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Social Evolution

By Luka Nieto

Karl Marx was right when he said that *"the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."* Every power establishment eventually undergoes a downfall, of which the lower class takes advantage in order to improve their situation; in the most extreme cases, the action takes the form of a full-fledged revolution and in the not-so-extreme cases, they at least make themselves noticeable enough to make sure they are never again ignored. The history of civilizations in their path to our pseudo-democracy (modern history) can be defined as a painful **'stagnation-revolution-stagnation'** cycle: generally, when revolutionaries take control, they represent the exponent of human liberties, but *just* in that time frame, *just* in their own context.

Nowadays, the *"everything for the people, nothing by the people"* disposition of the enlightened absolutism seems like a bad joke. However, if we take into account the historical web surrounding that one thread, we must admit it was an advancement that resulted in a slightly more enlightened society. This can mislead us to think that if absolutist monarchy had not made such a concession, maybe that very order would have endured for a much longer time, or maybe the shift towards liberalism would not have been so gradual, would it? But could monarchy even afford to *not* make such a concession? Of course not: cornered by dangerous new ideas, every power establishment ends up trying to adapt to them superficially, disguising the old and known with a shining fur to go by unnoticed, although later the plan backfires; that is precisely how we see enlightened despotism now and we can only conclude that people in the future will laugh at our concept of liberalism and democracy.

From primitive societies to capitalism, all have tried their best within their physical context, not accounting for ups and downs. That is the human propensity, as long as the environment allows it. In other words, it is not just that we *'are'* better people or more civilized beings: the technical conditions

have allowed us to be so. Were we left tomorrow without our essential facilities (tap water, electricity and transport for goods and people), faster than seems possible the inhabitants of the 'developed nations' would take up a new paradigm: chaos.

So yes, capitalist economy *is* an advancement, even with its current characterization that owes more to the monetary reforms on the mid-20th Century than to its original ideas. Although a case could be made that it is a perversion of what liberalism *'could have been'*, the idea of alternative ways will not be further entertained here, as the fact is, the average life of a human being has improved considerably throughout the last two hundred years, since the industrial revolution. We witnessed its effects on mechanization, medicine and methodical education; it is technical know-how, to a certain point carried out by capitalism, which has improved our lives. But capitalism, and indeed the monetary system in general too, can only take us up to a certain point.

Sure enough, we must not forget that while life expectancy in the Americas, Oceania and Europe (and even Asia to an extent) has raised considerably, in Africa the situation is still deplorable. Worse still, it does not show signs of improvement: taking a look at the current data, we will see we double the life expectancy of many South African nations. We *double it*. Trying to look for discrepancies of that level in other animals will result in a practically useless exercise and that is precisely why it is highly enlightening.

Why does this happen? Why is there still classic slavery in those poor countries and paid slavery in developed or developing countries? A lot has been said about this, so we'd better not get deep into the immediate causes again and focus instead on the general problem: that kind of thing happens because the *now-not-so-new* capitalist model, once the prototype of the maximum freedom possible for humanity, has been obsolete for almost half a century now, therefrom the decay and need of 'playing dirty' to survive, just as a cornered animal. Even though the new technology is already here, the economic system is not up to date: clean and practically inexhaustible energy sources, more practical methods of agriculture, an almost entirely automated manufacturing sector (and soon the same will go for the services), more energy-efficient and faster means of transport for goods and people, instantaneous global communication, advancements in medicine (more than half of the major medical advancements have happened in the last hundred and fifty years), and the dawn of cybernation and nanotechnology.

The current political-economic model is already attempting to reconcile with it all and will keep trying to do so with what's to come, but it will eventually fail. It won't even be able to justify its very basis: the human employment in the production process, and therefore the concept of product 'value' mostly defined by the human time and work required in manufacturing. The mechanization of the industrial age substituted twenty men for just one driving a machine and the automation of the computer age is already substituting employees of all sectors for a few technicians -and no, those jobs will not come back. If the eight-hour day was achieved with mechanization, what will then be achieved in the next day's labour-shrinking revolution, taking automation into account? Even with the extremely consumerist practices of capitalism and its low efficiency when trying to synchronize production systems to avoid redundancy, the difference would be astronomical—but currently, the power establishment doesn't give up in that respect. Still, what will happen when more efficient techniques are also applied? Exactly, the concept of employment and wages as the basis for economy will end up being obsolete. The monetary system—be it capitalism, communism or even anarchism in the form of barter transaction—will not be able to justify the necessity of paying for food and energy either, when its ability to make them in abundance is already beyond question. This way, scarcity—the third aspect taken into account to calculate 'value' in this system—decreases more and more alongside human time and work, until product value according to their own economic theory dangerously approximates to zero.

Hence, changes will happen. Either a painful revolution breaks out or capitalism will gradually adapt to these bio-social pressures until it destroys itself, just as enlightened absolutism did: conceding a place in the system for the new ideas. There will be a time when this junction will be important, decisive, but for the purpose of this text the difference is insignificant, as capitalism will collapse no matter what, alongside every monetary system and they will collapse under their own weight, thanks to the same practices that one day brought about a new prototype of human liberties.

The possibility of us killing each other before we follow the natural path described here, will not be brought up either, beyond this very annotation; not because it is an absurd proposition, but because it requires no further explanation: it is highly probable that cultural change will not be so fast as to outmatch the energy problem or the tensions among nuclear-armed nations. But even if that happened, the current system would fall—the difference is that, in stark contrast with the upcoming projection, it wouldn't be replaced by other social paradigm. There would not be a society to speak of in the first place.

Having said that, how can you avoid the continuation of the **'stagnation-revolution-stagnation'** cycle in the culture that emerges from the new techniques? How do you create a society that evolves accepting the little mutations, instead of standing up to them to eventually explode and succumb to the next logical step? How do you make it so that the very basis of society, with its culture and economy, stops the human trend of shifting the socio-economic model by dominating the ruling system? In short, how can we avoid an *established system* and arrive at an *emergent system*?

The answer is not particularly complex, but it is not easy to understand either if all these concepts aren't already in your head somehow, changing your mind without you even noticing. The point is to organize these new techniques in a way that those pioneers in the forefront of social evolution cannot (and don't want to) be *leaders*, but *doers*. Instead of *leading* the system in an overarching way, they *do* stuff to improve specific characteristics within it. Therefore, to avoid the stagnation of ideas at a social level, to avoid an *established system*, you simply cannot have a government as we know it; ***each and every individual***

governs or leads society by means of their input in technology and culture.

From technological and medical contributions to artistic and recreational ones, society arranges itself by *'the little things'*, as opposed to most modern theories of power. But at the same time, thanks to electronic communication and fast transportation, there is a possibility to connect society as a whole: even the product of the most insignificant participation is available to everyone in a decentralized but totally united network of computer systems and physical transport, instead of being left limited to a region or expand with exasperating and sometimes lethal slowness, as it happened in primitive societies and is still proposed in politics by certain kinds of anarchism and in social movements by off-grid *ecovillages*.

That is how you create an *emergent society*. Following the natural course of technology, communication among human beings is eased until a global interconnection is achieved, with which every individual knows perfectly that their contribution will help themselves, their family and everyone else and that the input of the rest of the world will follow the same path, uninterrupted by any government that would be *unnecessary* in this historical context. Not having an overarching power, in this system the only *constant* is *change*. The **'stagnation-revolution-stagnation'** cycle and the struggle between new and old ideas simply ceases to work and is naturally replaced by another paradigm: ***the social evolution in an emergent society.***

Getting back to the "rare" Earth

By Taunia Roberts

Some members of TZM might think that the most important substance currently being extracted from and polluting the earth is oil, as corporations such as BP and Conoco Philips have various operations and drilling sites across the globe and will rally to send troops or other methods of persuasion to keep that drilling from expiring. But maybe we all need to take a closer look at other substances that demand extraction for products consumers find so popular and never think of where-from those substances come out of and how. For instance, the next time you or someone you know is considering buying that very inexpensive flat screen monitor from that discount website or superstore, you should consider that the cobalt used in the creation of that product comes from Africa, and that the mining of that substance can sometimes, if not always, involves child labor at incredible risks. It is mined from under water, and divers, mostly underage divers, have to go down and get it, leaving them at risk of possibly drowning. Of course they are children, working for a very large corporation, and yet do not receive much in way of payment and benefits. You may have seen the reports about the Chilean minors that were trapped underground in a gold mine for some 70 days. They also do not have union paychecks and readily available health benefits. It took these miners to have a life threatening incident to get any acknowledgment from any one us.

Recently, it was reported that China blocked all rare earth metals from it's list of exports. This concerned everyone, especially the United States and Japan. While you may have been busy chatting on your new Android phone or waiting for an e-mail on your flat panel wide screen or watching the newest YouTube video, you may not have even noticed that replacing that product could get very sticky with just that one statement from China. China holds all of the rights to these rare earth metals that are used to produce cell phones and many of the electronics you buy, and if they so chose, China could stop production of these products, flat

out. But, they won't as they have assured the U.S. Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton and Japan in a recent phone conversation. Because the U.S. is a large purchaser of those rare metals for the manufacturing of their popular models of cell phones and Japan is also a huge manufacturing hub, it is unlikely that China wants to create any more financial harm to themselves because of the healthy U.S. debt they hold. But think about how easy it would be for one country to settle your purchasing that cell phone or a new one again. Of course, China is very concerned with it's own economic standing in the world population. China saw a massive loss during the economic downfall in 2008. But, it is also a country that would very much like to see a more sustainable way of doing things throughout the world. China would be on the side of TZM in that it sees how blood thirsty entrepreneurs are to get in the game, and make as many copy cat or cheap electronics for Internet websites that they can sell to rich countries at discount prices.

