  
similar this is to a fairy tale, when this pair of words  
‘open society’ is assigned the role of opining over its  
relation to religion.

“*The freedom of thought* allows critical thinking and  
*the freedom of choice* allows the market mechanism to  
operate”<sup>4</sup> – Now he treats these two combinations  
of words as supranatural agents ‘thinking’ and  
‘allowing’.

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<sup>1</sup> Soros, G. (2000). Open Society [Reforming Global Capitalism]. PublicAffairs, New York, USA, p. xii

<sup>2</sup> Ibid pp. 123 and 124

<sup>3</sup> Ibid p. 131

<sup>4</sup> Ibid p. 131

“*Scientific method* has been able to develop its own  
rules....Scientific method has been very successful  
in the study of natural phenomena”<sup>1</sup> – We should  
try to imagine Mr. Soros sitting in a comfortable  
armchair by the fire-place, next to him another  
armchair, two cups of tea, two servings of Danish  
cookies; a conversation between Mr. Soros and ‘The  
Scientific Method.’ The other chair is empty, the  
other cup of tea is full, one is speaking, Mr. Soros.  
He is congratulating ‘The Scientific Method’ on the  
advances in sciences since Popper’s times. Soros  
speaks, the chair is empty, with him is ‘The Scientific  
Method’- with us are the people in their endless social  
practices.

I cannot conceive of a more important task to be  
undertaken in philosophy, than the study of language  
use, and a constant criticism of it, with a goal to  
learn how to better express feelings and opinions. We  
need to free language from the constraints imposed  
onto it by *the language of things* and the thinking it  
infects. Similarly, instead of the bewilderment with  
the mysteries that language presents us with, we  
should try to understand what in language creates  
these mysteries. The root of the problem is in the  
misunderstanding of what language really is about  
– the failure to understand that language is not a  
thing but a practice, the most supreme manifestation  
of social practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Soros, G. (2006). The Age of Fallibility. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, p. 217



## Law as Social Practices –Legal Practices

I arrived at my conception of all human activity and knowledge being embedded in social practices - and social practices being art and interpretation of feelings – through a study of law. Therefore I enjoy referring to law as a perfect example for illustrating this concept. - I propose to view justice and law as reflections of social practices, which in turn are reflections of individual expressions and interpretations; these are the immaterial fundamentals of human and social life, of cognition, what through thinking leads to deeds. My view is based on the recognition that ‘law’ is but a certain perception on various aspects of life; certain aspects of human thinking, and that the resulting expressions and interpretations have traditionally been considered as constituting ‘law.’ My aim is to show that there is no such ‘thing’ as law (‘law’ is not a ‘thing’), and that law is exclusively perceptions on certain aspects of social practices; within the notion *law* we may speak of *social practices* in a narrower sense as *legal practices*.

Law is competition of arguments; it is those social practices where individuals exchange arguments aimed at achieving a certain (normative) behavior. Indeed I would even claim that all social practices are based on a competition of arguments, and that in ‘law’ we in fact deal with those arguments that we discern as particularly ‘normative’. That is, aimed

at such behavior which people have a tendency to regard as especially compulsory. This distinction in fact points to the character of law as consisting of actions that one holding authority over others - or wishing to hold -seeks to impose in contradiction to those behavioral patterns that would be more customary (normally accepted) in society.

Through the idea of seeing law as a competition of arguments reflecting, and affecting, the social practices we are in a position to understand that *justice* is the result of the competition of arguments, and thus may be called ‘*competitive justice*.’

But there are two biological, natural, restrictions to the competition of arguments; two natural fundamentals for justice; let’s term them the initial premises. These are: the supreme respect of life and the respect of the ecological environment. Justice is a property that the individual living human being has a supreme right to, and all justice is annihilated with death; the natural environment is the condition of life and therefore serves as the sole utilitarian base for justice.

A metaphoric comparison of law and justice with medicine and health could be illustrative. Now, I argue that law should be about the promotion of justice, in the same way as medicine should be about the promotion of health. In contradiction to this insight the prevalent theories of law can be

compared with a notion whereby we would think that health is produced (exclusively) on the surgeon's operating desk. The surgeon may have a very decisive role in many individual cases for sustaining life and promoting health, but certainly health is a million times broader a notion. Health is a function of a great deal of conscious and unconscious habits and activities, sometimes undertaken specifically for the benefit of the health; the diet; the habits of life; the environment; sports and leisure; all the health practices; doctors exchanging opinions; consultation; medicine; vitamins; fresh mountain air; less stress; proximity to a pet; love...Doctors and surgeons intervene only in an extraordinary situation – (and so do lawyers and judges). – Similarly justice is a function of the same living conditions; like health justice comes about by social practices – (in the perception of law we speak about legal practices). – Infinite Variances affect justice – each day.

But we may as well compare law with ice-hockey, or legal practices with the practice of playing hockey, the hockey traditions, for similarly like *law* – that is to say the perceptions on those aspects of life that pertain to the normative order and which we call 'law' - hockey has developed gradually through times, from times beyond the memory of mankind, through various traditions, through various games, through various forms of social playful practices; some even claim to trace the roots of the tradition of playing hockey

to a game depicted in 4000- year-old drawings at the Beni-Hasen tombs in Egypt (which automatically would mean that the game itself is yet older, for certainly they did not start the game with painting the players for the honor roll)<sup>1</sup>. Like all traditions, all practices, physical games change, evolve and take on new forms; there is always a root in earlier traditions, and yet we cannot say what exactly is the root or how the traditions evolved, how the hockey of today took form, at what point all that was before had been cumulated to the practice we now call ice-hockey. I claim that there is no such point, that there is no such point in the 4000 years of history we glanced at, and that there is no point - except for a point of taste - even in the more recent history of hockey. And naturally we have to understand that hockey did not even originate in a linear succession of cultural traditions from that game in the picture in the tombs of Beni-Hasen, and not even from the people that played the game back then; the hockey we have today is a product of traditions of variegated cultures which each have affected the most recent traditions of what today is called playing hockey – similarly like the Beni-Hasen game was the result of all the traditions that had preceded it. - The hockey played today is by contemporary historians considered to

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<sup>1</sup> For this section on hockey I have quoted information from the Wikipedia article on ice-hockey and from the web sites of the Finnish Ice Hockey Association, [www.finhockey.fi/info/historia](http://www.finhockey.fi/info/historia)

have taken shape in Canada and more precisely the recent origins are traced to the McGill University in Montreal, to the developments that took place there in the years of 1875 to 1880 with the first organized indoor games and codified rules (interesting to note what significance codified rules played in this development). And yet even so historians continue tracing the origins to various ‘sources’ bringing up evidence like the Galway Statutes of Ireland which made reference to “the horlinge of the litill balle with hockie stickes or staves”, or references to the Scottish sport ‘shinty’ and the Irish sport ‘hurling’ that European immigrants brought to North America. – A gentleman referred to as Sir John Franklin had written in 1825 on a Great Bear Lake expedition in the Arctics that “the game of hockey played on the ice was the morning sport...”. And in 1843 a British Army officer in Kingston wrote “Began to skate this year, improved quickly and had great fun at hockey on ice”. – The game took shape gradually; the first game to use a puck rather than a ball took place in 1860 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, but by the year 1893 the traditions of hockey had already fully caught on in Canada where in Montreal alone there were a hundred teams, and where they had leagues throughout the country.

And what today is hockey is not the same as the game hockey that they played at the campus of McGill University in the year 1875. A lot has changed

since then; small adjustments, improvements and restrictions crept gradually in, for example that small invention that they thought about in Winnipeg in the last decades of 19<sup>th</sup> century to incorporate cricket pads to better protect the goaltender’s legs. - From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century hockey started to be played professionally with salaried players. The rules of the game were eventually codified in the rules of the NHL (North American National Hockey League) and the rules of IIHF (International Ice Hockey Federation) that the Europeans adhere to (these two bodies of rules may well be compared with the similarly competing sets of accounting rules, the American US GAAP and European IFRS, although fair play is clearly better guaranteed by the both sets of hockey rules). – Early in to the game only backward passes of the puck from one player to another were allowed, but after 1930s that changed and forward passes became allowed. What a cardinal change – try playing hockey with the earlier rule and you will sense the difference – and yet it is the same game. Today teams with 6 players on the ice are competing but when the organized form of the game first started to take shape there were 15 players per team, the number being gradually reduced through 9 to 7 and eventually to the 6 players of today.- The system of rules and penalties in hockey have also evolved gradually through history to address a multitude of expediencies that people have realized while practicing hockey; sometimes there has been

pressure to change the rules to make the game more speedy, or to encourage more goals to be shot, or to provide more protection to the players, and the public, or to rein in on violence, while sometimes the other way around: to encourage it; the fine-tuned system of penalties has evolved over time to address perceived specific needs: 2 minutes for tripping, elbowing or roughing; 5 minutes for something considered more foul play; and 10 minutes for misconduct, or 10 minutes misconduct combined with the 2 or 5 minutes personal penalty; game misconduct or disqualification. – Why 2 minutes and not 3? It has become to be so through the historic evolution of the game, the practice. Why penalty of 5 minutes instead of 2? Because more flagrant fouls are penalized more severely. But then what is to be considered as more flagrant foul? That is whatever in the history of the social practices of hockey has to come to be so considered...

The rules, the penalties, make up for the rule-of-law of hockey, but not only, there are more elements in to it, there is the whole community of stakeholders: the fans, the public at large, the investors, the sponsors, the press, even the general legal system affects the rule-of-law of hockey (like international law affects that of a particular jurisdiction of a country); all combine to the rule-of-law of hockey, that is what is to be considered right and wrong – and even so there is a constant change. – Now we may compare

this with the development of the legal system of Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union. By now - in fifteen years from the fall of the USSR - the Russians have had to learn a whole new game of law – in fact not one but an infinite number of games – to somehow set all issues - all arguments, all needs – in a fine-tuned relation to each other, with all minor alterations of what is to be considered right or wrong, permissible or forbidden, what is to be considered to be in excess and what is to be deemed adequate; all these competing claims have in the West been settled in an evolutionary fashion without any major interruption throughout the history - e.g. in Britain, at least ever since the Roman intrusion, some two thousand years of uninterrupted social processes – but in Russia there was a cardinal break in the traditions during the Soviet period, I even claim that Russia in much started law from scratch (hereby I mean law as a normative system, and by no means people's moral values and judgments, the sense of justice and fairness, the qualities of which never fell behind those of the West – I have to admit that today I would turn around the question sometimes wondering at the fundamental injustice that the managed Western Press indulges in). And yet in the microcosm of hockey we still disagree fundamentally in point of view even dealing with the very restricted number of questions: we may wonder whether it was right to penalize a player with 2 minutes for hooking in the particular incident; and this after hundreds of

years and after thousands of people considering over and over again just this small aspect of the game, this infinitesimally small aspect of life (aspect of social practices), while the Russians were forced to fine-tune all the millions of aspects all at once. We have to conclude that the Russians surely are the historic world champions in the game of social practices, in organizing fresh and healthy social traditions after so many years of being shut out from the free game of social practices by the communist regime that played by the rules cooked up by Karl Marx.

Today they play this kind of hockey because the game has evolved to what it is today by force of people playing it. We may go to another direct analogy with the contemporary conception of law (the wrong one which I criticize), and consider the rules of hockey, to think about them as the laws in a system of justice; could anybody imagine to learn to play hockey, to become a good hockey player by merely reading the NHL rules of hockey - or even more – could anybody expect to put together a good hockey team of guys diligently memorizing the rules by heart, but none of them having ever played the game with skates on their feet on the slippery ice! – Yet this is what the critics of Russia claim, they claim that the Russian president and legislature have failed because the society has not yet learned to play law according to the books, but law like hockey is not learned from the books, but by playing in, and the game itself, like law, is the playing,

is the free social practices. Society is like a big hockey team, or rather like a major league with an infinite number of potential teams participating in the games, and now Russians have been playing for only 15 years, because before Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Putin introduced the rules to the game they were playing a different game, not law, but no-law, a command-system of arbitrary rules, a game where the teams had no right to make their own strategies, one where only the referees had any rights, while being themselves above the rules. The critics, against any ethics of fair play, hark down on Russia comparing their young game with theirs that they have played for hundreds of years. And yet the only honest criticism would be to say “What a wonder that they have learnt the game of law in such a record short time of 15 years; for us it took hundreds of years”. Yes, hundreds of years – maybe thousands – but the really striking realization is that these Western countries which brave themselves with their rule-of-law have not in fact moved much beyond where Russia is today, and who knows how the roles will be turned around in another 15 years? – In Canada they started to play an organized form of hockey back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century already with hundreds of teams. They have strong cultural traditions of playing hockey and enjoying it with 1,6 % of the population playing the game today, and therefore they are playing it better than ever, the game has become such an important part of the social practices of the Canadians. – Compare with Finland where they started to play hockey

in an organized form between clubs only in 1928. Finns were to wait 21 years before they could score the first victories in any games in an international tournament beating Norway 7-3 and Belgium 17-2 in the World Championships 1949. And it was only in 1959 that the Finns first beat the neighboring Swedes with a sweet 4-1. – So far no great achievements in the social practice of hockey, but in 1968 anyway an unfathomable 5-2 victory over Canada in the Olympic Games of Grenoble. – In 1978 the junior team of under 18-year-olds won the European Championships starting a decade of success for the junior teams. – This because the results of the social practices started to pay off; it was the culture of hockey, traditions of playing hockey that showed their strengths, even individual players were able to stand off as stars on the strengths of the traditions. Now the kids all over the country played hockey, watched hockey, read about hockey, and collected cards depicting their favorite teams and players. – And that is why success was next to strike the adult teams, staffed with the boys that had grown up with hockey in a country that had grown with hockey: 1991 third place in the Canada Cup; 1992 Prague, first time medals, silver in World Championships; 1994 Olympic bronze in Lillehammer; World Championships silver in Italy. – 1994, the 100<sup>th</sup> indoor hockey rink inaugurated in Finland; more than three million spectators in the season 1993-94, in a country with 5 million inhabitants; 1995 GOLD

in Stockholm; 1998 Olympic bronze in Nagano; 1998 World Championship silver in Switzerland; 1999, Norway, silver again; 2000, Russia, bronze; 2001, Germany, silver; 2006 Olympic Games, Turin, silver; 2007, Moscow, World Championships: silver... What these international placements speak of is foremost of the strong social practices of playing hockey in this little country with the world's second biggest density of hockey players with 1,2 % of the population playing hockey only to be beaten by Canada with 1,6% density. - But not only the players make the game, but all what is around it: the managers and trainers who chose the most important features of the hockey culture worth of highlighting to the young generation and to the adult players, giving all they know and all they have to give in an effort to win; the critics - sports journalists, sponsors, politicians – the fans, friends and family, and all the other people which by chance become involved in the game, maybe just an accidental passer-by caught by a patriotic fervor to join in the hailing of the national team and its achievements. – But really this is the same way law comes by, how law develops, and as with hockey it is a competition, law is a competition of arguments on every level of society, and both law and hockey, I think it is evident, develop where freedom reigns and competition can be conducted in an environment of freedom, where the monopolists are disqualified, and where it sometimes takes some pretty tough referees to achieve it.

