

Incomplete crosscuts

“Because history is learned to be a process of crisis, the present as the sudden emergence of critical ramifications, the future as a bundle of unsolved problems – there is born an existentially intensified conscience of the danger represented by failed decisions and omitted interventions.”

Jürgen Habermas

The distinctive mark of modernity is building up on innovation, as a product of rationalization. Societies lagging behind under the rule of the ritual of nature have never stepped on the track of modernity. They were spent in the excitation of emotional thinking. Where the revolt against nature took place and the obsession of the independent invention of the means of subsistence emerged, even by coercing nature to yield them faster, in larger quantities and in diverse sorts, the other natural force gained legitimacy: the human nature. Modernization is a phenomenon intrinsic to human nature. It brought with it the autonomy of this nature.

Modernization emancipated human nature but brought with it the danger of destroying the mother-nature. This assumption makes the distinction between two incomplete views: the conflicting disjunction of the two natures and the fact that the rational and the emotional are complementary. The former is specific to mass industrialism while the latter to romantic ecology and post-capitalist sociology.

Both irreducible dichotomy and forced harmony are incomplete solution to the problem of development. In one line of thought – that of opposing the two natures – the idea of progress was insinuated and in the other – that of appeasing the universals – Utopia was reloaded; illusion has become the absolute link. In the former line of thought, scientific innovation will bring us good and in the latter redemption is the unused resource of our own wisdom.

The crosscuts of our advancement are in line with human expectations. Though reality has denied them anywhere save when they were declared to be miracles. The option for one path or another – both tempting – has made the rule. History as it is can be interpreted as a succession of options for a crosscut. In more depth, we can accept it as cutting and intersection without regard to markings or to the traffic lights. A decisive way to overcome the limitations by cutting straight through the Gordian knot stopping the advancement. Betting on rationalization was an attempt for a crosscut. The complications of ethics, fixed in myth, were eliminated and norms of referential liberty were instituted.

Secularization marked by the hypothesis that science is the true power has turned the limits to ether. Everything became possible and, furthermore, permitted. The leap ahead took place both in theory and in reality. Theory per se being a reality thought as, including in its intangible forms, a virtual reality.

As man got lost in the imagined universe and rationalization touched on emotion he resorted to a second, incomplete crosscut toward a wonderful world. Matching

human nature with its original placenta was intensified by the expressive force of the paradise lost. The universe is bound to accept back at its bosom man and all the evil done. The solution seems ultimate. The crosscut taken for the great return to nature calls on emotion. The counterweight to the project of emancipating rationalization is the project of the protection of nature. Man hides his rationality in the emotional thinking of the enveloping diversity. He re-introduces cohabitation in his set of conditional reflexes in order to avoid the experience of surviving.

In a way which points to the incompleteness of the options, man responds to the dangers of un-humanization-through-excessive-rationalization by mixing post modernity's roads to the unknown. Because traditionalizing the new has failed through the myths it had destroyed, meta-narration was added to the rational in the belief that a new synthesis would be created. In fact, a new incomplete crosscut emerges, beyond good and bad, looking for the good in the communion between human nature and the mother-nature and banning the evil resulted from their former belligerent positioning.

The way to modernity cannot be followed as a return to Eden. Its sense is given by living on the implacable axis of time: prior to the future, not prior to contemporaneity. Here and now, more and faster, better and more profound, larger and more diverse, more natural and more human, global and local are the ingredients which give sense to modernity.

What matters is the larger vision in which the acting fragments and the consistency through time with the values of modernity are particularized, inclusive of – or perhaps especially in the case of post-communist transition – the values which are against the habitat laziness and the attachment to emotion and to the rhythms of nature. Justifying feebleness is counterproductive and fixes us in boarders of the forever failed modernity. Beyond the olive tree does not mean cutting it down, as organic oil does not exclude the refining machine.

Modernity is the adding of the new on performance criteria which do not alter the texture of life. It's not the access into (the return to) nature or the destruction of (running away from the bosom) nature that are crosscuts toward the coming of age of the world. Defining concepts – until now opposed for reasons of demiurgic daring – as a functional whole would comprise the solution. This whole would be consistent through successive approximations of good and through regularizing the elimination of the self-generative evil. Ad infinitum!

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