Consider that the website you might purchase this product from is owned by a particular outfit that operates over 20 websites with the same intent and that it may be owned by the very large corporations that are ravaging the earth in the first place. The Internet has allowed for such practices to be done with ease. Discount stores or sites, all with different names, but carrying some of the same products and each are priced too low to cover the cost of the child deep diving to mine that cobalt. You might have to pull back a little and think, do I really need a new flat screen or that more popular phone? You definitely do not, if you already have one or two, and a laptop, and a cell phone that has Internet access. In a Resource Based Economy, it is preferred that you have the very best of what you need, so the idea of having to replace something that is designed to break down too soon, wouldn't happen. If you are a member of this movement, trying to help others, you should understand why we need a Resource Based Economy; this is one particularly good reason.

The word "rare" should be taken very literally and seriously. China is the only country with these metals so far as we know and they are not interested in running out, neither should you be; and that is a terrifying fact for northern countries, who are very dependent on these minerals to produce such products. When speaking to people about TZM and TVP, you might want to give them these facts by asking if they have a cell phone, and, how many cell phones have they purchased in the last decade? How many computers? How many monitors and wide screen TV's? And then tell them about these rare earth metals and where they come from and how they are secured or not secured, for your use, in the future. This could be a huge advantage to you in representing a Resourced Based Economy. It might also urge you and your family to donate older products to someone who is looking to purchase them, and due to financial constraints, they might opt to buy it at a discount price. Discount for who?

From the reports released, it may seem as though China is using it's rare earth rights as leverage against abuses by other seemingly powerful countries. One might like to remember that China has to struggle to sustain itself as much as everyone else and in last years COP 15* China's representatives made it very clear to those present, that China needs to be greener. So anyone out there thinking that China is the bad guy, could be seriously misinformed. The "bad guy" could just be you. But, be aware that as China has made these statements, the corporations will not stop searching for other mining opportunities, maybe in your backyard, in as many places as can be obtained, for the continuation of producing such products for profit as long as the consumer is still there. The only way to curb this incessant pilfering of the earths resources is to watch your purchasing habits and inform as many others to also watch theirs. It is also recommended that letters written to these corporations, telling them why you are not purchasing this product or that one.

It might also be a good idea to have a TZM chapter meeting that involves planning a donation bin for old electronics to others less fortunate or for recycling.

"This monetary paradigm is the greatest threat against which our species has ever had to contended, and will be viewed by future generations as the greatest obstacle we had to overcome in order to progress and mature as a species."

Tom Skazinski

Left: Vertical Farming by Chris Jacobs
Bottom: Gwanggyo Power Centre by MVRDV

A case for Social Cybernation

By Tom Skazinski

Let us ponder and inspect the idea of a socio-economic paradigm shift, and plot a social direction with the help of social cybernation. Democracy, a loaded word, has a lot of connotations and ideologies associated with it; but what does it really mean? And, more importantly, how does it manifest in our current society? The ideological purpose of democracy is for everyone to participate–for the governing power to derive from the people. Unfortunately, when we inspect today's culture and the governing institutions, this ideological premise is questioned. Take the various democracy governments around the globe today–they exist as entities operated by groups of individuals that people elect to power. The government needs to balance its budget, grow its GDP, uphold a framework of rules and laws of the land, and compete in the world marketplace in order to satisfy its interests. You would assume its interests to be that of serving its citizens' collective needs and foster a healthy environment that creates incentives and motivates individuals to contribute towards the betterment of the social collective. That is the theory behind what our current monetary paradigm system is trying to achieve: if you satisfy your own needs and desires by earning income, you are contributing to the betterment of society as a whole. This is the staple and structure of today's mentality – it is why we have jobs, why we have personal property, it is what the culture promotes, and what we don't question but assume is the golden rule of how society is to function. This is the basis for the structure of today's mentality: it is why we have jobs; it is why we have personal property; it is what the culture promotes; and it is what we don't question, but assume is the golden rule of how society is to function.

Although this mentality or framework has some positive aspects–it will change: not because of some prediction or because of a growing enlightenment about alternatives that in theory would work better; but because simply put–our current paradigm is not sustainable. The current monetary paradigm is heading in a crash course of self destruction by its unintended side effects on so many levels. The profit-driven mechanism of unrelentless, blind consumption, and the constant incentives to become greedy and abusive to one

another, are the influencing factors that affect nearly every decision any individual in power has to make, and which results in cancerous effects to society. No longer can our idealistic-democracy-driven government serve its citizens when its lifeline and existence is threatened by the continuing requirement for sustaining exponential consumption with no regard to nature's limits, no regard to the wellness of its citizens, no regard to solving problems if these were to disrupt the generation of profit. This monetary paradigm is the greatest threat against which our species has ever had to contended, and will be viewed by future generations as the greatest obstacle we had to overcome in order to progress and mature as a species.

Would a paradigm shift of the modern socio-economic-democracy ideology towards social cybernation a rational alternative? Do we even know if it's even feasible and sustainable?

As a computer scientist I look at this problem from an informational systems theory approach, there exists an infinite solution space of frameworks that tackles the issue at hand; a framework is a series or rules and standards with which we can organize our society. Our society runs on a massive collection of rules and standards, either assumed, or inferred from the past, or planned out and enforced by law. This collection of rules and standards dictates how we interact with each other, how we create incentives for each other, how we distribute resources and influential power between ourselves, and in the end, dictates how we experience our existence on this rock. So shouldn't we collectively prioritize that the most influential aspect of our existence and the long term sustainability of our species be forever improving? and shouldn't we be continually optimizing this set of rules and standards? But, in our current society, does the average person even contemplate this? or do we assume this is the way things are; then, so be it? I'm just an individual playing out my life in the current set or rules and standards; that's the way it is. Each of us to varying degrees, likes to pass the responsibility of our actions or our in-actions to others or to the collective: "I was just following orders;" "No one told me this would happen;" "This wasn't my job, or simply "I don't care about that." These seem to be the popular approach.

We wont be able grow out of our past until we realize that the responsibility lies within each one of us; each one of us is able to make a difference, and collectively we can learn from each other to become sustainable and accomplish amazing technological progression.

Once we have taken on the responsibility role the question now becomes how do we devise a new set of rules and standards to create a framework that works? I've been always fascinated how nature works, and how low level simplicity results in emergent complexity. Life is no exception; if we look for inspirations, we can find it in processes that have worked in nature for billions of years; and pay attention to these. The solution, as it turns, out may be quite simple, to treat social frameworks as living organisms, with the rules and standards becoming the DNA of the frameworks. Simulate these frameworks using super computers for their fitness level, or their scorecard of what works and what doesn't, in addition to what we prefer from alternatives. We then apply genetic algorithms on this population of frameworks and witness scientific democratic evolution in action. Social rules and standards that are inefficient, irrelevant, corrupt in nature, and any other destructive aspects of society will fade out and perish as they will have the effect of lowering the fitness score of frameworks, while the holistic, cooperative, and synergistic rules and standards will continue to prevail and evolve.

"A computing project of applying genetic algorithms to social simulations in order to help us derive optimal evidence based social decisions."

Zemerge Project

Would this approach be considered a centralized planned economy? I think not; I would call it self-governance with tools to give communities a series of evidence based decisions, and would be completely bottom-up, decentralized-driven-decisions guided by continues feedback of all individuals to form the fitness landscape where these frameworks will evolve in.

This social cybernation project would continue to advance as the resolution and accuracy of framework simulation would continue to improve. It will be one of the greatest endeavors humanity has ever undertaken; but the rewards will be ever lasting and will enable the continuous progression of the human species.

The Zemerge Project
(a Zeitgeist Movement inspired Project)
http://zemerge.com

The end of fighter aviation

By Mark Jones

A fascinating thing occurs when a fighter pilot realizes his aircraft is equipped with a radar. It's on his second or third flight after being assigned to a fleet model while he's cruising on some jet route in the sunshine, snug wrapped in canvas and fire resistant Nomex flipping switches he knows nothing about. Radars to him are lawn fixtures to get satellite cable, or just things rotating on control towers at airports. And why would an airplane even need to transmit anything in the first place?

The only issues of significance stem from the seat of one's pants. Airflow, fuel supply, and aerodynamic feedback. Everything else just detracts from the view. But admittedly some new confusion emerges about how flying might be more than dynamics; about how the screens that he keeps fiddling with might actually contain symbols that have meaning; and how they might somehow be connected to all those conversations between superiors that he can't seem to ever keep up with.

It either registers at this point that he's part of something bigger, or it dies there and is left unaddressed forever. Either way, within a few weeks of the commencement of training, he is summoned along with his classmates into the corner of a quiet room where a black safe sits waiting under guard. The padlock is undone and the contents are put on display. Four tactical manuals measuring several inches thick containing the details of every air threat in existence. Surface-to-air missiles. Shoulder-fired manpads. Russian and Chinese MIG aircraft along with every missile they are thought to be carrying. Their maximum ranges. Who manufactured them. Where and when, and how many have been exported since.