## Claude Lévi-Strauss

To understand the present reality - the present and reality - we have to move beyond our own contemporary superstitions, and try to mirror our own beliefs in those of others, for it is a result of ignorance and a fear of the unknown that induces people to embrace the false conceptions that the ways of other peoples are dominated by primitive beliefs in magical cures, spirits and retarded customs of backwardly men, while for some reason those of the own culture, own country are taken to represent the foremost achievements of mankind, of people that in blissful ignorance consider themselves the most civilized of all – while for them the very yardstick for civilization is their own customs. And what really throws people off and prevents them from looking reality in the mirror is technical progress - which is a problem similar to the American retort “If you are so smart why ain’t you rich”, which presupposes that it is a sign of wisdom to be rich, while most smart people we know from history have not been especially rich, or *have been* rich like Ludwig Wittgenstein who indeed *was* rich but thought richness a burden to life and got rid of his immense fortune – and thus people that live in societies technically advanced and materially prosperous have this similar way of thinking themselves smart because the society where they live is materially well off, while nothing in life – except for those thingly surroundings – lends any credibility

to the statement, on the contrary, e.g. looking at the supreme power of the European Union, or the journalists of the leading Western press, you clearly are convinced of the contrary. While some men used to dance around a totem pole and work themselves in to ecstasy with a truly spiritual form of art, the others work them into a frenzy in their belief in the thingly existence of certain words and concepts like e.g. ‘democracy’, ‘rule-of-law’, ‘science’ and ‘state’, a state like e.g. ‘Britain’ which they in all earnest believe to be in the possession of a ‘will’, and to that degree are they rendered insane by the words, their chant, that they out of their minds accept the mind implanted in them by the propaganda of hatred and greed - (the British press being the most authentic source of this kind of evil) - so that they are quite willing to defend these words by sending armies and ballistic missiles equipped with warheads to kill the men and women - and their babies - who have not been able to penetrate the artistic merits of these same words. – This is the magic circle of superstition, where those who think themselves standing over the superstitions of others simply occupy another position in the eternal circle going round and round. The true magic would be to have the power to break through this circle, to cancel its rotation, to gain a language for interpretation of feelings, and to make art for art’s sake the magic of life.

With all this goes the fantastic belief in historical

progress, that life would have been shaped in a historical process going from strength to strength with ever better and more beautiful achievements, and that all this would have culminated this day in the life at the capital streets of major Western cities. But, there is no culmination, all we have is the present day balance of errors, all the historical errors mankind has picked up on the road. We need to broaden our horizons, get competing views on our histories, so that we Europeans could move beyond our poverty of perception, the one-sided view of the glory of European history. But not only we Europeans need to do it, all people would have to do it, the Chinese have to look beyond their own, the Indians beyond theirs, and so on. We have to understand that beyond the few epic narratives of each people, beyond these ritual-like beliefs in original causes - those heroic causes that for example according to the European historic mythology lie behind the present marvels - that beyond these there is a life shaped in infinite variances from the first day of life through history, which down below all the superficial notions is one history common to all humanity.

How little the human has changed is best evidenced in the narratives of anthropology. We could gain even more insight to the depth of life if we were able to travel back in time; in a way this is what anthropology enables us to do, and the sight it opens up for us is fascinating. Back there in time, in the stories of

anthropology, we meet humans, the very same types of people that crowd our perceptions today, humans that seemed to carry all the same traits that the fellows among us today, the same ideas, the follies, cruelty, and love. In fact I think this is the ultimate journey we should attempt, for I believe that we can reach back and we can regain that time, and with that time regained we can enrich the present life. Here I am very deliberately referring to Marcel Proust's work, the risk is that I may be seen as trying to be overly witty by evoking these associations, but even so I cannot avoid it because it is my sincere conviction that this is the case, and I need to express my admiration for Proust that has so beautifully formulated this idea – an idea within ideas – an association of ideas criss-crossing in infinite variances, but always reaching back to *memory*, *time lost* and *regained*. The same journey in time and back again that Proust took us within the life of a society in one hundred years serves us as a model for an eternity, although in a way that eternity is already within those 100 years and 3000 pages.

In view of having given conscious thought to these issues I find myself nowadays frequently faced with impressions that invite me to contemplate the relation between the past and the present, progress and development; it can be a similar expression of playful awareness of being respected and master of the moment that I catch in a young American student or an Asiatic vendor at an outdoor market



which causes me to wonder how these two men could use the same combination of facial expression and bodily pose while separated by thousands of miles, languages and cultures apart; how could they both sit in the same pose leaning nonchalantly to the side by supporting the bodyweight with the elbow, the head tilted to the side down towards the left shoulder as in a show of a combination of self-awareness, friendliness and playful timidity, as in courting an emotion yet unknown which; and the body pose correlating that of the head, free, relaxed, but secure as if there would be a kind of deference to the surrounding world; and clad in that same face of a seeming indifference moderated, though, with a closed mouth that has been stretched out to the initial stages of a smile, with the added stress of the middle part of the lower lip being thrust upwards two grains of a nuance - a nuance on the face that combine to make up this particular one- both ends of the outdrawn mouth tipping down one grain and the checks curling up to small rolls just below the eyes, while these eyes stare in the distance seemingly on nothing but in reality looking inside the person himself, the eyes nevertheless being assigned the task to keep a contact with people around, which is shown by the contours of the eye faintly strained to say ‘this is a happy thought in my mind’; the hands have been laid defenselessly on the belly folded by gently crossing the fingers in a grip that is not closed, and thus the two hands softly touching each other are telling that these weapons of pain and pleasure have been put to rest as in an armistice. – As they say “like

James Dean’s head-tilt’’. While the American might have seen Dean on screen, or inherited the expression from others that have seen the actor, but the Asian guy, I dare to say based on the circumstances, could possibly not have seen the movie nor received the influence back from there in any form of cultural exchange in such a fashion that he would now have integrated such an arsenal of expressions in his bodily grammar, it therefore must be the other way around, that both of them are showing the expressions programmed in the body and language stemming from lives with common roots and lived long ago. And this leads me to think that also the social setting to which the expressions apply must have been the same thousands and thousands of years ago, even back so far in time, to a life which our scientists and journalists would proclaim lack any connection with ours, to our progress of the day; but I think there is a common root and that there is this connection, in fact, I think that what has been added on by our science, philosophy – even by our art – is quite little, while the technical progress that confuses us has come about entirely through the forces of social competition in a process that has placed these same humans from the stone age in a new setting, similarly to the poor man becoming rich by a lucky strike and moving up in society and all its material surroundings, and then indulging himself voluntarily or involuntarily in the thought that he has himself made all that can be seen around him. - It is as we humans would all be the actors in a big social Theater of Time and called at

different times of history to perform in a new role, in new settings, and in new costumes, this time in this modern play, in these settings which seem like out of this world, but all the same the intrigue unaltered as it has been inherited from the previous generations, and yet the ones anterior to those in an infinite regress back in time, and the same actors with the same feelings, and all with the same expressions.

Just recently drawing to an end with my work on the present book I visited a Chinese restaurant in Moscow to celebrate the conclusion of a corporate planning session. I knew this restaurant from before and had chosen it for being the most authentic Chinese eatery I have come across in Europe. This restaurant called by the Russian word Druzhba is the offspring of a cultural exchange program between the Russian and Chinese governments, which explains its authenticity when all in it - the recipes - the ingredients, the chefs, the management, the style comes directly from China whereas the restaurants in most of Europe that call themselves by the word 'Chinese' have very little to do with the real culinary traditions of China; and this Druzhba, I was told, of the diverse traditions of China was closer to the Szechuan traditions. – The colleagues I had invited to the restaurant were as impressed with it as I had been first time around. I was pleased to hear Veronika, sitting next to me, after she had savored the first dishes, saying “It is amazing, so many flavors I can taste in one mouthful, I feel I

have pearls in my mouth all bubbling and sizzling, and as if the flavor pearls one after another would jump and hit the palate – and all simultaneously - with all the flavors of a Chinese market stall”. That is the point: the flavors can be recognized all separately, even though they are all mixed in the same food, you take a mouthful from your plate, expect it to be chicken in a Chinese sauce, and then you feel that the sauce is not only Chinese by name, but it is China that you get in your mouth, there is salt and pepper, lemon, ginger and a flower so fresh that you can smell its scent in your nose while the bite is in your mouth. It is this wealth of sensations simultaneously present, and alive at the table - not only in the different dishes and their names, but in reality, even in the one and same dish – this is what I admire.

Having got the menu in my hands I turned my glance at our party, there were fourteen of us I concluded for myself, and with this soothing thought I devoured the idea that I was given the opportunity to order for all of us ...for the servings here were so handsome that after my first visit - when I unknowingly had ordered four dishes and could not even finish the second one and having had to resort to that great American invention of doggy bag – I was always a little melancholy going through the menu knowing that I had to reject almost all on offer, and had to settle for two dishes... But now I read and reread the menu three times from cover to cover considering

all the 172 items on display, even giving the desserts a serious thought, for under usual circumstances desserts are out of question. Having considered the merits of all portions and the appetite for culinary sensations which was growing in my eyes, I set off to order the parade of six thousand years of perfection and tradition, traditions of China, which even they are not traditions of China alone, but come with traits of Mongolia, Korea, Asia, Japan, India...for even the Chinese culture has been enriched by influence from far and near neighbors – similarly like the Chinese have enriched their neighbors and us - in thousands of years of exchange. – This is what I settled for: a clear soup with a floating flower; broth with wontons filled with a mixture of seafood, meat and vegetables with the flavor of minced ginger, finely minced onions, sesame oil and soy sauce; boiled chicken Guadun style; fried peanuts with coriander in red oil; shrimp salad with celery; cabbage and cucumbers with noodles; kidney bean sprouts; boiled mushrooms with bamboo in oil; fried scallops and squids with spring rolls; chrysanthemum carp in sweet and sour sauce; deep-fried chicken with nuts and sweet pepper; pork in sweet and sour sauce (with the touch of sweetness coming from the honey of our nature); lamb with Peking cabbage in Szechuan spicy broth; stewed field cabbage with black mushrooms; A choice of vegetables: cabbage, spring onions, chives, broccoli, carrots – boiled, stewed, or braised; prepared in the most diverse fashions to bring out

the finest flavors, served with a hot chili sauce, and simmering in a flowery oil; and bowls with stir-fried vegetables prepared with a sensitivity appropriate to each individual ingredient sending them in the heat of the pan in strict accordance with the time it takes to allow each to cook to perfection, as this time required for carrying out the ideal texture and color with all the distinctive flavors has been deemed appropriate and established through traditions from generation to generation; and thus from the collective memory of traditions each vegetable had been entered into the pan in due sequence with the toughest and thickest vegetables like broccoli, carrots, and cabbage cooked just a slight moment longer than the softer and leafy vegetables, the salad, the snow peas and bean sprouts, which had been placed on the pan just when it had begun to tinge the white cabbage - bok choy - whose stalks delicately separated from the leaves had hit the heat first and been left to simmer in the flowery sesame oil for two short minutes, no more, when the chef had been ready to gratify the pan with the ginger that needed 30 seconds to part with its best aroma that corresponded to the ideal standard of the chef the way he read the memory of the great masters of the past generations whose work of art he was now so faithfully recreating; fried salad and soy curds in an oil extracted from Haoyu seafood; Peking cabbage with rose-petals; dumplings filled with mutton, spring onions, radish and coriander - still warm after the steam bath they had been plunged into - which

after a dip in a sauce of soy and vinegar were - small enough as they were - ready to be swallowed whole at one gulp; noodles in broth with pork, vegetables and marinated roots of mustard greens; fried pancakes with vegetables; - and in the middle of the table a simmering hot pot on which I could rest the desire of my eyes – combining the thoughts, and sensations of my mind with what was really present in the pot as advertised by the scent of the flower pepper, and the color of the thinly sliced meat, leafy vegetables, and mushrooms, all creating a sensation on the tongue that was both spicy, burning, and slightly numbing like the water of Vichy.

So, I felt I was there steeped in the mists of time to which this authentic Chinese food had called me weak as I was - having been contaminated by this way of thinking - to such influence from the forces of the involuntary memory of our environment, forces we can shut out from our personal life, but which we cannot resist anymore once we have opened up the gates of consciousness to the idea of finding out and giving in to the desires of the heart.

In this food I saw the color, redolence, taste, shape and fineness of all components present, and I felt a joy of being part of it, of this being in my life. – I noticed that I had understood the meaning of the search, and what we can hope to find at the end of it, when the tea was served in a clear transparent teapot together

with the buds of lily and jasmine flowers, which buds unfolded during the brew opening up to the mature flowers which time had preserved in the dried folded buds waiting for the moment that they would come to life one more time, the last time, to part with their aroma and beauty in a cup of tea where their flavor made a difference. – And I was wondering, was it so that this very sensation - which I now felt to be my own, and which I felt that it was worth living for, and which I felt was leading me back to my most sacred values of childhood – that this very sensation was in fact a received memory, one made mine only because I had admired Marcel Proust's description of this very sensation. And couldn't it be so, that I understood it in this very instance, because at this occasion there just happened to be such a strong connection between the source of the impressions and my consciousness about it? But couldn't it also be so that I was particularly susceptible to this kind of sensation because it was mine, and that Proust had just told me how to come to terms with the sensation and how to express it, perhaps not express it for others, but at least for myself.

When I saw the petals of lotus, the water lily, floating in the clear soup I noticed that through the course of the dinner I felt I was actually taking part in an exhibition of exotic flowers for I was constantly looking to identify the flowers which although dead and dried were emitting the flavors, colors and odors

stored in their substance like memories of life, and it was the memories that these dead flowers shared with me that stirred my own memories to recreate their beauty in my mouth and in the scents which I inhaled; on the table and in our minds we had daylilies, chrysanthemums and lotus, the water lily, and the flowers of the lilac tree spreading a magical fragrance which I thought to stem from an enchanted Chinese cousin of the lilac at my parents home. – Also chili, ginger and spicy herbs, sesame oil, and the fagara – the Sichuan peppercorn - giving a fragrant, numbing, and almost citrusy spice; coconut, garlic, mustard, yellow ginger and the white one, herbs, lilac, dry mandarin skin and oil, pepper, salt and oil, and toasted sesame seeds sprinkled on salads.

When we left our new friends at restaurant Druzhba I noticed that the entrance to McDonalds - the American fast food joint – was just next door, and this led me once more to contemplate the meaning of *progress*, for I was comparing in my mind the ancient traditions of China, a country which – although leaping forward as an economic giant – is way behind in *progress*, the way they understand this word in the West, while America on the other hand must be the very embodiment of the whole idea of progress, and McDonalds represents the culinary achievements of this brave new world. And I looked back at Druzhba, then again at McDonalds, and thought there must be something seriously wrong with our progress.

But as much as this comparison tells about our progress, so does the criticism that the self-appointed cultural elite of Europe directs against McDonalds, for it is only to the merit of McDonalds if they cater to the tastes and means of the European herd, and gives them what they crave for. In France it is even a national sport – complete with riot artists specializing in it to the acclaim of a choir of the elite - to crack down on McDonalds as a symbol for their bad consciousness, and yet the deep-fried potato fries the French themselves serve - without ketchup – with every meal and the chemical substance that they spread around the world under the brand Danone are not much better. And while a baguette with a piece of 50% fat cheese is certainly more chic, it is not much more healthy nor rich.

