

The Desert between Worlds

“Western man has secured power for himself in the Universe of Forces, while oriental man was left without specific force in the Universe of Power.”

The Enlightenment paradigm was born as a counter-reaction to the Inquisition's imposed restrictions on knowledge. The demarcations drawn by the bishoprics and the papacy between the mythical and magical thinking, quintessentialized in Tradition, on the one hand, and the dogmatic thinking, founder of the Church, progressively cleansed of that which constituted heresy in the belief of the hierarchs, on the other hand, has created the great antinomy of the spirit in between whose cracks the people of the Enlightenment have succeeded in insinuating the rational thinking.

Until the Enlightenment's silent revolution, rational thinking has been preserved in the Aristotelian formula, somewhat tolerated by the Inquisition, for then onwards to constitute the support which made possible the boldness of secularization. The Renaissance and Rosicrucian episodes have proven to be the frail tip of an iceberg which by its nature remains hidden to empirical certitudes. And this because the Enlightenment change stopped after the conquest by Reason over the commanding role exerted from 1184 until 1834 by Church dogma, sanctioned in 325 by the Council of Nicaea and decanted throughout the first millennium.

In fact, the Enlightenment did not change the order of knowledge, but only the hierarchy of instruments, Reason taking the tutelary position held with authority until then by the Faith, which had itself acted in a similar manner with regard to Magic, Myth and Tradition.

In a reductionist way, as soon as truth is demonstrated but not revealed, the only court allowed to judge in the City of Truth is Reason. All the alternative paths for reaching the truth are occulted (a less violent way of being forbidden, but sufficiently perverse in order to suggest the advantages of abandon).

The differences in focus between the scenarios undertaken by the Occident and the Orient, far from being essential as fundamentals, were proven radically different in the way they allowed themselves to be guided by the value of Tolerance when establishing the order. The Occident, fixed in the experience of purifying the Faith guarded by the Inquisition, dedicated itself with subservience to the religion of Reason, following the Path of Progress. The Orient, opting for understanding towards the other forms of thought, followed the path of Tolerance.

The Western performance was somatic, the Eastern one spiritual. The West illustrated itself in the artificial universe, the East connected to the rhythms of nature. The paradox of the paths taken lies in the fact that due to the restriction of behavior and thought the Occident was obsessed with constant breakthroughs while the Orient, aligned to the energies of the natural, has generated continuous ruptures.

The liberation through Progress achieved by the Occident has led to independence from nature, while the liberation through Tolerance experienced by the Orient marked a deepening of the dependence on nature. Interpreted in a heroic way, western man had secured power in the Universe of Forces, while oriental man stayed natural, without specific force in the Universe of Power.

The performances of Reason to be found within Progress have defined the Center, while the successes of Oriental eclecticism, favored by Tolerance, have shaped the Periphery. The Center is the world created by Reason, the Periphery is the revealed universe conserved through Tolerance.

The Center and the Periphery are complementary results of modernity and tradition, of assuming the risk of rupture and the risk of continuity, of ex-formation and of in-formation. Both are, in the end, royal paths of evolution. The modernist approach loses man in its own creation, while the traditional approach abandons man in the great creation. The path of liberation through the power of Reason enslaves, the path of harmony with Nature demeans. Regarded separately they are failures, complementarized as experiences they can re-open the horizon of fulfillment.

What constitutes a drama of the dichotomous Occident-Orient evolution is the establishing of materialist supremacy, made more acute by the progressive internalization of the efficiency model along the lines of the “science is power” precept. It’s obvious that this critical situation for the unity of the post-Enlightenment world had derived from making the methods of knowledge unilateral, from making the imperialism of Reason and rationalization the main course for knowledge and material progress. The banning or the atrophy of other cognitive paths and the total extension of

rational thought, together with its empirical substantiator represented by wealth – as a fundament of freedom, has thwarted any possibility of crossing the explicative desert which divides the types of thought.

If something would bring the reunification of the thought experiments pursued separately by the Occident and the Orient, it could only be an ample and vigorous movement of acknowledgement, which would suppose corrections and options, in fact a movement of both worlds parting with their fundamentalist options. The realignment of a new unity's compatibility focuses wouldn't be necessarily done through abdications in favor of the opposing path, but with regard to the closeness to the path of integrality, as a mental experience of summarizing the specific perspectives of all the parts in the whole.

Neither would the Occident be less attached to efficiency, nor would the Orient break totally with tradition, but they would both seek the path of the original alchemy of the worlds in order to try a new model of synthesis. The parsimony of Reason gave us the spectacle of the estrangement from wealth, while the eclecticism of Tradition comfortably aggregated us into poverty. One part of the world submitted to the norm in order to be free, while the other abandoned itself to the freedom permitted by nature. The first were constrained to be free, the others were free to choose the constraint. Where the Pyre or the Guillotine functioned – the liberation happened, where Tolerance functioned – the incarceration took place.

The externalities of the Enlightenment's ideological dichotomy were instilled under the guise of Individualism in the Occident and in the form of Collectivism in the Orient. The Cain and Abel of the rationalist Enlightenment, disguised in the ideological roles of capitalism and socialism, have fixed the extremities. The biblical tragedy reenacted in 1989 was not the solution to the Occident-Orient dichotomy problem, but the revelation of the historical rift of mentality marked by the modern-tradition boundary, as spaces constructed through different formulas of cognition.

The rebuilding of world unity must start with the refashioning of the originations, for them to lose their adversity.

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