It eventually becomes apparent that flying encompasses more than just being airborne. That one's nosecone houses an instrument that is only one part of a giant electromagnetic puzzle. A webwork of tactics that, instead of determining, are rather fueled by what's out there. What the other guy has. How to beat it. And it doesn't take a lot of time to get clued in to the fact that the only window into this world is through one's radar.

In the days that follow, these manuals are gradually employed in filling pilots with rote data. And sooner or later they tune into the fact that all answers are to be sought from the source. It's at that point that these four scrolls become equivalent to gospel, and even lauded as being written in blood. One chapter actually welcomes them with this:

It has been said that the history of failure in war can be summed up with the words 'too late'. While the origin of war can be traced back 5000 years, it can be argued that the most basic objective of combat since the first battle in history has always been, in simplest terms, to hit the other guy before he hits you. Consequently, success in achieving that objective has been contingent upon possessing either a longer reach or a faster punch.

In the earliest battles, men fought with clubs and daggers. Later, their reach was lengthened with the use of spears, and then extended even farther by mounting those spears in bows and launching them as arrows. The use of chariots soon took those same weapons closer and faster to the heart of the enemy than ever before. With the invention of gunpowder, man's reach across the battlefield was even faster and farther in the form of bullets and artillery. Eventually, those same weapons were mounted on sea-borne chariots in the form of ships, and later on mechanized chariots in the form of tanks. Ultimately, the chariots became airborne, turning the two dimensional battlefield into a three dimensional battlespace.

Although technology has changed significantly over the past 5000 years, that fundamental objective of hitting the enemy before being hit remains unchanged. Furthermore, it is apparent now, more than ever before, that the most important dimension on today's modern battlefield is the dimension of time. If one can act before his opponent and force his adversary to react, he can effectively seize the offensive advantage and keep the opponent constantly on the defensive. Nowhere is this principle more important than in the realm of modern aerial combat where the chariots are now supersonic, the punches are thrown at nearly four times the speed of sound, and the knockouts are permanent.

David A. Robinson is an F-18 pilot and former Top Gun instructor who authored the above paragraphs as a Major. They could quite possibly be the most brilliant summation of why weapons symbolize not action, but passivity; why their design and employment are never meant to provide solutions, and will at best only make them precursors to others; why the peaceful resolution of any international quarrel would by definition negate the existence of this skill set.

He goes on to describe in the paragraphs that follow the details of how to be tactically proficient. It consumes a few pages and comes replete with a series of charts and matrices specific to various missiles. All of which everyone is eventually expected to master. Shot ranges. Kill probabilities. Calibrated airspeeds. How to achieve the ideal firing parameter. What constitutes a valid shot and what doesn't. Robinson is sandwiched among a number of other elite who have at one time or another been commissioned to contribute a chapter. Most of which demonstrate an analytical clarity common to anyone capable of being cognitive. But they are at the same time saturated in the confidence of those who can only make sense of things by grossly oversimplifying them.

The reason all this is important is that the ability to make a judgment about whether fighter aviation works can only come from an understanding of what they do. And who better to make it than the very people who keep footing the bill. Because these tools we keep amassing are symptomatic of a predilection to outsource our disputes to the whim of hardware, and not humans. It puts a vacuum on our money, our resources, and our potential in an unending quest for the edge, but locks us into orbit around myth concocted to divert us from what works and what might actually yield solutions. It's time for us to go beyond the dimension of time.

It goes without saying that air engagements are designed to achieve only one aim. Physically destroy the other side's aircraft. But this in itself is nothing more than the latest variation on the theme. The only reason aircraft ever became targeted for destruction was because they were being used as fire support for ground troops. And the only reason they were

being used as fire support for ground troops was because they were advanced enough to be mass produced in the first place. So everything I'm about to describe is based exclusively on the need to achieve an aim for which the technology was not designed – just forced upon those who opt to participate in this charade of trying to outdo the other with currently available science.

Every sanctioned maneuver and tactic currently in use is designed with only one purpose in mind. Bring about a position of geometrical advantage from which either bullets or missiles can be fired. Every manipulation of the control stick, radio transmission, and flight formation is fashioned around the establishment of these conditions. But all of them are dependent on a long list of factors that rarely remain fixed for an instant. It's a complicated problem with an equally limitless capacity to stimulate, but essentially reducible to three basic actions. Evade, Attack, or Stall. But independent of all interpretation is the basic fact that fighters exist to win. That the only result worth the money is the physical annihilation of one's foe. And for an aircraft to be destroyed, it must first be detected, then locked – either visually or electronically – and finally tracked into the conditions mentioned above. No other scenario is possible.

So the issue at stake is who decides these conditions. The reality is it's not a question of who, but rather of what. The machines themselves form the bedrock of everything. And gadgets, unlike ideals, are bound by limitations. Temperatures at which they overheat. G-forces beyond which they won't pull. Ranges beyond which they simply won't reach. All of these pressed together comprise what's physically possible, but never reflect the scope of actual practice. There's a mind in every man, threats to keep at stiff-arm, and whole regions that won't lend you their airspace. So the operator's slate is eventually subjected to circumstance, and at best provides only a portion of its potential. Typically this takes the form of the following.

A large chunk of sky is marked off on a chart over an engaged area like, say, Iraq or Afghanistan. The evolution of events determining the selection of these points is a whole separate problem in itself, but we'll go ahead and refer to them as latitude and longitude. The coordinates then receive a three dimensional definition, and are again chopped up into small individual blocks. All of which are assigned a new boundary. So you eventually end up with a matrix of shapes snugly fit between a patchwork of corridors. It's not only Hornets and Eagles, but also Falcons and Raptors, and everyone wants in on the action. Because everyone's spent the better part of their adult life in a cockpit honing skills that lack the only element that counts. An actual target. And training isn't designed to cultivate a spirit of abstinence in the face of prospective field test experience.

So a document is drafted detailing who gets what block at what altitude and from what time to when. Air refueling will be conducted here and emergency landings can be made here and this is where we'll jettison unexploded ordinance. Everything gets established and distributed in the form of checklists, and operations become round-the-clock rotations. There's always someone airborne and the radio is never silent, and the most strenuous task becomes relaying one's boredom. But let's pretend something actually happens.

A flight of two fighters is orbiting its block next to everyone else doing the same thing in theirs. Waiting. Conversing with various ground controllers or just daydreaming about dinner. Beanstalked at an altitude that keeps fuel flow down to a minimum while they circle the same point in the sky. Each is busy scanning their half of the area based on a pre-briefed allocation of responsibility. For instance, one takes the upper half, and the other gets the bottom. Either way, it's just a contract between wingmen. So how does a pair of fighters control several thousand cubic miles of airspace? The answer is, they can't. And that's where radars come in.

Any transmission of electromagnetic energy will in part end up back where it came from. Most will get scattered or absorbed by various objects, but the small portion that returns is enough. In it is an imprint of everything that it ran into during its speed of light boomerang across the sky. But if instead of just once, you send it off, say, several hundred thousand times a second, the outgoing packets will eventually start coming back to you. And provided they continue to remain of a detectable strength, they can be captured and subjected to analysis.

Comparing an incoming packet with a record of its initial will reveal that it is apparently different. Something shifted. The packet that went out is not the packet that came back. At some point, it managed to slam into something. And now that it's come crawling back as a mangled set of wavelengths, the task becomes finding out why. From this comes the extraction of a string of useful facts. Most of which find their way onto a screen in the cockpit in the form of various symbols and digits, and interpreting this collage provides the answers to all the basic sets of questions. Who's out there. Where are they. How fast are they going. Are they alone, or am I up against an entire formation.

The device being described is called the Pulse Doppler Radar. One of which occupies the nosecone of every modern fighter in the world – symbolic of the fact that in order to find something, you've got to go out looking for it. And that's what our two fighters are busy doing. Circling their block spraying pulses across vast swaths of airspace. Analyzing the results that come dancing across the screen between queries about how each loved Annapolis. But collegiate nostalgia isn't the only thing they've stored in bulk. Their very presence in region is predicated on having completed some sort of syllabus. Most of which include the standard array of the latest satellite guided munitions. JDAM, JSOW, etc. Others offer a more congressionally funded understanding of FLIR, MIDS, and laser guided bombs. Some induce sweating. Some induce sleep. But most are heavily devoted to the grueling physical labor of programming a waypoint, pressing a button, and then leaving. Either way, they vary with location. And even if you left unaddressed the question of why they have to differ, you'd still be unable to flee from why those preparing for worthy causes must be even regulated by a budget in the first place.

But regardless of the program, every salaried occupant of any aircraft equipped with a missile is quickly inundated with what is generally referred to as "timelines." Which as with any use of the term, means a

consecutive string of events. But in this case represent just the latest revision on how to detect, lock, and track. It's a canned order of tasks that at first seem intentionally digressive. From the whole point of destroying the other side's aircraft. From the musty effervescence of simply barging in and gunning them into fragments. But the air war has long ceased to mean that. And has, for decades now, been fashioned around the execution of intercepts devised to wiggle oneself into a preset parameter. Whether or not you even see your opponent is of no significant importance. Just get the missile into a position where it can be launched with what the manuals profess to be a decent probability of collision. All the while dodging the other's electromagnetic spray in order to conceal the fact that you are even in the vicinity. Because essentially it's a question of who detects whom first, and then secondly, what gadgets are available. All of which Robinson describes with exquisite precision. But none of which is designed to bring about a permanent resolution to any issue, even if executed perfectly.