Thinking of the richness of the cooking traditions of China, and how the Chinese and their neighbors had influenced each other in thousands of years of cultural exchange, and how in the social practices thus evolved there had developed this Chinese cuisine, I also thought of the most weird idea of modern science, the idea of the Universal Grammar of the art of Noam Chomsky, for this idea of his that language would be an innate biological feature, sitting in the brain, in a place that his adepts call ‘the language organ’ - ☺ - but which in reality exists only in the minds of the members of this sect (*exists* for

if they believe in it, then it is their reality) – for this idea of his is similar to the idea that there would exist a Universal Cookbook, this one also sitting in the brain or perhaps in the belly (beware, they actually do think so!) which manifests itself through directing the hands of the chefs and all those that participate in the food chain to choose the most appropriate means and methods, and instruments and utensils, and ingredients to cook the meal that was already programmed in the UC, the Universal Cookbook of the brain or the belly – in the *culinary organ*. And certainly they think that the system is so complete that the vegetables, fruits, chicken, pigs, cows and fish have been directed to live, grow and feed just the very way they do, so that they one day, at the right day when chosen by all the participants in the food chain, and at the perfect heat of the pan, will come complete with all the flavors as required by the instructions of the Universal Cookbook and thus be fit to fulfill their role in a pot as predestined by the recipe. – But if we think about cooking like that (and this is a complete analogy to the idea of UG, the Universal Grammar), then we can say “Yes, there have been these explanations, there are these explanations: we call them religion.”

I noticed that I am in this habit – and I think that more or less consciously it has always been so with me - that each time when I attempt to think a thought to an end I finish at the gates of regress in time, this

regress in time which is a regress both within my own life-span back to my youth, childhood, my beginning, and the infinite regress back in eternal time, of which mine is a reflection. Eternal time is carried in the biological and the new dimension of it, the mental, which through language is manifested in life, in social practices, and which through these social practices hits back at life (I say ‘hits back’ – I wish I could instead settle for ‘touches back’). This is why I think that our attempts to understand human cognition and the eternal questions, and to glimpse the answers, will circle around understanding the biological evolution and its relation with language, and so truly ours is a search of lost time; to know the future is a question of interpreting the past, of finding expressions for these interpretations.

Having this in mind I wanted to round up this presentation with a look at the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss, and in particular at his *The Savage Mind*<sup>1</sup>. His anthropological narratives and the traditions he represents contain important clues to understanding the present reality. My impression on reading Lévi-Strauss is that the human being has not changed, what has changed are forms of life, the culture around us has changed, and fundamentally this is not but a superficial change, this change is merely about a new superstition taking over an earlier one,

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<sup>1</sup> Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Savage Mind* (Nature of Human Society)

or a new form of life replacing the older. Lévi-Strauss joined immense reputation and fame during his life, and he gained a wide audience, even the religious philosophers (like Sartre) listened to him, but he did not draw any grand scale general conclusions from his material, did he fail or did he not want to? To my understanding Lévi-Strauss held the opinion that the minute organization of life in the cultures and societies he observed and studied, the customs termed totemism (a system regulated by a ritual adherence to traditions even in the finest aspects of life) was a result of a grand plan consciously elaborated in the given society. While I admire his work and agree with most of his writings, I do not share this conviction; rather I believe that quite to the contrary the elaborate routines, marriage-exchange rules, eating-prohibitions, systems of naming, etc. were manifestations of the perversion of inertia that life in extreme closed societies leads to. It is the lack of internal competition (lack of freedom), and external competition (contacts with other cultures), that causes traditions, rituals, to take over, to gradually change reality in the veil of appearances and then to become the new unchallenged reality – in the mind. The internal competition in those societies was suppressed by the utterly rigid traditions that subverted the role of the individual. This is the same road that will take down all societies that are shielded off from external influence, or competition. In such societies detrimental social practices will enroot and

expand and convert the individual to a cog in the social system. These societies, which Lévi-Strauss studied, were successful in fending off external influence, but this very success is what perverted them, subjugated the individual and stopped the time. – The very paradox is that the development of world-wide economical, political and cultural integration termed *globalization* is very much attached with this same danger. Our challenge is to integrate for peace, but at the same time find ways for a multicultural and multipolar world where the individual human being can be free. – For the moment the tendencies are alarming, and most vividly evidenced in the scary developments in the European Union, where a new kind of totalitarian belief in metaphysical reality suppressing the individual is being raised to new heights.

The lesson of life, of history, is that human liberty – that is happiness - will be safeguarded only through the means of open societies where people believe in pluralism and are organized on the principle of free non-monopolistic competition; competition on all levels of life: external, internal, individual and social. – This kind of competition can equally well be termed co-operation, it is just another name for the same (to be used by the adherents of political correctness). Totally free competition equals perfect co-operation; in free competition societies will strive to a balance, the balance is co-operation.

I am very skeptical of the idea that there would have been any progress in the world. There has been *change*, there has been *technological advances*, but hardly any *progress*. Through history, as I know it, all progress I can discern is the *relative liberation of the individual* human, the *recognition* of the value of individual life, the increased freedom of the individual to be himself, to feel the way he feels, to live and let live. I stress more this important recognition of these fundamental values than the actual achievements, the individual is by no means as free as he should be, much more freedom is needed. In fact much more has to be done even to protect the relative achievements, for nothing can be taken for granted, freedom is threatened every day, everywhere, not least there where it on the surface would least seem so. As soon as the freedom fighters lose their guard new dangers emerge. – The idea of progress is linked with the idea that the men and women of today would be better persons, more human, than their ancestors, as if the genetic composition of a human being would so have changed that some genes that cause goodness and superior moral values to emerge had taken precedence over the genes of the bad and all this now only in the last decades of thousands of years of history. And this is total misconception. The human has not changed, only social practices have changed, and even these social practices are not to be seen like any kind of things which now with

new technology will permanently be produced with superior quality. Such a view on progress is especially cherished among most North Americans and Western Europeans – for they look around and think they see all the evidence for it in the material prosperity and the orderly conduct of social life they detect around, not understanding that this orderly life is the result of a few quite superficial conditions of social practices: a relative equilibrium in the competition of arguments; the likelihood that force will be put against force being so big that certain forms of use of force is practiced less than it has been customary through the history, while on the other hand due to the absolute power the Western governments exercise over their respective countries certain forms of force within the proper societies are practiced more efficiently than has been customary, and due to the new power balance these governments can be rounded up to support any form of international aggression which due to the very power balance and scare of the leading powers is in unison presented as something very human, laudable, and good. – In addition to the equilibrium in the competition of arguments, and this balance of terror, what causes the idea of human progress is the relative prosperity in which the good Europeans live: they have fewer reasons to kill each other materially well-off as they are, that is to say a critical mass of them, which mass thanks to the power machine built to protect the status quo may well decrease significantly for some



years without noticeable effects on the surface. – And then on top of these conditions: the equilibrium in the competition of arguments, the balance of terror, and the relative economic prosperity, we have the brainwashing: never have the Europeans and North Americans been subjected to such a strong flow of one-sided information from the politicians busy at resurrecting the Holy Roman Empire - in the name of the European Union, - the Academy, the scientific community - in the name of their positivist credo -, and the Press, the real power machine of Europe and North America, the unelected oligopoly that rules the Western hemisphere after having concentrated the flow of information in the hands of very, very few, wielding a power stronger than any church or king ever had.

The Press brings us back to the most primitive emotions of human beings, for now when the Press is so one-sided they do not even try to argument for the causes they support and instead they only play with images and key words, display code words sacred for the European herd and through these devices hold sway to an unheard of extent over these *very modern* men.

Some seventy years ago in the center of Europe, in Germany, there came to being the most horrible beasts that mankind has ever experienced. And now these people that rejoice in the progress of man

should keep in mind that, certainly, it is not so that one hundred thousand years of genetic history which had led to that kind of *man-beasts* has now been cured by the few decades that followed (perhaps with the genetic injection of Marshall aid) so that now with the passing of an additional 50 years – a drop in the ocean of history (I stress this only because this banal idea is de facto held among European politicians, journalists and scientists – i.e. all three magicians) – would now anyway have – finally and permanently changed the genetic composition of Homo Europeaus so that he now was ready and complete in goodness, as if complying to some kind of directive of the European Commission. – No, all what we are, and all what we will be, is in social practices and the language which reflects and affects them; our human values are nothing but a reflection of this language under the spell of which we are - a language reflecting the struggle between the forces of pain and pleasure, now at a mental plane, and perhaps reflecting a strive, a quest for lasting love, a love which is there beyond pain and pleasure but far away from where we are, far as the stars twinkling somewhere yonder while we cannot but wonder where they are. A few wrong words and the beast in the human is loose– this beast is not the animal but a hybrid between the animal and the human, an animal in a human form perverted by a language of hatred. And this is why “when we study certain periods of ancient history” - as Marcel Proust said - “we are astonished to see men and women

individually good participate without scruple in mass assassinations or human sacrifices which probably seemed to them natural things.”<sup>1</sup> It is this language of hatred that “throughout the whole duration of time” lifts up “like great cataclysmic waves from the depths of the ages the same rages, the same sadness, the same heroisms, the same obsessions, through one superimposed generation after another”<sup>2</sup>

As I write this book I live and work in Russia, a country which has through time and space been swept with one and another of these tidal waves of obsessions; and just recently Russians have rid themselves, and the world, of one of the most forceful obsessions mankind has experienced: the Marxist ideology and the dictatorship built on the platform of this ideology. After the flood, the land still damp, Russians are building a new society guided by the better values of their traditions going back far to the same values other Europeans cherish in their art and literature. I witness how social life is taking shape with all the features of normality of modern social life – normal as normal can be in human society - human life in society being reinstated, and all in a record time of 10 to 15 years, years of peace and calm. But I am perplexed for as clear as this is

<sup>1</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*, p. 213 and 214

<sup>2</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*, p. 353

the Western Press and their politicians claim the opposite; in this 21<sup>st</sup> century with all the travel and means of communication, with all our science and education, the Europeans are successfully fed with a make-believe image of *another Russia*, a country which – against all reality and totally untruthfully - is portrayed as an undemocratic threatening enemy. I will not in this connection dwell on all the reasons for this, which have to do with an attempt to gain a control over Russia’s vast energy and other natural resources, and with other economic and geopolitical reasons, for in this connection I discuss the tool by which these aims are advanced, this tool: the language of hatred and all the primitive emotions that can be stirred up with it.

At first living and working in Russia and reading the Western reports – not very attentively, just once in a while the way a European man reads his newspaper in the morning over a cup of coffee and a sandwich and eggs, or watches the news broadcast on TV tired after a days work and satisfied after dinner - I first thought that they were mistaken, that one or another journalist was mistaken, or maybe guided by old fears and scares. But then I saw that it is a pattern, that the same unjust and wrong accusations, the same misinformation – at the same time, in the same words – appear all around the Western world. And I began to see the patterns of a campaign; paying attention to it, being more alert to it, I eventually noticed that

they are lying. And now I do not mean that they are *all* deliberately lying, but I claim that there is a core team of those that direct a campaign, a kind of an information war against Russia, they set the agenda through the dominant press – which is in the hands of very, very, few – and in the bowels of specialized propaganda lobbies they produce the perceptions of Russia to which the other journalists subscribe to, who then out of ignorance and fear – and pressure - do not dare to contest the truths that thus have been made official, acceptable, and fashionable – mind you, that almost none of the journalist that repeat the perceptions thus produced have never set foot on Russian soil. This is precisely like Marcel Proust said: “The truth is that people see everything through the medium of their newspaper, and what else could they do, seeing that they are not personally acquainted with the men or the events under discussion”<sup>1</sup> But still we cannot stop feeling astonished that “the public which judges the men and events of war solely from the newspapers, is persuaded that it is from their own opinions”<sup>2</sup>

What I say is that for some reasons (greed, hatred, geopolitics, fight for energy resources) some forces are engaged in a very deliberate attempt – and totally fraudulent - to portray Russia as an evil enemy

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<sup>1</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*, p. 139

<sup>2</sup> Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*, p. 144

country. It is an easy task when the Western media has so successfully been recruited to serve these forces. Even earlier under far better conditions, a few generations ago when Europe and the USA still had a pluralistic media, it was not too difficult to manipulate the European masses to support one or another cause that the propaganda called them to embrace. Albert Einstein was well aware of this saying: “In two weeks the sheep-like masses can be worked up by the newspapers into such a state of excited fury that the men are prepared to put on uniform and kill and be killed, for the sake of the worthless aims of a few interested parties”.<sup>1</sup> And nothing has changed. Today the European masses, which are made up of most European men and women (and even the youth more docile than ever) – and also, and especially, those who (the majority of the mass), in view of the intelligence they perceive themselves to possess, would utterly reject any claim of forming part of the masses (this European herd) – are more susceptible to propaganda than ever, and the means for producing and disseminating the propaganda are at unseen levels of perfection, and thus it is easier than ever to awake the combative and destructive instincts of this European herd to new forms of hatred and wars.

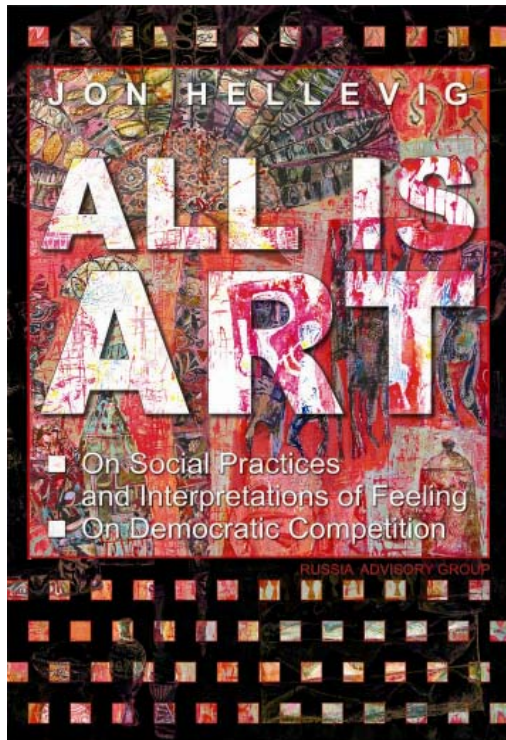
Dwelling on this propaganda and the hatred thus

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<sup>1</sup> Einstein, *The World As I See It*, p. 10

reproduced I remember the words of Russia's President Putin who in this year of 2007 on the day of commemorating the fight against and victory over Nazism - the biggest evil of all times - said: "We should remember that the causes of a war are always to be found in the errors and misjudgments in time of peace, and that their roots are in the ideology of confrontation and extremism. And we have the more reason to remember this, because today these threats are by no means diminishing, all what happens is that they undergo transformations and merely appear in new forms. And at the bottom of these new threats there is the same contempt for human life as under the Third Reich, and the same aspirations to exclusivity and universal dictate." - I add to that: equally, as in the Third Reich, these threats are produced by propaganda; now propaganda less obvious, but more shrewd. - And this is all we can do, stand and fall for the truth. A human can die just any day, so why bring the truth to the grave, why not try to make a difference while still alive. But do we have a choice? Maybe we are just like drug addicts obsessively surrendered to the truth without no cure - no other cure than writing and reaping from it a small satisfaction, all for oneself, not expecting any praise or rewards, but just like a sick man who congratulates himself on standing up from his bed and venturing into town and back again, and who upon returning home falls flat on his bed with an enormous satisfaction that it was done; or like it was with myself when the new

elevator was being installed in our office and I had to undertake the effort of mounting weeks on end the seven floors by foot, satisfied with myself each time I accomplished it but not expecting any praise for it - while receiving some nevertheless - or perhaps an analogy more easy to understand: a man or woman doing the jogging exercise, running for an hour, sweating, forcing himself to endure more, going out the following day and the following again, with only one reward: the pleasure of feeling fine.



Jon Hellevig:

**All is Art:  
On Democratic Competition**

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### DEMOCRATIC COMPETITION

Undulation ...a rising and falling in waves, wavelike motion to and fro in a fluid, elastic medium, propagated continuously among its particles but with little or no permanent translation of the particles in the direction of the propagation: vibration. - The pulsation caused by the vibrating together of two tones not quite in unison. A wavy appearance, outline, or form ...Power and Democracy.

*Ivan Svetovoin*

### **This is the third way!**

Living and working in Russia since 1992, the early years of post-Soviet reform, offered me laboratory-like conditions to perceive how all social activity and cognition is embedded in social practices. Russia was a country where during the life-time of three to five generation the country was under the rule of a totalitarian regime that had purposefully destroyed – or forced underground - most of the country's social practices, all the cultural heritage that in any country is the fundament of orderly life and social progress; all the social institutions on which freedom, democracy, justice and economic prosperity had been built on in other countries of Europe were devastated. And when the Russians ridded themselves (1990 – 1993) of the Marxist regime they had to start building society from scratch. I noticed that nothing functioned merely for the reason that people individually good were in power (and that in fact the more evil-minded men were more successful in grabbing important positions in politics and the economy when the social practices were in ruin); I noticed that nothing functioned merely because a well-intentioned law or other decision were passed; I noticed that nothing functioned until a critical mass of infinite variances of aspects on social life had been brought in the right relation to each other in the free practice of social life, in a process where the most important component was time. I understood that

there was no right or wrong way, that there was only the balanced way, where the balance was a function of freedom and time.

From here I developed my conception of viewing all being – human and social life - as manifestations and reflections of social practices, and even more fundamentally, I gained the insight that all is art. In the book *Expressions and Interpretations*<sup>1</sup> I stressed that behind the words by which we call the major perceptions of life, such as ‘law’, ‘economy’ and ‘religion’ there lay in fact bundles full of different forms, or rather aspects, of social practices. In this essay I wanted to focus on one of these perceptions: ‘democracy.’ My aim was to decipher the meaning of the word ‘democracy’; to make out the real meaning of all the phenomena we mentally collect under the term ‘democracy’; to penetrate this notion beneath the surface and try to reach some common denominators that based on our life experience could be seen as constituting democracy. This quest meant that I had to take a very critical attitude to the political sciences as propagated by the Academy. I understood that the conceptual method of academic science, the so-called scientific method (in the meaning that e.g. Karl Popper assigns to it) was useless in the endeavor. By the conceptual method I mean these academic traditions of launching new terminology, new words, and then to claim that these words

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<sup>1</sup> Hellevig (2006). *Expressions and Interpretations. Our Perceptions in Competition. – A Russian Case.*

have an independent meaning, which is defined by yet other words and insinuations. In this perverted form of science ‘democracy’ is defined as whatever is perceived to be the political system of Western Europe and America, and whatever is different is more or less wrong – according to the Western European and American scientists themselves.

I understood that instead of this conceptual scientific method I needed to refer to a real scientific method, the one I call the competitive method<sup>1</sup>, instead of trying to satisfy the ritual formulae of our universities and loyalty to the historic significance of the word ‘democracy’ I need to approach my task armed with the understanding that all in science is but perceptions in competition, that there was nothing firm but only different possibilities – infinitely many – to view life, and that true science meant an attempt to reproduce a truthful narrative of all the aspects that affect the phenomena under observation. I understood that I had to anchor ‘science’ firmly within the proven reality, firmly within art. And in order to pursue this aim I had to avail myself of something new, new standards to replace the fictive scientific method. For this purpose I had developed in *Expressions and Interpretations* my own competitive method, and all I needed was to find support for it, to find like-minded authors that I could refer to; this is how I

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<sup>1</sup> Regarding the competitive method I refer to *Expressions and Interpretations*, chapter 10



discovered the scientific value of the works of Marcel Proust, and this is how I came to fully embrace his conception of science the way he explained it in his treatise of human nature: *In Search of Lost Time*. – The Search has to be read from cover to cover, it is there that the meaning of the search can be found and from there that it can be understood. And so in this connection I can only give a taste of Proust’s thinking, of his method, by referring to a section I consider especially illustrative of this,<sup>1</sup> this is where he advises the scientist to “struggle to discern beneath the matter, beneath experience, beneath words, something that is different from them”, and this can according to Proust be undertaken— as a remedy – when “our true impressions...are entirely” concealed from us “beneath a whole heap of verbal concepts and practical goals which we falsely call life”. Proust chose the word ‘life’ but by it he means all the surface notions of life that people in their hallucinatory concepts create for themselves, this ‘life’ that in the Academy and the Wikipedia is called ‘science’.

This is, as Proust said, what “alone expresses for others and renders visible to ourselves that life of ours which cannot effectually observe itself and of which the observable manifestations need to be translated and, often, to be read backwards and laboriously deciphered”. And this is precisely what I herewith intend to do.

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<sup>1</sup> The citations are taken from *In Search of Lost Time*, Volume 6, *Time Regained*, pp. 299 and 300.

## **I want to tell Mr. Barroso that ‘democracy’ is not a thing**

In the first section of this book I laid the conceptual framework of the philosophy of social practices telling that social practices are carried in language which in turn stems from the efforts of each individual human being – from the beginning of time - to give an expression to an inner interpretation of feelings; the collective practice of language that thus emerged in turn affects the individual interpretations of feelings which again affect cognition in a process which is best seen as an eternal interplay between the collective (social) and the individual. So I claim that human cognition – in good and bad – stems from the interplay of expressions and interpretations, interpretation of feelings of one and many in infinite variances. This second section of the present book can therefore be seen as an example of the application of this philosophy of social practices on one of the major areas of social life, or one of the major perceptions on life, i.e. democracy. – Democracy, democratic competition, is also an issue I wanted to bring up for discussion in view of the heightened role this word has been assigned in the information war that the Western powers, or the ruling forces behind them, direct against the rest of the world. It seems that the democratic rhetoric is being employed as covert weapons to launch preemptive strikes on countries that pose a threat to – or serve as targets

for the expansion of - the hegemony of the present leading powers, or which perhaps possess riches that the ruling forces want to put under their realm.

As a measure of disarmament we need to demystify the concept democracy and demonstrate the real life processes that hide behind this beautiful word. To achieve this it is about time that we refuse to accept the hollow superstitious symbolism of concepts in favor of a sincere quest to carefully examine and analyze the underlying human behavior - individual and collective – which gives rise to the phenomena and processes amounting to what can be seen as the social practices that we term ‘democracy’ – phenomena and processes which we can never capture in the definition of a concept, of which we can never reach more than an intermittent idea, but which we can describe in the narratives the way an author tells a story or an artist paints a picture; thus we may hope to form an experimental interpretation of the phenomena, an interpretation that helps us to form an idea of what are the specific features or characteristics of the issue at question. Words like ‘democracy’ function like mental shortcuts by which we try to avoid the trouble of thinking twice, avoid contemplating the underlying phenomena, but the danger is that when we don’t do the contemplation ourselves then, for sure, somebody will try to do it for us. This is how the propagandists seize the opportunity for manipulation, grabbing a sacred word,

filling it with their favored content and using it in and out of context, whatever way fits their needs in the information war they wage on the rest of society, and the rest of the world. – To understand ‘democracy’ we have to keep in mind the basic postulate of true science as expressed by Marcel Proust: “The reality that we have to express resides not in the superficial appearance of the subject but at depth at which that appearance matters little”.<sup>1</sup>

The war in Iraq and the preceding information war are striking illustrations of the means and effects of this information war, of this kind of modern warfare, where it does not make a lot of sense to try to differentiate between the words and the missiles – they are both designed to kill. In regards to the war in Iraq most honest people will agree – at hindsight, knowing today what we did not know then - that the decisive support for the war was mustered through carefully prepared and cunningly implemented propaganda maneuvers, but few come to think that there are many more fronts in this information war, few know that the very same perpetrators are engaged in a most dangerous assault on Russia; on this front the stakes are even higher, not for the individuals on ground for whom war and death are always equally horrendous and final, but in this war the stakes are higher for the whole of mankind, and thus even for

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<sup>1</sup> In Search of Lost Time, Volume 6, Time Regained, p. 279

the people whom these plotters claim to represent. On the Russian front the propaganda plotters may not yet possess a final assault plan, but it seems that they are engaged in a long-term investment in creating the bad will, putting in place the image of an enemy, a threat to security and a threat to perceived values; thinking that once these scares are firmly installed in the European mind – and they have indeed been mighty successful so far – they can strike whenever occasion offers, for which occasion they are itching for in the fashion of an unloving aspiring heir who is restlessly waiting for his sickly uncle to die while not being able to resist the temptation by all means possible to hasten the death.

It seems that nothing has been learnt, not from Iraq and not from any other of the endlessly many wars and sorrows of human history; the evil forces are never satiated, never beaten, they never disappear, they just take cover under the air of normality and wait for their chance to reemerge – and human society sure abounds in these chances - to strike again.

The European Union is the story of the biggest reversal of democracy in world history, and yet it is precisely the EU institutions that serve as the European center for missionary democracy; it is like with the faith of religious fanatics: they know nothing of the true values of humanity and yet are prepared to go to any lengths to make others accept theirs. The

eurodeputies define ‘democracy’ as “our common democratic values and traditions”. But I ask them to spell out these values, what are they in reality; what do they consist of; where did they come from; where are they heading; has Europe seen the peak of these values and democracy ...? - And why do all values in the European Union have to be common for 500 million people? What a totalitarian idea. - What are these values, what is democracy when one attempts to scratch just a bit under the surface of this lofty word which Mr. José Manuel Durro Barroso, the President of the European Commission, so generously at any occasion allows to crawl out from between the fluffy lips of his mouths where it emerges together with the saliva, the frothy liquid secreted by the salivary glands, as a product of the hyperactive - and not fully satisfactory, as his countenance displays - processes of regulating the bodily functions. For sure there has to be more to the word than this, the spit. – And in fact there is, even for our dear José Manuel, or that is to say especially for him, for he used to be in the habit of employing this word democracy in a completely different sense – at least to the external it seemed so – back then when he exalted violence in his capacity of the revolutionary leader for the Portuguese underground Maoist organization, the MRPP, or the so-called Reorganizing Movement of the Proletariat Party (later the Communist Party of the Portuguese Workers and Revolutionary Movement of the Portuguese Proletariat). It was only when new and better carrier prospects turned up that José Manuel

decided to substitute the contents of this pretty word, democracy, throwing out the revolutionary rhetoric and replacing it with something that better suited his new neoconservative patrons whom he was now committed to serve. – This is also the explanation for the chronic political Oedipus complex that this José Manuel suffers from. He tries to hide the duality – or rather multiplicity – of his personality by attempting to command his puffed up countenance into a stern statesmanlike look, but instead the disorder of mind pushes his face into a frantic anxiety-driven activity which take expression in fast and nervous tumultuous movements, movements which lasting only fractions of seconds are separately movement by movement barely perceptible and thus converting the face into a pulping surface of a shivering jellyfish – a perfect match for the political backbone he utterly lacks. Unable to control his facial framework he thrusts the efforts where he thinks he can make a conscious difference, on the mouth. But this is where he runs from bad to worse for all he can manage with the mouth is to twist it into the most imbecile and meaningful smile of the political history of the European Union, a smile oscillating between a ghastly grin and an expression of resigning idiocy – a failed merger between the American external confidence of his patrons and the inferiority complex of an ex-communist from a country of the periphery of world politics suddenly at the helm of a conglomerate aspiring to become the resurrected Holy Roman Empire. - But the jellyfish countenance set in motion

by his shoulders - which are continuously shaking as a result of the dilemma of being conspicuously aware of his surroundings but equally unable to know what to make of them, while thinking it is his duty - or rather what he was passively experiencing as his duty (for in this case thinking is far too elevated a term) - to try to perceive each impression at once, and even the pouting lips, twisted in the idiotic smile, would not catch our attention were it not for his eyes. Because his eyes retain something of the honesty from his Maoist youth, it is there that we can find the true expression of his anger, or the impression of that unjust and unworthy, the mean something, that is the cause of his anger, this sacred hatred. It is precisely from the anxious look which flickered in the depths of his eyes that I got the impression that there was something more than the ordinary political bluff – there was a more personal and deeply-nested primitive anger that his other bodily functions had tried to conceal; something about the disproportion between the number of different points which his body successively and at once occupied, the shiver of the shoulders, the tremor of the voice, the jelly-beat of the face, the meaningfully idiotic smile – they somehow adverted to the anger glimmering from the depths of his eyes.

But this chameleon, Mr. Barroso, is a good choice to lead Europe, for he personally, in one man, covers the whole ideological specter of Europe, which is the same as concluding that he does not have any

ideology at all, or that is, that he has the European ideology. In him the Global Elite found the best European politician that money can buy. – And dumbfounded to even contemplate the fact that he had become the President, he has learnt one lesson in life: to be grateful and loyal to his master's voice.

Now this is the Barroso that I want to tell that democracy is not a thing.

## **Foucault's notion of power applied to democracy**

Democracy is the name for a system – (I use the word system but I need to alert to the misconceptions this word might cause as it points to the wrong analogy of thingly processes, and therefore I stress that in this context, in social sciences, we should understand the word system as meaning 'the complex interactions between people') – of deliberate attempts to affect power relations, hence democracy could be defined, or rather understood, only in terms relating to the underlying power. - Again I note that I characterized the system of consisting of 'deliberate attempts' but this, in fact, points to another problem: the idea of conceiving all from the perspective of deliberate actions, while in reality most of what affects democracy is a result of complex interrelations in all spheres of social life, and it is to a large degree only the overall conditions of life in society that gives rise to – or prevents – democratic competition, while the quality of democracy (good or bad democracy) is a function of all these conditions in their infinite variances.

I would say that democracy is an aspect of the same phenomena that we call power, in a way they are mirror images of one another, from one point of view we describe what we see as power and from the another point of view we describe it with the

notion democracy, the processes which affect power. But when we really try to contemplate the issue with an aim of getting to the finest analytical details, then we are drawn into a most veritable hermeneutical circle, continuously peeling off layers of surface notions, seeing how one aspect of democracy refers to another aspect of power and so on, until we really understand that democracy and power are only names for two different perspectives on the same issue, perspectives on the same social practices, and we will understand that each new aspect of democracy which we consider can only be understood in relation to another aspect of power, and so on in endless details on all aspects of democracy and power, from the minute considerations up to these grand notions themselves.