One of the sad facts about the structure of modern militaries is that the very individuals that fund them are conceptually unaware of how they function. And provided one has no actual experience running intercepts on fighters, one has likely never participated in any conversations about timelines. And therefore, is in the dark about all of this. But it's important to understand what our two fighters are poised to do should they come across anyone crisscrossing their sector. Even more important than that is the judgment that follows about whether any of it is worth the money invested.

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Most of us are under the impression that engaging fighters means turning loops and pulling G's. Spiraling around a bird's nest mixed with good guys and bad guys with your fangs out and your finger on the trigger. Certainly there are tactics on the books for this, but they hardly represent more than a fraction of current training. The less well known truth is that fighters engage fighters by flying straight at each other. Opponents can be detected at over fifty miles of separation, but it's what you do while closing the distance that determines everything about the result. And it's timelines that offer pilots a series of templates about how to wiggle into a firing position. These of course vary according to missile, but are based on essentially the same set of events.

A call is generated by one the fighters themselves or from an external source such as a ground station or ship – or even another aircraft in a completely different location – someone with the ability to observe several blocks at once. The information it contains is of a standardized nature, usually the altitude, location, and general grouping of what's out there. All of this data is typically soaked in a monotone drool and then regurgitated a least once for confirmation. But it's the very last word to which pilots remain attune, because that determines whether or not they can even pull the trigger.

Regardless of who found it, whatever reflects radar energy is often no more than a blob in the distance. No one's even seen it yet, and no one knows what it is. But sometimes available radar energy can be decoded in such a way as to clearly reveal who's actually reflecting it. Pulse Doppler devices can be preprogrammed with special algorithms capable of pinpointing the very model your opponent is flying. MIG 29, Su-27, MIG-23, etc. Echo energy off the compressor blades of the intakes themselves conform beautifully to an electromagnetic beat. Each of which has been catalogued for the purpose of informing pilots not who, but exactly what it is they are up against. And given the proper geometry, this data will show up on most radar screens as soon as the computer can crunch the numbers. It's unclear whether it is indicative of a potent sarcasm or mere lack of it, but the formal name for this is actually Non Cooperative Target Recognition. Either way, confusion imposed by complicated rules of engagement and unreliability inherent to the technology make it rarely passable as grounds for launching a missile. Doing so might annihilate a compatriot. And that's why the last word is so important. If it is "bogey", it's still a blob. If it is "hostile", it's a green light to shoot.

But even if you get the word on something still thirty miles away, you're only through step one of the timeline. At this point our two fighters have already oriented themselves in the direction of the blob in the distance. But not exactly nose to nose. They've

offset their track by roughly twenty degrees to one side in order to minimize the high rate of closure. Doing this is also said to help conceal the fact that they're purposefully even targeting it. But provided it isn't a flight of far superior Russian aircraft closing hypersonic from well over 60,000 feet, they've got a few moments to make some decisions. But regardless, it will be over within the span of a minute – which is less than the average freefall skydive.

In keeping with our statement that available gadgets determine everything about tactics, it pays (not much) to know a thing or two about missiles. And the truth is there's basically only three. All of which have remained immune for literally decades to any breakthrough in thinking or even progression of fighter aircraft. You'll find the same missiles that were strapped to American jets in Vietnam are basically the same ones around which fighters are still designed. And given no subsequent overhauls of this form of logic, the phenomenon will likely to continue. The first kind is designed for short range engagements, and is generally reserved for when the other is in sight – when infrared energy can be sensed and tracked. In other words, it detects the heat of aircraft engines. And, therefore, is typically only available when you're behind someone. The second receives its direction directly from the radar, and requires electronic guidance until impact. Meaning, the moment it ventures outside the cone of electronic spray being emitted from the nose of your aircraft, it stops working. The last kind is essentially no different than the second, except for the fact that it can leave the cone and keep working. Sometimes.

"The fighter pilot is cut from the morally confused, and fashioned into the ethically immune. Cognizant of his contract to adhere to the checklist, but ignorant of what any of it might mean."

The unofficial names for these three kinds of missiles are infrared, semi-active, and active. And not unlike the cigarettes, pipes, and cigars of this world, come in various forms depending on the country. They are manufactured, upgraded, and warehoused in quantities untraceable by the very people who get the invoice. One nation in particular shelves an arsenal of each, calling them the Sidewinder, the Sparrow, and the AMRAAM. The first is apparently an effort to equate heat-seeking with snakes, while the second alludes vaguely to birds. But the third, for whatever reason, is nothing more than an acronym for Advanced-Medium-Range-Air-to-Air-Missile.

Our pilots, meanwhile, are still closing on the blob, which has since turned into a tight group of two. But they're outfit with at least one of each of the missiles mentioned above. Their objective, as Robinson describes, remains unchanged since the beginning of time. Get a punch off at maximum reach. This, in technical terms, means fire a missile at a physical separation large enough to enable them to flee undetected. But they have no secret gadgets enabling the monitoring of the cockpits of either of the pair in the blob. So unless they get beelined in a manner clearly visible on radar, they have no way to verify if their presence is even known. And the only thing on hand enabling our pilots to make decisions is a meticulous adherence to the timeline.

Which says our blob-pair is ready to be locked. But missiles, as stated earlier, are not always dependent on radar. The Sidewinder, for instance, can be launched from the roof of your car if you could find a way to properly aim it. But until the US collapses and the hardware becomes available, testing of this sort will likely be heavily regulated. And at this range, there is virtually no infrared available.

The radio up to now has been clobbered by a repetitive series of calls. All of them similar to the first. Updates on position, altitude and the direction of the blob pair approaching. The last one was finally punctuated with a "hostile" declaration, but the NCTR equipment has yet to even come up with a model. Meaning, these "hostile" intruders have already been ordered to be shot out of the sky, but the equipment hasn't even deemed them uncooperative. Anyway, time is running out. And the pilots have only seconds to get their radars out of scan mode and into a beam concentrated exclusively on one aircraft. This is generally referred to as "sorting", and basically governs who locks on to what part of the blob. Although it may often be subject to slight airborne adjustment, typically this is all decided ahead of time.

But the last few seconds haven't been filled with only radio calls. The blob pair have actually turned around and are now facing our fighters, and are likely now running timelines of their own. So at this point it's a question of who can get a missile off quickest. But actually it's not quite that simple. There are countless permutations to how this situation can unfold, depending on what kind of missiles are in use. Should the blob pair be equipped with only the semi-active kind, they will still be forced to maintain their general direction. Because that's the only way to ensure that the missiles they fire don't venture out of the limits of their radar. In other words, the first opportunity for the blob pair to physically get away from the situation would be the instant their missiles impact our fighters. Pilots refer to the distance between the fighters and the blob pair at the moment this occurs as the missile's F-pole. It therefore follows that an intercept involving groups equipped exclusively with semi-active is essentially a war between competing F-poles. Between who can get a missile off first. And even if the other manages a shot with yours in transit, mutually assured destruction is still avoidable. Because any missile launched from a fighter that is subsequently destroyed will no longer be receiving anymore radar data – and will eventually arc off unguided. But all of this changes if you have an active missile on board.

Active missiles are equipped with tiny radars themselves, and are capable of locating targets on their own. The pilot's job is just to point them in the right direction. And based on a data stream transferred to the missile at launch from radars that have already completed "sorting", the missile will eventually open its own eyes and start looking. This is typically referred to as the moment it "goes active", and is also

known as "Pit-bull", or more technically, "A-pole". Without getting too technical, AMRAAM's, as a rule, "go active" after traveling roughly one-third of the distance between the shooter and the target at the instant the missile was launched. For example, should our fighters launch AMRAAM's at eighteen miles, they will "go active" when the range ticks down to roughly twelve. Meaning, the fighters are no longer required to keep flying at the blob pair for the purposes of keeping a missile inside the radar cone. And after manually flipping a switch cutting off the radar link to the missile, they are free to go elsewhere and do other things.

But what if the blob pair is also doing the same. What if the fighters have themselves been locked and are now in danger of being subsequently targeted. Honestly put, there are few ways to confirm this. Most fighters are fit with what is generally pronounced "Raw Gear" (despite the fact that the actual acronym reads "RWR"), which is nothing more than a series of passive receivers attached to various points around the aircraft, connected to a gauge in the cockpit. They are installed for the purpose of informing a pilot that he has managed to find his way into someone's radar cone. This is usually interpreted for tactical reasons to mean "oh shit, I'm being chased by a missile". But provided you aren't piloting a Mirage 2000, you've long since discarded this equipment as useless. Switching the thing on will just open up the circuit to every wave currently ricocheting through space, so the device itself eventually depreciates into an attraction fit for the headboard of some pinball arcade. Within the realm of active missiles, it's no longer a battle of F-poles. It's rather one of maximizing one's distance from the other at the point when the missile finally decides to "go active". In other words, it's a joust between A-poles, and essentially a question of who can cut the radar link quickest.

Sort of. Unlike the previous illustration with two semi-active missiles simultaneously airborne, active missiles are obviously at some point bound to "go active". Meaning, regardless of whether your missile impacts one of the blob pair first or not, you're still left with airborne missiles to dodge. In spite of what others may profess, this is virtually impossible to pull off with the naked eye. So the only way to defend oneself against a missile currently tracking is to separate oneself physically from the radar energy. But since there is no definitive way to determine if there's a missile even tracking, measures against this are usually taken preemptively. Which brings us to the next step of the timeline.

It was pointed out earlier that airborne radars function by broadcasting a series of closely-spaced pulses and then comparing what comes back with what went out. That from the frequency shifts exhibited comes some basic data about what it ran in to. Altitude, velocity, position, direction, etc. But what was intentionally not mentioned was that there is one useful exception to this phenomenon. A void, if you will, in which frequency shifts are altogether unobservable. And it's thanks to the research of one Christian Doppler from Austria that any of this is even discussable.

Consistent with the principle that energy reflected off objects in motion will to some extent exhibit a frequency shift, it follows that objects not moving will show none. So in order to even detect any object moving in the vicinity, it must have some sort of relative velocity. Objects moving away from you will show a decrease in frequency, while approaching ones will show an appropriately higher one. But if the movement of both observer and target together happen to maintain the same relative parameters – should they have no closing or opening component – they will be altogether undetectable with what fighters are currently limited to - none other than the pulse Doppler radar.

Everyone knows this, and most take advantage of it by incorporating it into their timelines. So the obvious solution to how to dodge an airborne missile is thus to make oneself electronically invisible. To cloak oneself in a condition of zero relative velocity by maneuvering to place all threats at either the left or right extremes – a place pilots typically refer to as "the beam". It goes without saying that as long as this relationship between radar energy and frequency shifting undergoes no major evolution, any established method for accomplishing this feat will itself continue to remain the same forever. So it isn't a big surprise that the "notch" maneuver I'm about to describe has for literally decades remained virtually unchanged. And given no major paradigm shift in either nature or how we exploit it, this too will likely continue indefinitely.

Suppose our fighters launched an AMRAAM apiece at the point when they were eighteen miles from the blob pair. Now that the separation is twelve, they have no reason to keep making themselves into targets. The missiles are active, the "RWR" gear is blinking, and it's unclear if they've even been fired upon. The timeline at this point calls for both of them to put the blob pair on the beam. In other words, perform some flight maneuver that reduces their relative velocity to zero. Since they've been tracking from the beginning at an offset to reduce closure, it's not exactly a ninety degree turn. More of a flop over to a heading exactly ninety degrees from the blob pair, complimented with an extreme adjustment of altitude. The objective is to eject oneself from the radar spray of the other, while simultaneously attaining electronic invisibility. The altitude shift in this case requires either a climb or a descent, whichever puts them roughly five thousand feet below the blob pair. So the notch can be a rather disorienting maneuver.

Sometimes it works. Sometime it doesn't. Often it can be monitored in its entirety by the other if, for some reason, the radar manages to keep tracking it. But our fighters have no way of knowing this. Only unhelpful suggestions from the pinball that's still blinking. Reminding them to keep arcing around the beam. So here they are at some completely different altitude having wiped their radars clean executing the notch because the radar spray doesn't extend to ninety degrees from one's nosecone. And even if it did, the fact that they are "beaming" would make it meaningless.

Meanwhile, the range to the blob pair is less than ten miles now, but there is no actual radar data to confirm it. And regardless of whether or not they see any explosions in the distance, they are simply on to the next step in the timeline. Turn back in and figure out what happened. So they each execute a hard climbing turn to get them pointed in what they are guessing is the direction of the blob pair. Their objective at this point is to lock them again on radar while zooming up from their perch below. Should they be successful at this and also equipped with extra missiles, they are generally free to pull the trigger at will. This process of climbing out of the notch and beelining one's adversary is what pilots refer to as "cleaning up the merge". It affords

what they believe to be their best chance at capitalizing on whatever is left of the element of surprise. The manuals at this stage prescribe that one's eyes be outside – scanning for either airplanes or debris. It's their first look at what has up to now been just a blob pair, and it determines how the timeline will end.

If the technology was good enough, and their A-pole was longest, there might not be anything left for them to do. But if either of the blob pair are still airborne and searching, it ceases to be a mere war between missiles. Everything at that point becomes a visual engagement, and a series of other factors rush in. Pilot experience, engine thrust, fuel capacity, luck. Actually, it's a different manual altogether.

But when you multiply this picture by hundreds of different blocks manned by thousands of aircraft on constant patrol, you lace it with a complexity of unmanageable proportions and open up huge margins for error. All of which can mutate exponentially into a monster quite ungovernable within the jurisdiction of one individual. And this auctioning off of the problem to legions of the eager empowers thousands with the ability to kill. To run timelines. To pull triggers. To program waypoints and press buttons. To reduce the problem to various issues of procedure. It gives control of heavy weaponry to the physically adept and invites them to get their rocks off on deployment. Away from family. Away from the law. Away from the need to be reflective. To even examine if what they are doing is actually working.

This is what fighter aviation is currently composed of. Granted there are variations on how anyone can run a timeline, each is fastened conceptually to the same theme. For example, missiles can be fired without locks being taken, and sometimes your only job is to pester. Ranges for firing are prescribed for different altitudes, but in the end they are little more than recommendations. One can forego the need to even notch altogether by simply bypassing certain blobs entirely. There are numerous ways to put the puzzle together, but all of them descend directly from one aim. Achieve a set of preset parameters. Put the hardware in a position of relative advantage and send it on its merry old way.

None of this requires the operator to possess an intellect, nor an ability to see the situation from a distance. Doing so might add a little stimulation to the labor, but in the end is of no special significance. The system is not structured to even listen. The fighter pilot is cut from the morally confused, and fashioned into the ethically immune. Cognizant of his contract to adhere to the checklist, but ignorant of what any of it might mean. Reared in the upper reaches of middle class affluence and often radiating with Christian repentance. A crusader with a radar and a supersonic chariot flinging spears with his hands folded in prayer. Detached from what lies dormant at the bedrock of everything. The fact that it's not about him, but rather the gadgets.

It's the data he's managed to assemble through years of constant training. The numbers in all the tables scattered randomly throughout the manuals that keep showing up in every question on every test. It's that none of it was ever designed around crediting the successful, but all of it around unleashing the missile. The bulk of current tactics stem not from pilots themselves, but from the bow wave of technological prowess. From who can funnel the most capital into research and development, and who can wield the mightiest machine. Every question of tactics in fighter aviation is simply a backdrop for how to better one's missile. And the real wars are waged in today's China Lakes and Znamensks. Not in any aerial engagement.

Perhaps this is the only true explanation for why "the fundamental objective…remains unchanged," and why one must "keep the opponent constantly on the defensive". And perhaps this is why the most visible offspring of Robinson's foray into exposition is an apparent obsession with the concepts "unchanged" and "constantly."

So if the Major is correct and what was once hailed as a battlefield has migrated decisively into a "three dimensional battlespace", detecting one's foe will in most cases require more than just eyes. And provided the vast majority of all airborne engagements are thus conducted beyond visual range, it follows that such victory will be contingent more upon the capability of one's gadgets than success in cultivating one's instinct. This gradual separation between parties to conflict is essentially what Robinson is illustrating. In other words, he's elaborating on the reason why everyone in his profession has for 5000 years been foreclosing on their own relevance. And why forking over control to research and development is gradually negating any reason for their existence.

"The excavation of ethics from both sides of the equation is what fighter training is designed to accomplish. To capitalize on ignorance by ensuring pilots can land a plane before they are even capable of understanding its purpose."

Should gadgets determine the outcome of a vast majority of fights, the study of them will only quicken one's ability to get into position, which by definition would stand in the way of a real solution. The accumulation of such knowledge will continue to grow in complexity and require increasingly more time to master – limiting what remains of the operator's ties to the layman and alienating him from those he professes to defend. It will latch itself to the laboratory and leech gleefully off the beltway while continuing its manufacture of those freshly dedicated to revenge.

But that isn't to say there's anything wrong with piloting airplanes. Or engaging in tasks that require high levels of awareness. These activities exist in states of overwhelming abundance and stand subject only to what limits the mind. Running a café through lunch hour is likely no easier than running an orchestra through Bartok. Steering a city bus through Chicago would likely exhaust anyone's ability to persevere. Just like one false move hauling crab in the Aleutians might mean the difference between fortune and death. These professions demand a sustained concentration that in the end only serves to accentuate one's development. One person's decision to embark on such a career is thus an expression of his desire to grow. And the skills associated with the

operation of airplanes in no way represent an exception to this. The intentions of most fighter pilots are themselves typically centered on an innocent wish to succeed. To do well. To not f*ck up. And in most cases do not exhibit what is passed around publicly as a premeditated, bloodthirsty urge to dismember. There are of course some of those, but the vast majority are just out to pay the bills. Or keep a marriage. To have fun while providing enough dough to raise a family. And they do what they have to do to stay away from the big questions without disrupting the status quo.

And this is the root of the problem. Fighter aviation exists not as a product of ideology, but as a mutually exploitable career path in spite of it. An overwhelming default for millions of young men and women who aren't after the hype, but are willing to swallow it in order to get what they want. A chance to excel. To hone skills. To create mates and break a sweat for something noble. And it's this tiny personal sacrifice that marks the genesis of selective morality. A numbness to all issues not directly connected to one's objective or its rehearsal. Blank spots and gray areas only interpretable as pure black or pure white. Good people who become faultless and bad people who should perish. Anything to protect the meaning of all the effort expended to get a grip on the controls.

In other words, the excavation of ethics from both sides of the equation is what fighter training is designed to accomplish. To capitalize on ignorance by ensuring pilots can land a plane before they are even capable of understanding its purpose.