But this is not how learned men understand democracy – they do not relate it to the notion power, they do not relate it to anything else either; in fact they do not relate, because in their thingly worldview there are no relations they just claim like in any language-game what is their superficial artistic vision on the word democracy - and this artistic vision they call science (while a more precise investigation and analysis of the nature of this vision would yield the diagnosis scientific hallucination). And all they achieve in terms of analysis is to muddle into the academic history of the concept ‘democracy’ – mandatory references to Ancient

Greece and Athens, Machiavelli (regarding him even with more complete misunderstanding than what is the customary in science), Montesquieu (the icon for all those that lack any capacity to think clear, for no fault of the baron Montesquieu himself, the fault is with the reader – reader? – No there are no readers, they do not read his work, they have an impression of what Montesquieu is from the two paragraph notes from secondary school history text books, and endless references in the Academy to the name Montesquieu, but they do not bother to study what he in fact said, and in connection with what, in which circumstances); Rousseau and the Social Contract get high rankings in academic jargon (although nobody cares to consider that the “social contract” is only a fiction, a figure of speech, and greatly deformed at that). –As other milestones of democracy they quote the Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, the US Constitution and the Fifth Amendment and other such anecdotal evidence that find their way to the trivial pursuits of science. And all these terms are to be crowned by ‘Parliamentarism’ which sounds, for them, like the ultimate synonym for ‘Democracy’.

I claim that democracy is more than these anecdotal references to documents and men we know from history, much-much more, and what it is can only be understood against the background of looking to what power is.

Now with power we are lucky, because unlike democracy, where we cannot enlist the support of any authority past or present, with ‘power’ we may turn to Foucault, Michel Foucault, the French philosopher and historian who commands an acclaimed position in the history of Western thinking and, what more, a favorable influence on that<sup>1</sup>. – Now if all those who admire the work of Foucault would pose to think, to contemplate on what he says, then they would also launch themselves in a position to understand the concept of democracy that I champion. To illustrate Foucault’s ideas of power and set the background for understanding the correlation between power and democracy I will below quote from and comment on a passage where Foucault presents his conception of power.<sup>2</sup>

Foucault defines power both in terms of what he considers it to be and what he considers it not to be,

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<sup>1</sup> Although I have to note that unfortunately Michel Foucault was not able to completely free himself from the Marxist oriented so-called post-modernistic thinking with its class theories, and remained therefore to a large extent hostage to those prevailing conspiracy theories in accordance with which a metaphysical capitalist class was conspiring against the rest of humanity

<sup>2</sup> I quote from Foucault 1990, pp. 92 – 97. For the clarity of presentation the text is somehow altered from the original translation.

or rather those aspects of the notion ‘power’ which traditionally first come to mind but which he rejects as mere surface aspects. – “By power I do not mean Power as a group of institutions and mechanisms to ensure subjugation of citizen to the state”, Foucault says. – “I do not mean either a mode of subjugation in the form of a rule, as opposed to subjugation to violence”, he continues and adds that he does not either “have in mind a general system of dominance exerted by one group over another...not a system that through its effects would pervade the entire social body”.

After these disintegrating observations on what power is not Foucault says: “It seems to me that power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies.” - Foucault’s style of writing is affected by the Continental metaphysical traditions going

back to Hegel and the Marxists, and therefore it may sometimes be difficult for a reader not versed in these traditions to decipher the meaning of phrases like “force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate”, and to understand why these “force relations” appear in the text as if they would depict some physical entities, but nevertheless I would think that a reader positively inclined to understanding the meaning will do it. From the above paragraph the important message to understand is that Foucault describes a situation where a large, infinite, amount of stimulations stem from an unknown number of sources (“multiplicity of force relations”), and that he tells that the way these stimulations affect people is not linear or hierarchical but rather the result of infinite variances (“ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses...”), and that all the power relations can be seen to form a system, but not an orderly one, not a predictable one, and by no means a perfect one (“thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from another”). This is similar to one of the most important scientific postulates of Proust: “An image presented to us by life brings with it, in a single moment, sensations which are in fact multiple and heterogeneous.”<sup>1</sup>

Foucault: “Power’s condition of possibility, or in any case the viewpoint which permits one to understand

its exercise, even in its more ‘peripheral’ effects, and which also makes it possible to use its mechanisms as a grid of intelligibility of the social order, must *not be sought in the primary existence of a central point, in a unique source of sovereignty from which secondary and descendent forms would emanate*; it is the moving substrate of force relations which by virtue of their inequality, constantly engender states of power, but the latter are always local and unstable.” – In above paragraph I supplied the italics to highlight what I find as the most important aspect in it i.e. Foucault’s stress that there is no ‘central point’, no one leader or leading body on the top of a pyramid.

He speaks of ‘the omnipresence of power’ whereby he means that power is not something that one person subjects another person to, but rather a bundle of complex relations, or as Foucault says “it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere”. - Foucault rejects the simplistic perception of power as a mere hierarchical relation between superiors and subordinates, and he says “it is in this sphere of force relations that we must try to analyze the mechanisms of power. In this way we will escape from the system of Law-and-Sovereign which has captivated political thought for such a long time...”

<sup>1</sup> In Search of Lost Time, Time Regained, p. 289



Although Foucault does not state it in the same terminology as I developed for Expressions and Interpretations, I think his conception agrees with mine in accordance with which power should not be seen as a ‘thing’, not anything existing, but life mirrored from the perspective of the notion ‘power’, that power is a perception on those issues that are considered to affect power relations. The problem is that – as it is with all perceptions – power is viewed in very simplistic terms as e.g. a relation between a president and a people. Only very few have like Foucault been able to devote the issue as much thought as to note – similarly to his fellow countryman Marcel Proust – that all aspects of people’s interrelations (power being but one aspect of, or perspective on, these interrelations) are governed by, or is the result of – reflections on – endless, infinitesimally small aspects of life and the forces that affect life. We will not be able to advance in science before we for ever give up the simplistic world-view propped by the Academy and the Western educational system – a world-view based on the language of things and a mental picture which has not advanced a bit from base arithmetic and second grade geometry. – Somebody would need to write a Proustian volume on power and democracy and to include in the treatise all the aspects of life that are related to the topic, to fire a salvo of aspects demonstrating all the traits of social life which have to be included in the treatment, to destroy the myth of power and democracy as being kind of a logical

formulae, a view in accordance with which power perches on top of a social pyramid and spreads its wings down from there in accurate linear mathematical forms – and democracy correspondingly builds up from the base of the pyramid in linear forms to the top – and this while we do not even know who perches on the top, and whether the pyramid would be a completely different pyramid if all of a sudden the leader, perceived to exist on the summit, was to be replaced (as it clearly happens once in a while), if a totally new bird with new wings would sit on the top. For, after all, history is full of instances when there is a new leader, and yet it does not mean that the pyramid has altered, and correspondingly the social relations may alter even when a person formally on the top remains the same.

There are endless aspects of life that affect power relations, and there are endless power relations; just to name a few we may return to quote Foucault who said that “power comes from below; that is, there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations, and serving as a general matrix – no such duality extending from top down and reacting on more and more limited groups to the very depths of the social body. One must suppose rather that the manifold relationships of force that take the shape and come into play in the machinery of production, in families, limited groups, and institutions, are the basis for wide-ranging effects

of cleavage that run through the social body as a whole...”. – But, even more: power is not even in these relations, power is in the eyes of the beholder as perceptions of viewing these human relations, and even so power, or the various competing views on power, are kind of internal aspects of these relations, or rather they are in their resulting outcomes, in the reflections on life that these relations bring about, or as Foucault says “relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships – economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relation – but are immanent in the latter”. – Not in a position of exteriority, but immanent – all in one holistic whole.

And I agree with Foucault who says that “power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of ever changing relations.”

From yet another angle Foucault says that the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through social institutes and structures “without being exactly localized in any of them... they traverse any social stratifications and individual unities.”

Foucault concludes: “Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it certain strength we are

endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society... it does not result from the choice or decision of a particular individual subject; let us not look for the headquarters that presides over the perceived system; neither the caste which governs, nor the groups which control the state apparatus, nor those who make the most important economic decisions direct the entire network of power that functions in society.” – Foucault says that power is all over, and yet nowhere, because power is not a thing, but merely social practices that we view from a certain point of view. – One who is willing to accept Foucault’s notion that ‘power - is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society’ will have made quite significant advances in acquiring a new sort of vision for aspect-seeing, for seeing the infinite variances of life, and understanding the philosophy of social practices and interpretation of feelings.

I think that Foucault would agree with me asserting that power is in the social practices, traditions, encoded in language, in personal relations, in religion, ideology, literature, sexual conceptions, superstition, propaganda, in the arrangements of journalists’ housing needs, in economic gain, avarice, hatred – and (but less) in love.

**When power is as complex as this, then certainly its remedy, i.e. democracy, cannot be any less complex.** Thus democracy is not a question of simply holding elections, because elections can be fair and telling of people's choice only if all the underlying conditions – all which Michel and I listed above – are fair and such that they provide for a free and pluralistic process of democratic competition. This is why I so wholeheartedly oppose the hypocrite view on democracy promoted by the sanctimonious propaganda media, Financial Times, The Economist, Washington Post, The Telegraph, and the likes – and their lackey, Mr. Barroso. Democracy is not a question of the survival of the richest and the most audacious, the ones that have the means to buy the media coverage and stage street protests, but democracy is about all having equal opportunity to freedom of speech, and a right to propose one's own ideas for the democratic agenda, or a right even to simply tacitly agree with the ideas and actions of political leaders.

And yet, a majority of the world's political elite is trying to convince us that democracy does not mean anything else than the periodic conducting of elections. They forget that even the USSR was democratic with that measure; in the USSR they also periodically called the people to the ballots to confirm the monopolist. [Although they also admit a role for the “free press”, which they define as ‘any privately owned press no matter how monopolistic and with

any level of corruption’. - Maybe they mean that democracy in the USSR would have been complete if instead of the state the Soviet media was owned by one or two local Murdochs.]

The ballots are, of course, decisive, but only as a part of the overall framework for a competitive democracy, as the culmination of fair democratic competition. There are instances when it is more harmful for democracy (the sovereign power of the people) to conduct ballots in circumstances where all the conditions for a democratic choice are absent, than to implement other mechanisms that better serve the requirements of the democratic choices (the change of the system how governors are appointed in Russia is a case in point).

Now, keeping in mind this analysis into the essence of power, and its alter ego, democracy, and the infinite variances in which they are manifested and interrelated, I invite the reader to consider the ideas of democratic competition, which I present below, as guidelines for how to understand democracy as a function of all the conditions for competition on all levels and depths of social interaction, and how to organize the democratic competition in society (to the extent that we can at all speak about deliberately organizing them). – The reader should emerge from this with an understanding that democracy is like a fabric woven together from all the different threads

of life- threads that entwined with each other in infinite variances form the most variegated patterns of social interaction, all threads constantly in flux, and all patterns constantly blurred by other aspects of life – and with the understanding that we can grasp and feel the consistence of this fabric called democracy only if we put it against all the other fabrics of life.

## Competition and democracy

In Expressions and Interpretations I chose the word Competitionism as a term for encoding my idea of what empowers all and everything in our social world. I built the idea of Competitionism bottom-up from the basic notions of philosophy, for describing that all in life is subject to competition, ever on-going competition inherent in all aspects of life, equally in individual dealings on a personal level as on a macro level in the economy and politics. Competition is what solidifies all aspects of life, which merges individual actions to social patterns of behavior by way of averaging out the extremes; and this smoothing of multitude of individual behavior into relatively stabile social practices is always a result of a historic process best depicted as a process similar to the image of a hermeneutical circle – but here the idea of a hermeneutical process is used not only for interpreting the reality but also for understanding how present reality is formed through historic processes where one stimulation leads to another stimulation, to kind of a counter stimulation, each indicating the range of the possible. – And the stimulations can be thought of as arguments, which return us once again to the competition of arguments, where each stimulation, each argument in a free competition serves to define the range of possible arguments (this is one more manifestation of the forces of pain and pleasure in action, in the search of a balance) – When

there is no free competition - or when the competition is more distorted than the customary – then the range of the possible, or the acceptable, is blown up, then the traditions, the existing social practices, will fail to contain the quality of arguments which as a consequence turn coarser and coarser; and peaceful persuasion based on the merits of the argument will give way to violence. This is how the arguments of violence are born, how murder, revolutions and wars come about. – And this is how our world has been shaped. This is how the European democracy (this thing) was made through murder, wars, revolutions, through immeasurable sorrow – sorrow that even mathematics, the language of social science fiction, cannot render intelligible - through the Guillotine - the veritable start of the glorious revolution, that parted 40 thousand human beings with their heads, an achievement the French still nourish with precious pride, as one of the most eloquent arguments for democracy resulting in a Corsican opportunist proclaiming himself Emperor – and all the French believing the hallucination, like the fairy-tale in reverse: not an Emperor without clothes, but clothes without an Emperor - and starting an endless row of wars and human suffering leaving millions dead on the glorious road to European democracy -1848 more revolutions and killing and man-made misery in France and all over Europe; 1871 more misery in France, 17,000 killed to commemorate the new dawn of European democracy, 1914-1918 Finnish Civil

War with 37,000 dead including casualties at the war fronts and deaths from political terror campaigns and in prison camps; 1914 -1918 World War I 15 million people dead; the Weimar Republic, the road which brought yet new milestones – and tombstones – to the glorious path of the European democracy, now 60 – 80 million people dead in World War II. In between these two most glorious milestones of European democracy there was 1922 the March on Rome and Mussolini's fascist coup; 1923 Hitler's first strike, but not last; the coup d'état and dictatorship established in Portugal; 1933 Hitler's appointment as Chancellor of Germany; 1936 – 1939 Spanish Civil War with close to 1 million dead, followed by the dictatorship of Franco until 1975; 1944 – 1949 Greek Civil War 1945 Atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki–the most remarkable achievements of the democratic civilization of the United States of America reported to have been committed as an argument for the sake of European democracy; installation of a series of unelected socialist governments in Eastern Europe (later as a result of a new and fresh look at the data of natural geographic renamed Central Europe), countries which showed the first sign of democracy in later 1980's.

That is the glorious history of European democracy – something that the eurodeputies, the journalists at the Financial Times and Mr. Barroso think that only Europeans (i.e. all the Europeans west of Narva as

they define it) are capable of – and they are right. – It is only the living – not the dead – that think that all this is so damn glorious. It is only as a result of this European insane competition of arguments where bullets, gas, bombs, and death have been the main arguments under the last 500 years that the Europeans now enjoy the balance of terror that they take to be democracy, and rightly so, it is democracy, but a democracy built on blood. – It seems that people with such traditions are the very last ones that should come forward with their arrogant claims to teach the Russians how to build democracy, for Russia is a country which has not spent 500 years and 100 million dead on their path to democracy. The Russians peacefully liberated themselves from the European ideology, the Marxist yoke, which destroyed in 70 years all the collective political traditions, and yet the Russians built a new society in record time, entirely peacefully, in 10 – 15 years a functioning society with a functioning democracy. Mind you, Mr. Barroso, this is not the same kind of democracy as they practice in Europe, but neither is the Russian road to democracy the same that started with heads rolling off the Guillotine. – And the Russian is not the same kind of democracy that they have in the United States, and neither is the American similar to the European, not is it the same that they have in Brazil, and in Europe they do not have one but many forms of democratic government – although all gradually being suffocated by the resurgent Holy European Empire,

which will build yet many memorials to the beautiful word, democracy.