This structure yields great success during the early stages of training when the individual focus is less on flying than social acceptance. When the conscript is still ignorant of the fact that he's been involuntarily enrolled in the most rugged reputation-building regimen in the world. Where the widely recognized standard is that new guys don't know anything. And if they did, it'd only be buzz words swallowed whole. Because the job of the rookie is to come across as stupid, but clever enough to repel condescending humor. To shroud the actual dimensions of his tactical knowledge in a self deprecating superficial idiocy. It's the only way to infiltrate this circle of testosterone without wounding the pride of the far more experienced. This collateral duty of trying to get everyone to like you is characteristic of groups with a lot of down time. Small troupes of humans like SWAT teams or bible groups, preparing for similar contingencies but hard up for practical application. And it's this effort expended on getting rated as worthy that helps distract pilots from the cold hard facts.

While the missile may be temporarily useful in eliminating the presence of a so-called air threat, its employment will never eliminate a problem. Because action conducted to "neutralize" is essentially action conducted late, and only prolongs the arrival of the awareness necessary to graduate from the callow notion that perfecting the annihilation a problem somehow equates to having solved it. Further financing for this mindset will no more lead to the seizure of the offensive than a pupil of Robinson's to the planting of some proverbial knockout. The reason is mind-numbingly simple. Tactics, while stimulating, are determined by gadgets, not by any spontaneous gift of instinct. Where you go and what you do are simply byproducts of the evolution of the missile, and while signing up for this role might get you laid, it will atrophy your soul.

Free yourself
Images created by The Zeitgeist Movement community at the Zeitgeist Media Project.

The epoch of radical behaviorism: civilization, values and ecology

By Tristan A. Shawn

The Old Stone Age, or the Paleolithic period, began nearly 3 million years ago, with the first appearance of tools made by the first subhuman beasts, and ended only 12,000 years ago, when the great ice sheets withdrew for the last time to the poles and ranges. Geologically speaking, 3 million years is a small fraction of time, one second in Earth's day. But in human terms, the Old Stone Age is a deep abyss of time – more than 99.5 percent of our existence – from which we entered civilization only yesterday.

During this era, the natural world determined our every move, shaping behavior and dominating human evolution through the surrounding environment and the limitations therein. Archaeological research has exposed these societies, including the current hunter-gatherers that still remain in certain parts of the world, as tending to have non-hierarchical, egalitarian social structures.

A series of seductive and accidental steps, and as wild game rapidly died off from over hunting, led to that great change know to hindsight as the Neolithic or Farming "Revolution" – between 8,000 and 10,000 years ago. This found new ways to raise the evolutionary stakes, while simultaneously influencing and changing the social dynamics by engineering a different way of life. In the words of Biological Scientist, Dr. Robert Saposlky:

"Hunter-gatherers have thousands of wild food sources to subsist on. Agriculture changed all of that, generating an overwhelming reliance on a few-dozen domesticated food sources… Agriculture allowed for the stockpiling of surplus resources and thus, inevitably, the unequal stockpiling of them: stratification of society and the invention of classes. Thus, it has allowed for the invention of poverty."

Compared with earlier developments, the Neolithic revolution happened at breakneck speed across continents, rapidly leading to the creation of towns and villages that sprang up in a dozen farming heartlands. They seemed to have continued the egalitarian life for a while, in which everyone had a comparable standard of living. Land was either thought of as having no owner or it belonged to the community. Gradually, differences in wealth and power became more and more entrenched and land boundaries became a necessary part of existence.

3,000 years ago, civilizations had sprung up in many places: Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, and more. The earliest of all was Sumer—in what is now known as Southern Iraq. In the fifth and fourth millennia B.C., this land was a marshy delta of channels teeming with fish, reeds, and sandbars covered with date palms. Humans migrated from the exhausted topsoil of the East, and created new arable land in the soon-to-be Sumer. After fast exploitation for human residence, scattered mud villages grew into towns, and by 3,000 B.C., these towns became small cities. The priesthoods, which started out as village cooperatives who controlled the organized distribution of food and its stockpilled surplus, became, in essence, the first 'corporations,' complete with employees and officials, controlling the profitable task of administering the god's estates.

Over time, and with mounting concern for their own interests, the priestly corporations evolved to become an exploitative force – exhibiting the first signs of capitalism. We have to understand that no community, however primitive, can effectively hold together unless recognized rules regarding the relations between members are crystallized into precedent or custom. 'Correct' behavior consists in not violating this social equilibrium. But once an economic imperative leaches into the social collective, as seen in Sumerian culture and in many other small communities, a new form of behavior evolves – a value mutation that finds expression in the self-interested competition of social-economic standards. In attempt to handle such conditions, a new kind of law, made by humans and called legislation, emerged to deal with the new problems for which the old customary laws have no specific remedy. Thus conformity was encouraged by the use of force and threat.

With the invention of cities, irrigation, and corporations, Sumer completed its social rank with hereditary kings who forged their power by claiming personal links with divinity. By 2,500 B.C., the social system was in the hands of lords and great families. The Sumerian population became serfs, with a permanent class of slaves beneath them. The ecological demand from a growing population and greater economic expenditures eat away at nature's ability to sustain their agriculture. And with no attempt at staving off disaster, by 2,000 B.C., scribes were reporting that the earth had "turned white." All crops were failing. This was the inevitable result of over-tampering with a natural system to meet economic requirements. In this case, their water diversion for arid land meant rivers could no longer rinse salt from rocks and earth and carry it to the sea. The water evaporates and the salt is left behind. This effect, coupled with warfare, depression, inflation, and acute hardship for the lower class, led merchants to utilize the absence of state control to become full-fledged capitalists who amassed fortunes in the decline of Sumer.

The next five centuries is a dark age about which little is known. The historic one thousand year run of Sumer came to an end. Their life-blind values, a human value system blinded by contrived meaning unrelated to natural law, and entrenched social beliefs decoupled from the only real government that ever exists – Earth's ecology on which all life depends. Once a diminishing natural capital falls below its ability to regenerate, without repowering this ecology, society is led down the inexorable path of collapse. Granted, some areas have proven privileged in this regard. Among them is Egypt. As Herodotus wrote: "Egypt was the gift of the Nile, her fields watered and her soils refreshed each year by a layer of flood-born silt." This allowed for the same annual field to be continued without diminishing its topsoil. Despite some large events, Egypt has sustained itself for thousands of years.

In the two millennia that passed since the fall of Sumer, civilizations had leaped up around the world. Each one

exhibiting similar behavioral traits as the Sumerians: an infectious growth of power and wealth expanding peripherally until it eventually diminishes its life host. Most of us are familiar with the careers of Rome, Maya, and most notably, Easter Island. These societies fell victim to the same behavioral forces that rendered Sumer almost uninhabitable. They functioned much like a Ponzi sale scheme, requiring ever-increasing growth to sustain itself, a system destined to fail. They were, however, geographically isolated and had the fortunate ability to migrate from their exhausted environment to another fresh location – more natural capital, a new capacity to grow and exploit another constrained ecology. Today, Earth's 6.8 billion people lack that comfort; there isn't a whole untouched world surrounding the global ecosystem. We depend not locally, but globally. The experiment of global civilization is one that needs to succeed, or the engines that sustain billions of people will die. (It is estimated that one billion may be close to the number who could feed themselves indefinitely if industrialized civilization were to fail.)

We cannot surrender to the dehumanizing ideology of totalitarian capitalism that threatens to wipeout the human species.

After the Neolithic revolution, which maintained a population of about one or two million, human numbers began the steady rise. Localized societies allowed the experiment of civilization to continue – a collapse didn't affect the greater whole.

If we employ an analytical observation to the current trend of global civilization, a picture all-too familiar emerges. Unlike in the past, we have the capacity to measure our impact on the global biosphere, which is the clearest depiction of sustainability. The ecological markers suggest that in the early 1960s, humans used 80 percent of nature's yearly output; by the 1980s, we reached the threshold of 100 percent; in the year 1999, we used 125 percent. This should come at no surprise, for our present behavior is typical of past civilizations. It's not accidental that twined with an environmental crisis, both at present and in Sumerian times, is an economic crisis.

Karl Polanyi, in his book The Great Transformation (written in 1944), laid out the devastating consequences that grow out of a so-called self-regulated free market. He warned that a financial system always devolves into a Mafia capitalism, which is an accurate description of today's financial and political system. He grasped that a self-regulating market turns human beings and the natural environment into commodities – situation that ensures the destruction of both society and the natural world. "The free market's assumption that nature and human beings are objects whose worth is determined by the market allows each to be exploited for profit until exhaustion or collapse," Palanyi wrote. "A society that no longer recognizes that nature and human life have a sacred dimension, an intrinsic value beyond monetary value, commits collective suicide. Such societies cannibalize themselves until they die." And this has already has began to unfold.

An important step in confronting the new paradigm of global economic power is to understand how it wields control. Sheldon Wolin, a political philosopher, effectively explains the new state of economic domination within our political and legislative system in his book, Democracy Inc. He labels our system "inverted totalitarianism." He states:

"Inverted totalitarianism, unlike classical totalitarianism, does not revolve around a demagogue or charismatic leader. It finds expression in the anonymity of the corporate state. It purports to cherish democracy, patriotism, a free press, parliamentary systems and constitutions while manipulating and corrupting internal levers to subvert and thwart democratic institutions. Political candidates are elected in popular votes by citizens but are ruled by armies of corporate lobbyists in Washington, Ottawa or other state capitals who author the legislation and get the legislators to pass it. A corporate media controls nearly everything we read, watch or hear and imposes a bland uniformity of opinion. Mass culture, owned and disseminated by corporations, diverts us with trivia, spectacles and celebrity gossip. In classical totalitarian regimes, such as Nazi fascism or Soviet communism, economics was subordinate to politics. Under inverted totalitarianism the reverse is true. Economics dominates politics – and with that domination comes different forms of ruthlessness."