Like the things in nature social practices take shape and gain strength by the effects of competition. The economy, and how we understand it as a free and competitive market system, serve as a case in point to illustrate how social practices are reflections of the efforts of an infinite number of people, people whose efforts are the more fruitful the more equal and free they are. By today most people will agree – after the socialist experiments in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with planned economy and regulations – that in the economy competition and freedom is the decisive constituent force. Therefore I invite the reader to try come to terms with all the processes which affect the economy (the constituent elements of a successful economy) and then to mirror this insight into the economy to all the other perceptions on social life. At the end of an honest contemplation everyone should be able to apprehend that the same processes (elements) that affect the economy affect all other spheres of life, and furthermore now especially the parallel with democracy should become evident, for what is the essence of democracy if not competition! In the human interactions we call democracy there is a constant competition of all and everything, a competition of arguments on all levels, in all aspects of life, and it is this competition that builds up to and that cumulates in democratic decision making, now

in a mirror image, or rather a second dimension of Foucault's conception of power.

In competition people's historic social traditions, or the competing views on them, are balanced one against another, to create a competitive balance. In mature political systems, like the Western European states - (for mature they are, the question is only whether they've not turned dead-ripe) - this historic balance prevents people from seeing that it is in fact all about competition, now that the competition has been restricted within a tighter range of competing views (not least by the considerations of *commel-faut*, peer control and conceived good manners) – arguments are more and more refined within a limited range of dissonance - a situation where there is a mainstream of arguments that all can agree upon, and therefore the arguments in competition are fine-tuned to nuances that are not so readily perceptible as they are in societies where the competition has started a fresh from a vacuum like it is e.g. in Russia of today, and especially as it was in Russia of 10 years ago. The problem with the Soviet Union was the destruction of past traditions and the lack of competition in all aspects of social life (this, more than the ideology itself, was to a greater extent the problem), and thus Russia's dilemma and struggle after the fall of the Soviet state was to build the best possible society without having recourse to all of the best traditions of its own past, and not having the luxury of the

shared experience from best practices of the world. – Nevertheless, by today Russia has covered a lot of distance and it is fair to say that Russia has regained time, enough knowledge experience to merit to be considered a democracy among democracies – in a world where there is a long way to go for all societies to reach the ideal of democratic competition.

Democratic Competition means democratic and competition on each level, from the human individual to nations (states). In all societies, all political systems there is a democratic competition similarly like there is an economy in all societies, but as with the economy only a free market economy is a functioning economy and so with democracy only in conditions of a free (from all constraints) democratic competition can a well-functioning democracy come about. The competition has to be a free competition, and a competition equal for all, a process where all people have to have a chance to voice their opinions on equal terms. This is of course an ideal, similar to the notion 'perfect market' of economics. But, while we label it as an ideal, it does not mean that we should not strive towards that ideal, and we may indeed approach the goal where all people have an equal voice and equal opportunity to make the voice count - maybe eventually, at the end of a historic road that mankind has entered upon, only a few aspects will separate us from this ideal. The distance between contemporary reality and

the ideal can be shortened by conscious efforts of a political leadership to tear down the obstacles to free competition in all social spheres. The process could be hastened through the implementation of some kind of broad competition laws - similar to the anti-trust (anti-monopoly) legislation we are familiar with from the economic - to be applied to all fields of social life to affect all aspects of life, to all social relations where there is a particular problem with free competition caused by abuse of a dominant position in society. – In an ideal competitive democracy there would be a truly equal opportunity and equal voice for each and every individual. Individuals - this is the crucial point: democracy is about individuals organizing their mutual dealings in society, states (nations) on the other hand are always unequal and cannot be but unequal; the states are sovereign, but all states do not command the same influence on the exterior – and cannot command - simply because states are not generic entities; ‘states’ are purely legal constructions which all have developed in the context of the own specific history and legal traditions; they encompass territories of different sizes, situated on non-comparable locations, endowed with a climate and natural resources of different composition, all leading to completely different living conditions, challenges and opportunities; they have different population size, ethnic composition, languages and cultures. States are bundles, legal constructions that capture the living conditions specific to certain people

in certain conditions, and nothing except for certain ritual surface notions merit to compare one state with another. – And these issues are confused by the most basic ritual conception i.e. the term ‘state’ in itself, for while there are between ‘states’ only similarities and dissimilarities like family resemblances the term ‘state’ has created in the thingly minds of people an idea of there being these fixed entities that behave like people and are like people, and are treated by scholars and journalists alike as if they indeed were people with a mind and a will. This is why the journalists may say: “Finland supports Estonia”, “The European Union has to speak in one voice”, “Russia is wrong” or “The US rejects Russia’s concern...” or “UK wants beerdrinkers’ fingerprints”. –States are not generic entities, particular cases of one species, but rather like legal constructions, something to be compared with legal agreements which regulate similar issues but which still remain particular to each individual case, like for example two agreements on acquisition of separate real estate, one by which the Smiths acquire a house in London and one whereby the Wessons acquire one in Glasgow; while we can say that both are agreements on purchase of a home, but no matter how similar the agreements may seem for a legal scholar there is nothing similar in them for the Smiths and the Wessons, for the Smiths cannot move to the house in Glasgow and the Wessons cannot move to the Smiths’ house in London, and the sellers of the house in London could not care less what somebody



is up to with a house in Glasgow, the terms of these agreements do not have anything to do with each other; but still the scholar may say that both agreements are under British law – and be wrong in this too – and then we can change our example and say that in the other cases the house was bought by the Boulangers in Paris, and then there are nothing left of the similarities except for the irrelevancies of science. – States, like legal agreements on various topics between various parties, cannot enter in any kind of symmetric relation with each other which is the necessary condition for democratic competition, competition between equal individuals. - States are manifestations of democracy between people but the states as such cannot be subjects of democratic competition. And, further, therefore between states it is the ideal of democratic competition that has to serve as a model – while not the mechanism - for organizing a functioning international co-operation: a non-monopolistic competition in a multipolar world free of any social, cultural, ideological, and economic influence exerted by a dominant hegemony.

## **Academic anecdotal definitions of democracy**

Most educated people come as far as to realize that the word ‘democracy’ comes from old Greek. It is from the word ‘demokratia’, probably derived from ‘demos’ meaning ‘people’ or ‘region’ and ‘kratia’ meaning ‘power’, ‘rule’ or ‘strength’, which add up to the idea of people ruling (it is interesting to note that the notions power and strength reappear here). – These old Greek words, though, do not throw any further light on the essence of democracy, on the question what are the necessary elements for a people’s rule to become reality. We have to look elsewhere for the substance and ask what democracy has historically ideally meant and what should it ideally mean. Merriam-Webster’s dictionary definition is a good start saying: ‘a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections’ [We may note that by these criteria the European Union is the first to fall out from the club of democracies].

Many of the Greek city states created some kind of direct democracy, Athens being the largest among them stands out as an example. In Athens the democratic institutions were a legislative assembly (itself also called the demos); a court; and a kind

of executive council (boule) of 500 representatives, which was responsible for drafting preparatory legislation for consideration by the assembly, overseeing the meetings of the assembly, and in certain cases executing legislation as directed by the assembly. The 500 men – for they were all men - were selected by a lottery, held each year among the free men – for not all men were free in Athens - over thirty years of age.

We note from above that in Athens, the system which is the most cherished as the ideal image of democracy, half the population was excluded because they were not men, and yet other men were excluded because they were not free and were *subjugated to the free and democratic men in order to serve as their slaves*. This was a society where the overwhelming majority or some 85% of the inhabitants were excluded from political power by the most cruel and inhuman actions, and therefore we should ask ourselves what kind of democracy there possibly could be under such conditions! And in fact we see that there was no democracy in Athens, there was no authoritarian self-rule of one despot, a dictator or a king, but there was a non-democratic rule of few privileged men. So we shall note that after all ‘democracy’ has not been passed down to us from the ancient Greeks, and that in fact what we have from them is nothing more than this beautiful word democracy, a word like any word which can be filled with any content

as long as the content is backed by authority. We see that even in the very heart of what is today thought of as the cradle of democracy lies this fiction. While the Athenian political system certainly had some laudable features of an advanced representative government it would not stand to any comparison with a majority of the governments in today’s world. And what this also means is that we should be a bit more skeptical when interpreting past and remote traditions; we can look at the Athenian democracy as a historic curiosity, but not a model for democracy. We may give credence to the achievements of the ancient Athenians when we consider their traditions against the background of the given circumstances. And it is precisely these ‘given circumstances’ that we should always keep in mind when assessing the traditions of another country, another culture, keep in mind that theirs is different from ours, and ours different from theirs, that we may frown at the habits of others, but also that the others may frown at us, and that sooner or later our descendants will wonder how primitive we were in our social practices. We have not reached perfection, and we are not even anywhere close to it. Clearly some systems are better than others, clearly some people have more advanced social practices (in certain aspects of life), but all the achievements should be held to measure against the competitive circumstances of a given country, how far the country has progressed in relative prosperity, economic strength, security from external enemies,

de-monopolization of the economic power, decriminalization, the development of the judiciary, the development of responsible, non-corrupt, and professional journalists (not to mention non-corrupt and freedom loving owners of media corporations), political traditions, etc.

### **Athens was not a historic exception**

The Greek system comes down to our times as ‘the birth of democracy’ mainly due to the rich literary traditions which have enabled to keep the ancient Greek culture as a direct part of the Western cultural heritage, and not least by the influence of the Roman Empire and the Catholic Church, and later by the universities and then the European secondary school system. – In a more balanced world the influence of the Greek culture would have merited a fraction of what it has been assigned through the Academy and the authoritarian institutions of Europe, and instead our teachers and historians should have drawn from the histories of various European nations, not to mention from the great civilizations of the world.

Through history many other peoples of the world have governed their societies by means of common decision making and equal rights. For example in the Nordic and Germanic societies, there were governing assemblies for solving disputes and making political decisions, the so-called thing or *ting*. The ting was the assembly of the free men of a country (representing hundred households). The tings formed in essence a network where the local tings were represented at the ting for a larger area, a province or land. At the ting, disputes were solved and political decisions were made. The tings met at regular intervals, legislated and elected the leaders (chieftains, kings). The tings

were also courts that judged according to the laws passed on in the oral traditions of the society in systems displaying the same social stability that the Anglo-Saxon scholars call rule-of-law. – In Kievan Russia, before the Mongol invasion, all cities had a democratic town assembly, called the *veche*. All free male citizens took part in the veche that met to discuss and decide on the most important matters of the city, such as matters of war and peace, law, appointment or expulsion of rulers.

World history abound of evidence of various forms of democratic rule, which seems to have been the historic norm; anthropologists have furnished us yet with a multitude of other examples showing that most cultures have aspired towards and developed political systems of common decision making which should be regarded as democratic (at least by the same standards by which the Athenian system is measured).

Yet even today we do not know what ‘democracy’ should in fact mean; ‘democracy’ is like so many of our cherished mental images, - these ideas in the mind we think of as ‘things’ and nourish in our hearts - , perceptions we care for by mentally wiping and polishing them as e.g. by sprinkling the conception of democracy once in a while with a little bit of Athens and a little bit of Montesquieu; perceptions kept in high esteem and fiercely defended, while in fact being totally ignorant to the substance, to

the real essence of the perception or concept, not seeing that all we have are words which in reality like hallucinations take shape in the mind only to be filled with content consisting of our most sacred moral and patriotic prejudice . – It is only in the mind that the concept democracy is converted into a picture of that pompous building on the Capitol Hill, or the Big Ben, the Clock Tower at Westminster, London, or prime minister Tony Blair smilingly, next to his joyful wife Cherie, looking out from the door opening at Downing Street 10...Contemporary understanding of democracy has not advanced much past these mental images so much reminding of the stickers depicting the beloved fairy-tale characters that little girls collect and trade, just like scholars exchange their views on Montesquieu, or Mr. Barroso contemplating the mental image of democracy, which he thinks is a thing, kind of a ball that the European diplomats toss from one to another, and want to export to and impose on people they consider less fortunate, and people who they considered endowed with a lesser capacity to gain the deep insight they consider themselves having reached.

## **The European traditions of democracy are of more recent origin than Mr. Barroso's grandmother**

And how old are the European democratic traditions? Very few come to think how recent, in fact, phenomena the European democracies of today are; people talk about 'European democracy' as if it would have been around forever, at least since, Plato and Aristotle, while it is not older than the grandmother of Mr. Barroso. Anything resembling the standards that people place on a democratic rule (in the meaning free and equal vote) has come about only with the turn of the 20th century. The extension of the right to vote to all citizens – which we have to regard as the real test for a true representative democracy – is even more recent: Australia 1901, Finland 1906, Norway 1913, Germany 1918, UK 1918 (or perhaps 1928), Sweden 1921, France 1948, Greece 1952. This is to mention but a few examples. Consider the years of fascism and wars which for decades interrupted the democratic process and you should really be able to appreciate what a young phenomenon we are talking about. – And then against this background it is amusing to here the European herd, at the European Parliament (which is not a mere talking shop) and other gatherings of supreme political intelligence tell how "Russians have never learnt democracy, they always have had a need for a strong hand..." – as if a few decades of democratic

experience (trial and error) would make a difference in the historical perspective. And while on that they forget, that even during the years of Marxism Russia was much more advanced than any of them – that is, based on their own values – not mine. In 1917 Russia had chosen to implement the hottest thing, the most advanced social model, recommended by the majority of scientist in the European Universities, Marxism, which even today the majority of the contemporary eurodeputies admire as an ideal utopian social model. – I propose that the eurodeputies should just calm down, look at the facts, work hard to turn the EU back to the democratic orbit, and rest assured that Russians can take care of their own commonwealth; implement the choice the Russian people made in 1991 on their own free will, without any outside help nor interference.

## This is Democratic Competition

In this essay I discuss democratic competition, the ideas whereby I want to demonstrate that democracy in reality is a part of the great human enterprise of living together, part of the eternal quest to avoid pain and reach out for pleasure, social practices formed in the competition of arguments. Democracy is a certain grand political perception on all the aspects of social practices pertaining to the joint quest for pleasure, which is a road lined by pain.

We return to Merriam-Webster's definition of democracy: "a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections" This is a definition of 'representative democracy', the question on who gets to rule the 'official governing bodies'. – My fundamental aim is to help to bring about the apprehension that this is only one side of the coin, or one side of the Rubik's Cube; one side of the mental puzzle. – Already this first issue is immensely difficult, and covers such spheres as: 'what are fair elections?', 'is there equal access for all to be candidates?'; 'the role of the governing bodies', 'majority vs. minority'. – 'Majority and 'Minority' are more of those metaphysical entities; people seem to think that there could be an entity called 'Majority' and another entity called 'Minority',

and the one entity Majority would consist of people sharing the same opinions and values on each and every issue, and the Minority, correspondingly, would consist of a smaller amount of people, but equally unison in opposing all the same ideas that the Majority support. – But in reality there are no such Majorities and Minorities, only millions of people that continuously hold millions of opinions on all aspects of life, and all these millions of opinions are in infinite variances directed towards millions of preferences which lay behind all their choices. You can find majorities or minorities only on one or another issue, and even so only for the very moment a question is asked – at the longest.