Humanity now stands at the cusp of a great planetary endgame, characterized by the Easter Islanders cutting the last remaining trees, the Mayas frantically building the last pyramids to offer sanctity to their gods, the Romans at their height of military dominance, when Sumer's agricultural and economic systems began to fail. We cannot surrender to the dehumanizing ideology of totalitarian capitalism that threatens to wipeout the human species. Working to shift the neoclassical economic paradigm is the best chance we have in revoking the corporate game. But for now, learning to weather the coming collapse might be the only victory possible, and in the end, helping the system fail will be the only worthwhile form of resistance. As Aleksandr Herzen said a century ago, "It is not our job to save a dying system but to replace it: We think we are the doctors. We are the disease."

The global neoliberal order is dead. And if we don't radically implement the means to kill the cancer of monetary hegemony, save the living ecosphere on which all life depends, and prepare for a bleak period in human history, then like all the civilizations before us, we will commit collective suicide – but this time the magnitude of disaster will dwarf all the dark ages of the past.

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Seeing past the summit

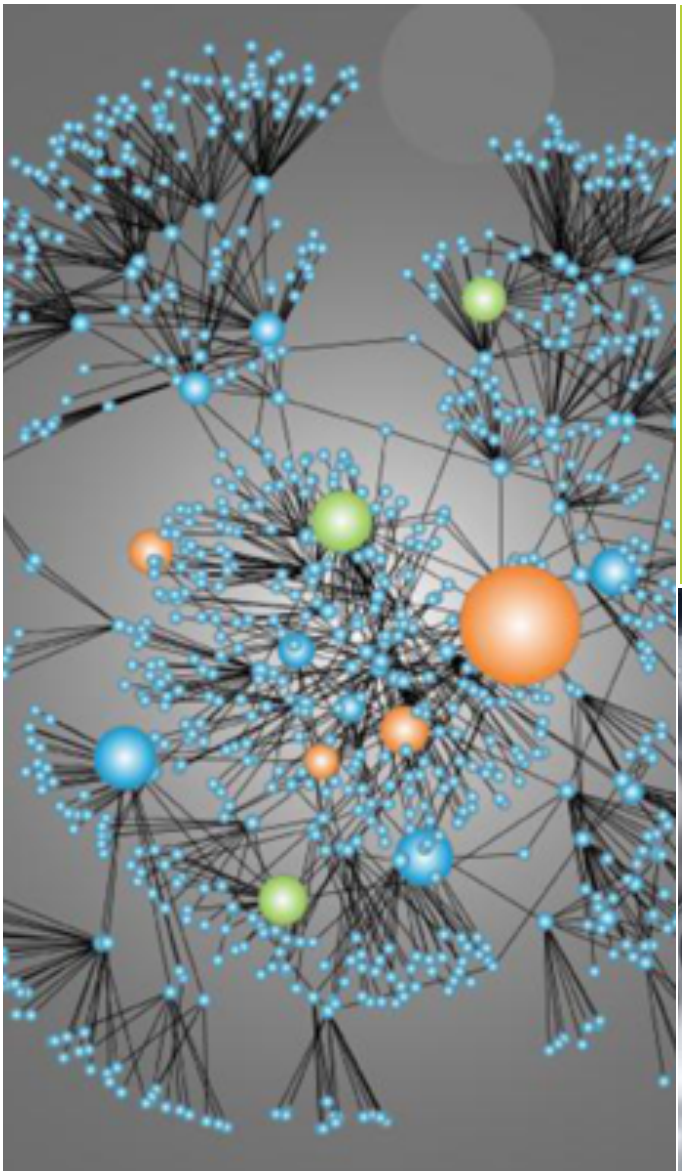
By Sam Fellin

Being an inhabitant of Canada's largest city, crowds, traffic jams, and even protests come as no surprise to this long-time Toronto resident. Nevertheless, as the G20 summit rolls into the downtown core this weekend, the word "crowded" becomes an understatement as thousands infiltrate the streets, including protesters and more than ten thousand police officers patrolling to protect the leaders of the world's top twenty capitalist nations. It shouldn't be a great shock to anyone that this June's summit has been optimistically branded with the title "Recovery and New Beginnings", as recovering from the recent recession will undoubtedly be the number one topic on the agenda. However, as the world's economies have desperately struggled to regroup and reform following the financial meltdown of 2008, increasing numbers of individuals who have been hung out to dry by their respective governments have begun to question whether they truly will see a new beginning, and whether capitalism will be the system to bring it about for them.

With thousands of protesters taking to the streets to make their voices heard, this event presents itself as an apt moment for us, the many supporters of the Zeitgeist Movement, to reflect on how we, too, can make our collective voice ring out for all to hear. The first point that comes to mind is that violent protest, although understandably cathartic for individuals who feel hard done by as a result of economic difficulties and the inherent inequalities of capitalism, is not the way to bring about long-term change, which is, of course, the ultimate goal of the Movement. Violence virtually always leads to sensationalizing of the protests, where even the peaceful varieties are tarred with the same over-hyped media brush. This, in turn, makes it nearly impossible for the many groups with legitimate concerns to be taken seriously by the vast majority of society, or by the government.

So is peaceful protest the answer then? As someone who has participated in peaceful protests in the past, the feeling of solidarity and of exercising one's constitutional rights is a great one. But on the other hand, this type of protest relies upon a premise that is often taken for granted, namely that the world leaders meeting at the summit and the governments that they represent have the people's best interests in mind. However, as much as I'm sure we all wish this to be the case, the fact remains that governments worldwide have been increasingly concerned with the rights of corporations over the rights of the people. The environment continues to be destroyed as a result of our addiction to oil (as any inhabitant of the Gulf can attest to), while companies are held largely unaccountable for polluting, and precious, finite resources are being used in a reckless and unsustainable manner. Workers have received little assistance in their ongoing struggle to find steady employment, while white collar criminals receive bonuses and bailouts for destroying millions of people's livelihoods. And despite this turmoil, we see here in Canada, as well an in the US and many other countries, that politicians win elections based on empty promises and platforms which focus on increasing profits and industry over increasing sustainability and equality. It is easy to get swept up in the G20 Summit and its illusions of teamwork and political progress. However, in a political landscape marred by capitalism's dangerous and ever- expanding hold, it hardly comes as a surprise that corporations have become the new first-class citizens.

The people have and deserve the right to peaceful assembly, and it's hard to doubt the sincerity and passion these protesters hold towards their respective causes, from gay rights to steelworkers' unions. However, while it is commendable that these groups stand up for what they believe in, the unfortunate truth remains that it is unlikely that their efforts will be seriously considered, let alone acted upon in a concrete way by the government that "represents" them. This being said, it is not my aim to be negative or cynical about the future, but rather to empower those who wish for change with the knowledge that the power to alter society's course for the better ultimately lies not within their political representatives or even the ballot, but within themselves. The Zeitgeist Movement is a grassroots movement at its very core. If the government refuses to represent us then we, the people, will proudly represent ourselves, our family, friends, and neighbours, and spread the word until the change we envision in the world can be made into a reality. The creation of significant change by the people may not come, as many continue to believe, through protest, but instead by empowering and teaching, and spreading the Movement's message amongst friends, even enemies, anyone who will listen, rather than screaming it at our leaders and expecting results which may never come. If we cannot get our message loud and clear to the people at the top, then our responsibility is to build the movement from the ground up until we meet our leaders at eye level and cannot be ignored any longer. It will certainly be a tough mountain to climb, but in solidarity with those who wish for a society free from injustice, inequality, and careless destruction of our environment, in unity with those who believe in a world that surpasses the greediness and contrived scarcity of capitalism, we strive closer and closer each day to reaching, and eventually, seeing past the summit.



"The website will be an open social platform, meaning that anyone can join in and submit their article [...] These articles will be part of the Global TZM RSS feed, which will be the unique official source of information of everything worth knowing about The Movement."

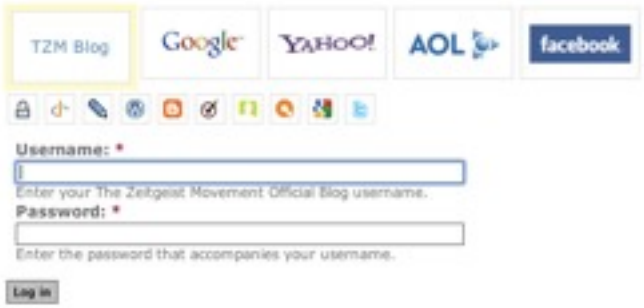
Federico Pistono

TZM blog and newsletter website
Unleashing the power of the community

By Federico Pistono

More than two years have passed since the movement started. Since then, we have made enormous progress: Zeitgeist Moving Forward is reaching 8 million views on YouTube, the community grew to more than half a million members, we have more than 1,100 chapters worldwide, several teams with running projects started, more and more are popping up as we speak. Clearly, we are not lacking in enthusiasm or people. We do have a bit of an organisational problem, and that is understandable. We are an emerging community, experimenting new ideas and directions every day, learning and evolving, and in the process making many mistakes. We are, after all, still in our infancy.