Democracy is not just about voting, and nominations, democracy is about everyday life, of taking care of the common and particular issues, each day. - The Marxists and socialists traditionally argued that the systems of electoral democracies (which they termed 'liberal or bourgeois democracies') were integral parts of the capitalist class-based systems and that they therefore were not, and could not be, fully democratic or participatory. They claimed that in the "bourgeois democracies" only the most financially powerful people would hold political power. – This criticism is not totally misplaced, and although I will not in this essay deal with the problems of those times, the alternatives and the outcomes, it should be noted that these bourgeois democracies and their adherents have been proven right in relation to the

socialists. However somehow the socialist critic has to be considered and understood in order to form a comprehensive conception of democratic competition. This is like one of the situations that Proust described in the Search saying that “certain comparisons which are false if we start from these as premises may well be true if we arrive at them as conclusions.”<sup>1</sup>

In this connection we do better to leave the European Union outside the discussion altogether, simply because it does not qualify as a democracy to start with. The EU is a confederation of states, ruled by diplomatic conventions, more or less transparently (less, to my opinion). The aim of the EU is to recreate a powerful economic-military Empire in Europe in the spirit of the Holy Roman Empire. The problem the European politicians face is to create a façade of democratic legitimacy for the Empire. The draft constitution for the Empire shows that there cannot be even talk about any democracy in the EU, because any sensible person will understand that constitutions are documents governing the relations between people, but the European Constitution is drafted to govern relations between metaphysical entities called states. States cannot be the participants of constitutions; it is the other way around: people’s constitutions create the states. In an attempt to

deliberate fraud, to give an aura of democracy, mentions of real humans have been scattered here and there in the draft constitution, as if to decorate a room with flower arrangements or pepper a meal for added flavor (pepper the people to be swallowed). – The EU can possibly not become a state ruled by democratic elections and procedures, but it seems that for the key architects of the new Empire it is not even intended to be so; instead I think that that the EU is designed by those who nourish the ideology of one-world-government, a world ruled by the global elite. We can see, or, in fact, we are prevented from seeing - we can guess – we should find out - which are the interest groups that influence the EU decision making; who are those behind this all. – Though, one thing is loud and clear: his master’s voice comes from the Financial Times of London.

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<sup>1</sup> In Search of Lost Time, Time Regained p. 305

## Competitive Justice

A real democratic system integrates competitive justice in the concept of democracy, in the democratic competition. – Competitive justice is the notion of law as a competition of arguments, where the competition of arguments takes place in all spheres of human life every day.

When a society is not sufficiently competitively democratic and free, and when all the other competitive constituents in society do not function properly then the outcome of justice is unsatisfactory (which is the situation more or less all over the world – any perception of superior justice in the West is purely owing to comparisons with places where it is worse). Only individual human beings can lay a claim on justice (but just people in a just society will have to guarantee a just treatment to all other animals as well).

Whatever is called law deals with the normative expressions and interpretations which interact in producing justice. A comparison of law and justice with medicine and health could be illustrative. Now, I argue that law should be about promoting justice, in the same way as medicine should be about promoting health. Hereby I stress that the prevalent theories of law (the fallacious theories which I criticize) - and especially the Anglo-American theories which are

overly focused on the precedents of the supreme courts - can be compared with an idea whereby we would think that health is produced (exclusively) on the surgeons operating desk (law in a supreme court, health on the operating desk). Instead I stress that competitive justice is a continuous process going on in all aspects of life, all the time, between all people. In law proper the two most important constituents of competitive justice are the competition between normative arguments in a court (of all levels) and between normative arguments in politics; the latter resulting in strong normative arguments called statutes (or laws). Both these particular competitive processes function far from perfectly. The main obstacles for grasping the true nature of law and justice and which hold up the free normative competition of arguments have to do with the fact that there is so miserably little understanding for the fact that law is nothing except a competition of arguments manifested in social practices, and with the corresponding mental fallacy to adhere to the prevailing primitive anthropomorphic conception of law (the idea to linguistically and mentally treat law and the provision of law as thingly entities, to which misconception they have been catapulted by way of their grammatical position as nouns forming a class of words that are combined with determiners to serve as the subject, the doer of an action, an agent).

The courts and the 'lawmaker' (parliaments and other



‘sovereigns’) are in a constant competition about the right to issue strong normative arguments (or ‘make laws’ as they say). In the United States this is admitted in legal theory and in practice, while in Europe they want to pretend that this is not the case. This very competition between courts and ‘lawmakers’ is the basis for a well-functioning society and this is the state of affairs any society should aim for. – An honest recognition of this would advance the cause of justice

There is no real separation of powers in the systems of European parliamentarism. – In Europe the legislative and executive branch are in fact one and the same, while in the United States, on the contrary, these branches are separated: The President is elected by the people and the government is appointed by the President. – The European brand of parliamentarism leads to a situation which could be called if not monopoly then at least ‘abuse of dominant market position’, and hence it is a distortion of justice – and a challenge to the fundamental conditions of life, a challenge to life itself. – To advance democracy in Europe the thrust in the democratic process has to be on breaking up the EU power monopoly and restore democratic competition.

More important than the division between the executive and the legislative is the separation of powers between the legislative and the judiciary. The

normative squeeze caused by the non-competitiveness of parliamentary democracy can be broken only by guaranteeing a truly independent judiciary. The judiciary should be independent to challenge any strong normative arguments issued by the parliament (so-called ‘laws’ or ‘statutes’) – the fact of the matter is that in many countries even the positive law recognizes this right on the level of constitutions (but the judges are not brave enough to oppose the parliament and render themselves into the service of justice). In the United States the judiciary and the legislator are placed in an open competition.

The true solution is to make the judiciary in reality independent and receiving its mandate from the people, but without any direct elections of the individual judges. A solution of the dilemma between the democratic control and the independency of the judiciary could be accomplished by instituting an elected public judiciary chamber which would not be subordinated to any other authority than the people.

## Laissez-laissez-faire

In my view a communist state is an extreme form of monopoly capitalism; it is capitalism where all the capital is concentrated formally in the ownership of the people, but de facto in the hands of a small circle of leading elite. Correspondingly the idea of unlimited monopolistic capitalism is very close to the idea of a communistic state capitalism. Both should be rejected. And to bring order in the perceptions I propose to replace the term ‘capitalism’ with ‘market economy’ whenever we have in mind the system of non-monopolistic democratic market economy. ‘Capitalism’ is better reserved to serve as a derogatory word denoting an unwanted and baneful system which is contrary to the interests of a democratic people.

A free liberal economy used to be marked as laissez-faire until the term was converted to a pejorative word for describing something termed as “unrestrained capitalism”, yet later the adherents of socialist planned economies stamped with laissez-faire just any system of free economic activity, and so successful were they in this that today there is almost nobody left to dare to stand up for the idea of laissez-faire, which after all is just a description of the fundamental economic reality, and not only, because it is a fundamental description of all social practices.

Laissez-faire means ‘let them do’, and I take it to decipher as ‘give the people all the freedom to conduct their businesses as they deem it best done’, or “Stay out! Don’t interfere in people’s choices, and all will turn to the best”. And naturally, this freedom is the basis of the economy - as freedom is the basis for all human activity. Criticizing the idea of laissez-faire, people forget that the economy does not happen in a vacuum, it is a part of all other social activities such as law and politics, which practices in themselves impose restrictions on the economy, and therefore the economy as such is certainly not in need of any additional restrictions. – A mindful reader will note that in the preceding discussion I am trapped in the difficulties imposed by the language of things; I am forced to use the thingly grammar, the thingly terminology, to point out from the one side differences and the other side interrelations between ‘law’, ‘politics’ and ‘economy’, but all the same we should keep in mind that they are no different ‘things’ to start with, but only perceptions on the same social practices considered from different points of view. This in mind, nevertheless, we should in policy, in thinking, in theory, keep in mind that ‘economy’ is the perception of the ‘well-functioning machine’ and we should ensure that this machine keeps running smoothly and not shove spokes in the wheels of the economy any more than the economy is already burdened with all the considerations that stem from law, politics and environmental concerns. - The critics

do not understand that the problems in the economic sphere, and society at large, were quite different at the time when the ideas labeled 'laissez-faire' first emerged, and problems of later make have unduly been mixed up and confused with the original idea of laissez-faire, the idea of freedom.

On the contrary it is freedom that is at peril, economic freedom should not be restricted but enhanced. But economic freedom like all other manifestations of freedom means an active struggle for the conditions of freedom, and conditions of freedom are conditions of equal opportunity. In the economy this means that all have to have an equal opportunity to conduct business in a non-monopolistic environment; therefore in the economy free competition means a fight against monopolies and all those who abuse their dominant market position. Today the danger and the challenge is more than ever the increasing monopolization of all spheres of economic activity. For a free economy, and for free people, it is imperative to realize this threat and to actively oppose it. Therefore I would like to rename the concept capturing the idea of economic freedom under a new label 'laissez-laissez-faire' (with a double 'laissez'), where the additional 'laissez' points to the idea of an active and constant opposition to all abuse of dominant market position and monopolies in order to ensure that there would constantly be opportunities for a democratically equal competition

in the economy. The term would then mean: 'Make sure everyone can compete on equal terms'.

## Private Property and State Ownership

Time after time considering what are the most fundamental features of our social practices be it art, morality, law or whatever I find that at the end of the thoughts I have returned to the idea of competition. Whatever way we look at social life, whatever way we turn the aspects around we are always left with the idea that competition is the common denominator for all social practices (where we detect stagnation there the common denominator is lack of competition). I am convinced that all development (or change if we prefer a word with less positive connotation) comes about exclusively through competition - whether we want it or not. – The idea of competition is also the fundamental underlying reason which led me to postulate the philosophy of social practices: there is no other knowledge than the kind of knowledge that is reflected in social practices as a result of what people do; nobody has access to any superior knowledge over other people to any extent that would make a difference on a global scale. Knowledge, or what is thought of as knowledge, is exclusively a product of competition, and then all social practices are manifestations of social competition. A well-organized society is one where the social practices have developed and reached an air of dynamic stability – stability, for predictability and consistency – and dynamic for gradual, piecemeal change. A well-organized society is not a society in

which mathematical precision has been applied to draw geometrical models of subordination, rather a well-organized society is one where the conditions for competition have been successfully advanced in all spheres of life, where infinite variances have through the processes of competition been tuned in to relative *synchrony* – while the ultimate goal of a free competition of arguments and the ultimate reality could well be a perfect *harmony*.

Given these considerations I propose to update the notion of classical liberalism with the inclusion of new perspectives on how to view two of the most decisive aspects of the idea: one aspect is in regards to the treatment of private property; and the second aspect is about the treatment of economic monopolies.

Classical liberalism has given root to a religious-like belief in the idea that all property has to be in private ownership, while at the same time ignoring the need to stand up and fight against the pernicious influence of monopolies. Rejecting, as always, any sort of fixed ideas that are not supported by material considerations, I contrary to the classical idea, advocate a preference for private property, but approve of common ownership of strategically important resources or businesses. We all agree that it is normal that property can be in the joint ownership of two persons, and that it can be in the hands of 5

people, or 10, or 100 or thousands of owners and so on. But, if we accept common ownership by thousands of people, then I do not see any reason that we should not accept common ownership by all the people in a country; and no reason that we should reject the idea that the state, as a beneficiary for the people, would enter in the role of the owner of the common assets (which could well be compared with any other form of juridical trust arrangements). For example the national wealth in form of a country's energy and other natural resources may well best be put to serve the interests of all the people if they are owned by the people through the intermediary of state companies.

State ownership of strategic resources does not pose any kind of threat to the economy and social system of a society. State ownership is bad for the economy when the state is a big owner which would suffocate other economic activity, or when state's ownership would unduly extend to none-strategic areas of the economy, and when the 'strategic areas' are defined too broadly, or when the state is not sufficiently democratic leading to inadequate and non-transparent control of the management of the assets. On the contrary, given the necessary circumstances, state involvement in the ownership of productive assets to a certain degree may be altogether beneficial, for example we may take the case of state ownership of strategic natural resources and strategically important

capital intensive businesses which are beneficial for the creation of an overall competitive market economy with low taxes (a trend experienced in e.g. contemporary Russia). Whether to choose state ownership or not should not be based on any fettered and old fixed ideas but rather a choice based upon consideration of each particular case on its merits and its effects on the common good and the fundamental conditions of competition on all levels of society.

I stress that to my view monopolies, in most cases, are anomalies which have to be counteracted, but I also recognize that sometimes there are situations when monopolies may serve a beneficial function, this for example when there is no choice but to settle with a natural monopoly. In those cases where there is no alternative to a monopoly, then it is clear that a state run monopoly is preferable to a privately held monopoly - it is far more preferable that the people jointly through a state company enter the role of the owner than accepting that a few individuals amass vast influence over society as owners of monopoly corporations.

## The State and Civil Society

Some adherents of classical liberalism have historically been skeptical to real democracy and viewed it as a collectivist ideal, concerned with empowering the masses in the form of the state, whereas the liberalists themselves have been concerned with limiting the power of the state over the individual. With the idea of democratic competition this dilemma is eliminated; when we understand that democracy is not a thing, and that democracy is about the infinite power relations between all people in society, a constant competition – and in the ideal a free competition - then we understand that there cannot as such be any conflict of interest between the individual and the state, for the individual is for real, and the state is merely a metaphysical concept, designed to delimit and juridically arrange certain aspects of life of a large group of people. In a system of a competitive democracy the state is simply the normal legal environment for taking care of the common matters, and the individual participates in all aspects of the common matters to the extent of his interests in the democratic competition.

Today it is fashionable to speak about civil society, and the discussion seems to presuppose an antagonism between a state and civil society. This mere controversy shows how traditional democracy has become institutionalized, and how the democratic

process is increasingly distanced from the citizens. Simultaneously the political parties have come to look like mere electoral corporations, campaign machines, interested only in gaining a market share of the electorate leaving behind the real issues of the citizens. In democratic competition there is not this clash between these two perceptions, the state is simply the highest form in which civil society is manifested, and within the democratic competition citizen partake in various democratic activities including those that the ossified institutionalized democracies have been compelled to eject as something alien to their democratic theater and relegated to the role of ‘civil society’.

We now see that traditionally ‘democracy’ has been exclusively associated with elections, representations, assemblies etc. These are for sure part of democracy, but they are but surface aspects of contemporary democracy. At the final analysis democracy can only be about an equal-rights-equal-opportunity rule of the people, and hereby the actual form of the government and procedures for democratic participation may vary greatly between nations. At the end of the day a democracy is such a society where all have an equal voice, and everybody’s voice is, in reality, taken into consideration. – And here comes the problem: how to make sure that everybody’s voice is indeed given equal weight? – Experience has shown that attempts to resolve the

problems simply by calling people periodically to the ballot boxes without simultaneously making sure that all the conditions for a democratic competition is in place are not viable; what happens at the ballot box makes sense only when all are equal participants in the democratic process. – Today democracy is not anymore, unfortunately, a question of how a nation organizes decision making in their commonwealth, rather today ‘democracy’ is often used like a Trojan horse, where nontransparent forces try to sneak in to state power taking advantage of the underdeveloped traditions and weaknesses of a nation. - Hitler’s road to power as Chancellor of Germany was precisely a ride within a Trojan horse of propaganda and manipulation. – The misfortune of Russia is that the enemies of open society (sometimes even in a double fake calling themselves “The Open Society”) are constantly mounting such Trojan horses against this young democracy, taking advances of all the difficulties the Russians have had with creating prosperity, justice and stability on a vacuum that opened up after the fall of the Soviet Union. There are many of those dark forces – including foreign powers - that using the weakness of the young society want to overtake the country in the disguise of one or another of these Trojan horses named in allusion to the fancy verbiage of democracy.

I understand that the recent doctrine of sovereign democracy developed around the current leadership

of Russia acknowledges this fact, the danger of the young democracy being manipulated by the enemies of open society. Therefore I am, naturally, in sympathy with this tenet. In my understanding with the ideas of sovereign democracy the aim is in a Russian context to address the same kind of threats that challenge the free democratic competition world over.

## The enemies of open society and democratic competition

The democratic ideal is that each voice counts, equally, every day. This is the ideal, but not the reality. In reality people are restricted in their democratic freedoms by the predatory forces of cartels and monopolies, all kinds of abnormalities of the social market place, all kinds of abuse of dominant position in society. We understand the terminology of market distractions from the economy, and it is widely accepted that monopoly power will have to be restricted for the economic markets to function properly, but this same kind of thinking has to be broadened to encompass all social practices. Thus we have to understand the importance of reining in on all kinds of illegal and unfair social practices, conspiracies, unhealthy concentration of mass media, monopoly parliamentarism, historically established dominance of any few parties, all ideologies and predatory acts designed to reduce the competitive vigor of democratic competition. We need anti-trust thinking in all spheres of life: in politics, religion, science, media and so on. – In politics the aim should be to remove all obstacles for achieving a free democratic competition with complete equality on the level of each individual, thus, for example, an owner of dominant media should be stripped of his power so as to match that of any citizen. In Europe it will be especially important to enact anti-parliamentarism

measures to fight this perversion of democracy.

All these market distractions are the manifestations of the enemies of a free and open society, enemies of democratic competition. To give an idea what is meant I list a few of these crucial challenges:

1. Economic monopolies
2. Political monopolies
3. Abuse of media; unfair journalism and monopolistic concentration of media in hands of few; abuse of freedom of speech ('the license to lie')
4. Propaganda - the archenemy of open society – produced by the monopolistic media and various dark forces, specialist propaganda organizations
5. Dominance of ideology
6. Dominance of religion
7. Poverty
8. Poor level of education

In the United States there is in principle a well-designed constitution providing for the legal framework for competitive electoral process. In Expressions and Interpretations I discussed the advantages of that system. However, there are other problems with the electoral processes; the constitution provides for the formal framework for democratic competition, but the participants in the process would also have to be competitive, and that is not the case in the United States of today. Today



the competitive system set forth in the constitution is being undermined by the social evil of monopoly; in this case the monopoly to power that the two national parties, the Republican Party and the Democratic Party, have carved out for them. As a result of the monopolistic position these parties hold they do not anymore represent the genuine democratic will of the people and should rather be seen as some kind of political marketing corporations which have been fully taken over by career politicians who function like corporate executives, while many of the leading politicians are promoted to high offices in a hereditary line of succession, like it is the case e.g. with the Bush clan; congressmen and senators function like lobbyists selling their services for money (similarly to the profession which I do not regard as the oldest one), while the propaganda machines and their media keep the two in power under all conditions. While these parties had a beneficial role in the early stages of American democracy they now de facto constrain the free choice of the electorate having become some kind of institutionalized conspiracies in restraint of a true and free democracy. Therefore it seems to me, that in order to save the American democracy (with its important repercussion to the whole world) and to protect society – and the world - from unfair social and electoral practices competition should be returned to the American political process, and this should be done applying means similar to those with which corporations enjoying a business

monopoly can be broken up and disbanded as illegal monopolies; applicable to these parties one could say that they should be disbanded as organizations – or conspiracies – restricting the free democratic choice of the people and hindering fair political decision making. For when two parties for over a century wield such exuberant dominance over the voter then this is the very same predatory oligopoly, which we may subsume under the broader category of terminal social ill: monopoly. Societies are in dire need of such antitrust laws directed against parties holding a monopoly power in order to guarantee fair play in politics and a level field for democratic competition; only by these means would there be a chance for all competing opinions, for all people, to take part in the democratic process on equal terms.

Problems of monopoly and other forms of abuse of dominant market position are especially crucial in regards to the mass-media. The media is the new superstructure of today's world, and it is my conviction that the concentration of media ownership into fewer and fewer hands is the biggest threat to democracy world-wide and thus the biggest threat to humanity and mankind itself. The problem is most pressing in regards to the Anglo-American media groups with global reach, the ownership of which has been concentrated in very few hands (with only a handful of dominant media corporations holding sway over most of the Western countries). These corporations

have established a de facto control – I would even say censorship - on Western thinking. With seemingly unrestricted propaganda manipulation the media has seized control over the democratic process in most of Europe and North America. – And it seems that these media groups have converted the idea of freedom of speech into a *license to lie*.

Most people will agree that freedom of speech is a crucial component for creating the conditions for competition, which competition is the essential prerequisite for democracy. But, as always is the case with these sacred code words, nobody bothers to consider what freedom of speech in essence is; nobody asks what kind of prerequisites should be in place (what are the necessary conditions) to enable in practice the phenomena that we call freedom of speech? Therefore I propose to give it a thought, consider that for freedom of speech, like for any human freedom, there has to be a real possibility to exercise this freedom: freedom of speech is like freedom of thought, everybody is free to think, and at the end of the day, surely nobody can *restrict the thinking as such* (although, of course, free thinking can be, and continuously is being restricted by, among others, this very same media; all information is in itself a restriction, all information is tainted; and language itself is tainted by past misinformation, past misconceptions. In fact this book and Expressions and Interpretations deal with this very problem, this

most fundamental problem of life. And also I have to note that I surely understand that there are forces that subject men and women to various degrees of specific, personal, brainwashing which certainly restricts free thinking. In this connection I referred to the more ordinary cases of thinking and how it as such can barely be restricted); but all this I say because the point is not the restriction on speaking and thinking but the point is to have a real venue to speak, a real possibility to voice one's thoughts. Freedom of speech has to mean that each person is given a real possibility to voice his opinions in public. And this is not the case in the world today, and this is not the case in the Western World either due to the problem with media concentration, the problem I call monopolization of media. For it is so that efficiently the few media corporations that control Western media also control Western speech; it is utterly difficult to come through with any dissenting opinions, while at the same time the Western media has gone over from a mere aim to report and disseminate information to creating opinions and manipulating thought through continuous propaganda efforts. – For freedom of speech to be relevant there has to be two sides to it, both absence of any kind of actively enforced restrictions to speak out; most people do not have any problems with understanding this much, but they fail to see the equal need for the corresponding access to a forum where to speak. With this kind of understanding, or

rather misunderstanding, in regards to the nature of freedom of speech, the notion has been converted into a kind of a slogan for the consolidation of media ownership into the hands of fewer and fewer corporations, with a stronger and stronger market position (the license to lie). – Real freedom of speech would mean that there truly is an access to speak, a true possibility to voice one's opinions, to make competing opinions known, and for this to become reality what we need is a competitive and pluralistic media where journalists are constantly on the watch for competing opinions to challenge the purported truths. At the final analysis *freedom of speech, like everything else, is a competition of arguments*. Therefore the very first criterion for freedom of speech is that no media outlet has a dominant position at any location and in any language. Today the situation is, however, far from the ideal in most parts of the world, and certainly much worse than it used to be a hundred years ago when market entry for new press was relatively easy and no one corporation enjoyed dominance over the readers. Today on the contrary in the Western world where they brave themselves as the “free press zone” there is a veritable monopoly or at best an oligopoly in every geographical location, in every language area and in every major city with only one or a few dominant outlets, and thus these dominant outlets have been able to establish themselves as the speech police.

Television is still the dominant means for opinion making, therefore it is especially important to keep television free from the corrupting influence of monopolies; on the other hand television – notwithstanding all the technical possibilities – is by nature such that on any given area the choice cannot be but restricted to one or two, at best three main choices of broadcasters; hence television always tends to form a natural monopoly. With natural monopolies we are bound to choose if we will give over the control to a private monopolist or give the control to the collective monopolist of the people represented by a state corporation under appropriate public control, and again given the choice it is far more preferable that the television remains in public control. – We should not reject state ownership, but concern ourselves with developing democratic means of ensuring that pluralism is guaranteed; among such guarantees I would see processes of diversified and rotating executive control of the broadcaster and – especially important to stress - control independent of any parliamentary majority.

## Democratic traditions

Democracy needs to be understood as a competition of arguments, opinions, and it needs to be understood that the competition to qualify as democratic has to take place on equal terms between equal people, that it is a competition free from any influence of monopolies and abuse of privileged or dominant market position. Free democratic competition needs to be supported by a competitive social environment, competitive social practices in all aspects of life, such which offer basic economic prosperity in order to guarantee genuine possibilities to participate in the democratic competition as informed citizen.

Notwithstanding all what has been said above regarding the necessary elements and conditions for democracy there is one even more fundamental and crucial constituent of democracy: that is time. – At the end of the analysis, after all the claims to what democracy is or what it is not we return to the most fundamental insight of philosophy, of social science, that democracy – like all perceptions – is but a name that we have assigned to certain social practices, these are the social practices we look upon from point of view of power and in so doing we shall keep in mind the ideal of equality between all people, and that all equal people shall have a right, and not only a right, but a real opportunity to affect the power relations on equal terms.

Today we are fortunate to live in a world where the principle of equality is widely avowed, although rarely upheld in practice. It seems as if people take equality to be a question of emotions, a matter of taste. I have a need to repudiate those emotional considerations and instead bluntly state that *equality is a biological fact*. The proof for equality is in the facts of the human biology, the fact that each human being is a biological being, each born through the same biological circumstances, a product of the same biological evolution, with the same biological and physical needs, and subject to the same process of withering way – and the same needs to fight this withering, to stay alive – and each condemned to lose the fight and die. Each person has an equal right to go through this process of life, to make it as happy as he can, and to face his death sentence not through another man. – This is all the evidence we need for equality and thus for democracy.

Social practices are manifestations of historic processes, the result of historic development, results of time; and good social practices, the ones we – or an informed posteriority - should find laudable are the traditions that come about through peaceful, piecemeal development in a stabile society open to foreign influence on terms of mutual respect and free of any sort of manipulations. And so only with the passing of time will the social practices that we term democratic traditions come about, these are

the results of unrestrained democratic competition tending in the right direction (I speak about 'direction' not of the present balance, for we have to keep in mind that democracy, like all in life, can be judged only in relative terms, in this case as a comparison between past traditions, the present conditions of life in society, and the trends in social development).

The experience we have from the former Soviet bloc countries shows that it is very difficult to cast democracy on a vacuum, that lack of democratic traditions leads to a kind of political lottery. Without traditions and a history of democracy the voter is prevented from making a balanced choice, for meaning – a meaning that will serve as the base for a political choice - can not be deduced from separate incidents, but only from a web of experience. Therefore the merits of each candidate and each party can only be considered against the background of what the political system on a whole has historically performed; what the separate parties have previously performed; what the individual candidates have previously performed; what are the real possibilities of the country at a given stage of development etc. Only against this accumulated experience will it be possible to weigh the potential of a particular political candidate or political program. – It is also a question of the voter to understand what, in general, are the possibilities of a new parliament or a new government to affect life in society. In a mature democracy there

is a historic tacit understanding of the underlying circumstances. In a new democracy, however, there are no traditions to guide the voter who is much more likely to cast his vote out of frustration, and without a consideration as to the fundamental circumstances affecting his choices, or to those restricting the range of political action; he is likely to vote in protest to the current leadership, whatever it be – protest for the sake of protest, leading to a kind of rollercoaster democracy which has been a striking feature of all Eastern European countries in transition.

The role of political parties is crucial – in good and bad – for the political system of Western countries; there the parties have gradually evolved to become the backbone of the system; historical allegiances to parties resemble much of the allegiances to a religious fate; this feature is to a large extent a problem (hindering discussions on merits, leading to abuse of dominant market position etc), but it is also these very features that that bring stability to Western democracies as a big portion of the electorate under all conditions support the status quo by voting for the party of traditional choice, and swing-voters by their choices merely affect the direction of the democratic process within the established political scene. In Russia this feature of Western democracies is lacking, and it cannot be but lacking, for want it or not there was only one party in Soviet Russia, the Communist Party. So therefore it is essential for Russia to find

other means of providing for the most important features of Western democracies, the stability that historic party adherence brings about. – I need to remind the reader, that it was a quite rough, and bloody, ride that process under which during two hundred years the party system was developed in the West. Russia is engaged in an interesting project to create a stabile democracy in a short time avoiding the same bloody mistakes that Europe and the United States have gone through.

The lack of democratic traditions makes a society and its electorate especially vulnerable to direct assaults by those who want to manipulate an innocent society by taking advantage of the yet undeveloped traditions. These forces operating through pressure groups and propagandists function like pedophiles who are attempting to seduce a young society by showering the victims with attention, gifts and grants, taunting them with democratic rhetoric, after which the propagandists like the pedophiles put their manipulative skills to work unleashing them on societies they deem troubled. First they try to gain the confidence of the weakest in these societies approaching them as friends, then identifying a few chosen ringleaders, whose self esteem they set to build up, and who like the pawns of chess are led to believe that they can with the help of the propaganda candy man checkmate a whole society, and thus having won their trust these pawns turn themselves into willing

accomplices for the social pedophiles preparing the assault on the commonwealth. They proceed with a strategy of media dominance and deceitful rhetoric by which they try to bring society to submission; finally when the society is unconscious of anything but the propaganda message the predator gets a stranglehold of society, strikes, and brutally tries to rape the young victim, politically, economically, violently. – For any society to have a future it must protect itself against the mental violence called propaganda (and it is only a matter of time when this mental violence is turned in to physical violence; and, in fact, the difference itself between mental and physical violence is but a matter of degree, or perhaps they are aspects of the same). And hence a society has to protect itself against the violence of propaganda similarly as a man protects himself and his family against any form of violence. Society has to protect itself no matter from where the propaganda assaults are launched: a domestic media oligarchy; specialist propaganda groups (often in disguise of charitable and lofty causes); undercover lobbyists; foreign intelligence services, international media monopolies etc.

## This is the third way!

Democratic competition is the famous third way. But it is not the road they used to be looking for left from the center, rather, a combination of all the paths that people will take in a peaceful and non-monopolistic society, with perfect competition that equals co-operation, and where the individual is the king, each individual simultaneously.

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