The newsletter team is our window to the world, a way to communicate among members, to keep up with what is happening in the movement, but also and especially to talk to the rest of the world about what we do, why society needs to take a new direction and what exactly we propose. For the past months, we have been lagging behind on this regard: the newsletter submissions by email are difficult to manage, the



TZM Official Blog registration form. If you use the Internet, you are likely to have one of those accounts. It integrates perfectly and takes only a few seconds. I know, we love you too :D

team is having difficulty organising and collecting relevant articles to publish, and our presence on the web has been very sparse. All this is about to change dramatically. In the coming weeks, we will be releasing a brand new website that

How does it work?

we have been developing in collaboration between the Italian developers team and the Newsletter team, to try and solve all these problems at once.

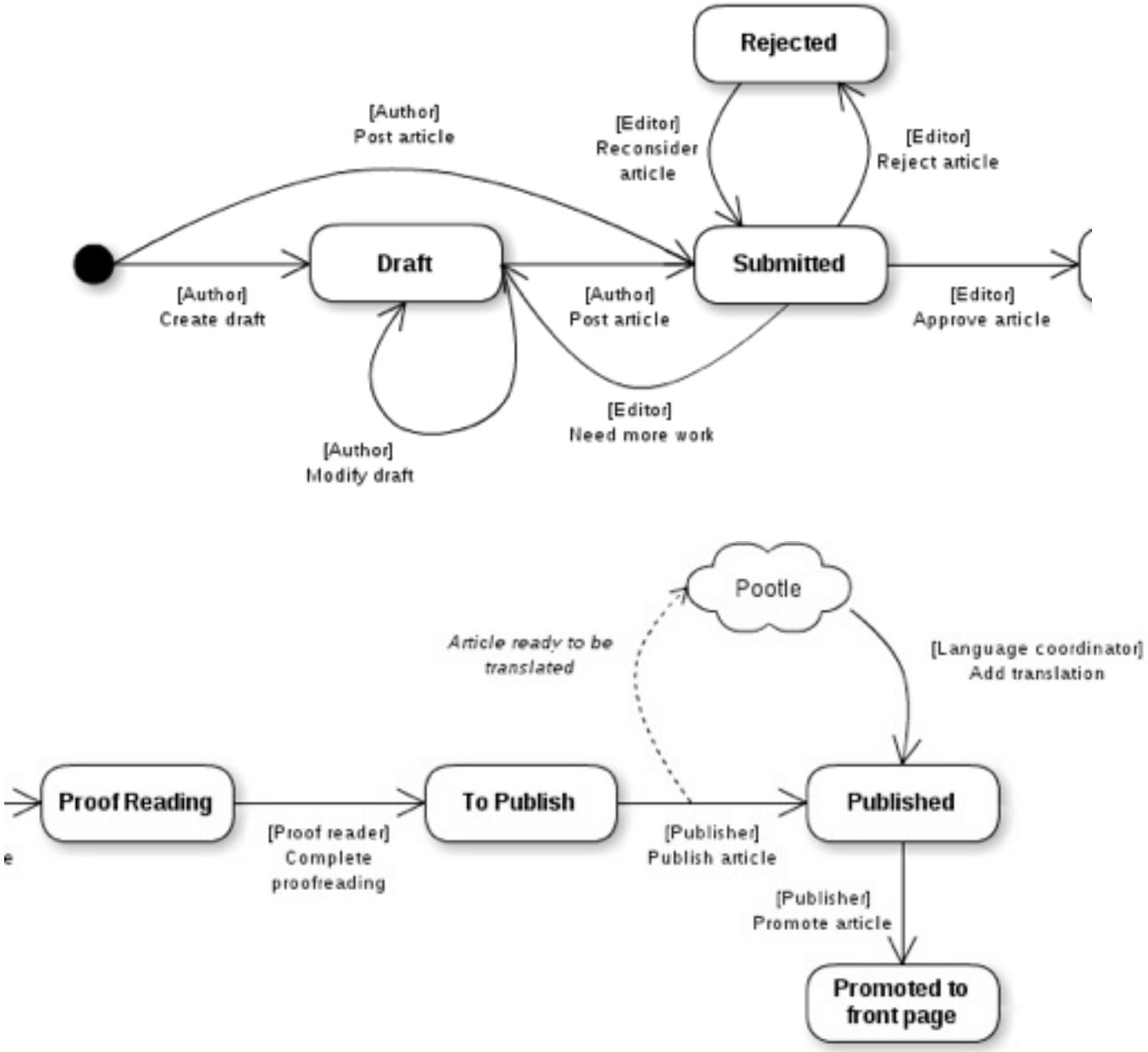
I have been asked several times many questions regarding this upcoming project in the last weeks, and I will try to answer them as best as I can in this article.

What is this website about?

The website will be an open social platform, meaning that anyone can join in and submit their article. It is developed using the powerful Free and Open Source Software Drupal, which many chapters have come to know and love, and that we think is the direction forward for the movement. We have also included several functionalities to facilitate the submission, revision and editing process, as well as user friendly interface that integrates the best tools that we know of. The exact mechanisms of the workflow will be revealed in the "Contribute" section of the website, where you will find HOWTOs and screencast videos that detail each step of the process, which roles are involved and what do they do. We are really dedicated in explaining the process clearly to everyone, we believe that transparency is a key word in building a community and making it work. Here is a general outline of the workflow.

Anyone can register and login. We have integrated multiple sign ins, to facilitate the registration process. It takes one second, and it works with almost any community/open service on the Web.

Although it is not compulsory, *we encourage everyone to use their real name and surname*: it's important to give a human face to the movement and show to the rest of the world that we are real people, with names and faces.



A summary of the workflow described above in action

Once you are logged in, you can go ahead and write an article. You may save it as a draft and change it as many times you want, choose the relevant section, geographical region it concerns (for example a chapter update or a news story), and add tags. Once you are happy with it, you may submit it for review. It will be evaluated by the Newsletter Team, which can either send the article back to the author for corrections, or decide that it's a valuable piece of work for the community. In the latter case, it will go to proofreading. There, a dedicated subteam will check for grammatical mistakes and fix them. Once the article is ready, it will finally be published. Depending

on the content of the article, it may be chosen to be one of the few to appear on the front page, or it could go on one of the many sections/subsections of the website. The articles on the front page represent the most important and interesting news, stories, projects, press releases *etc.* that concern everybody, on a global level. These articles will be part of the Global TZM RSS feed, which will be *the unique official source of information of everything worth knowing about The Movement*. All posts will be automatically submitted to our official facebook (facebook.com/tzmglobal) and twitter (twitter.com/tzmglobal) accounts, as well as any other community we may decide to use in the future. This hopefully will solve the problems of confusion and ambiguity that arose in the past: all the essential information that one needs to know is there. No more jumping around between forums, facebook pages and personal accounts, emails and so on. This is the real deal. Also, you can subscribe to these posts using just about anything: email, RSS, twitter, facebook. We are ubiquitous, open, and universally accessible.

All other articles will be accessible through a special page that contains all categories, sections and tags, which you can enter and subscribe through dedicated feeds, that are automatically generated.

What does that mean, in practical terms? Imagine you are only interested on articles about the Brazilian chapter, or articles from Europe regarding societal breakdown. No problem, just subscribe to those feeds with one click and you are good to go. Basically, the news will finally come to you, and just what you want to read.

What are some of the special features that you have included?

We have been working very hard on making the process functional, as well as user friendly, which is not an easy task. The website has all the standard tools of a blogging platform, including some social media integration, extended user profiles, and a dashboard to check the status of the articles you submitted. But maybe the most important and revolutionary function is an advanced commenting and meta-moderation system, which we have adapted from the hugely popular website Slashdot. We have been looking at all different solutions out there, from YouTube, TED, the Huffington post, Reddit, Stackoverflow, *et cetera*, and the single most reliable, best moderation system that has consistently proven to be effective is Slashdot (you can read about the details here http://slashdot.org/faq/com-mod.shtml). While we realise that this is not a perfect system, it is by far the best we could find: an emergent, evolved system created and managed by a community of enthusiasts that has worked immensely well for more than 13 years. We often talk about using the best technological tools available in the most efficient way. Well, it's time we actually do it, don't you think? ;)

How can I be part of the team?

All will be revealed in the "Contribute" page, as mentioned above. For now, suffice to say that anybody proving to write quality material and behaving well in the community is eligible to become part of the team.

When will it be functional?

We just finished the development phase, and we are now on BETA testing. We want to make sure that there are no bugs and obvious problems before launching. Of course, as experience tells us, we will not be able to spot all the problems and correct them, so we hope you will help us improving the platform one it goes live, and that you will be patient enough if you encounter any issue that we haven't addressed. Only by collaborating with the community at large can we hope to move forward as a movement, you support is precious.

The official launch with the will be notified through all of our channels, including a mass email to all members, very shortly.

Federico Pistono, Italian chapter coordinator
http://federicopistono.org
http://twitter.com/federicopistono
http://facebook.com/federicopistono.page

Psywar Interview

By V-RADIO

V-RADIO set out to get an interview with Scott Noble, the filmmaker of the film "Psywar". Psywar is an excellent film about the power of propaganda, public relations and advertising to influence and therefore control mankind.

You can view this film at no cost by visiting http://v-radio.org/ and going to the "Must See TV" tab. On the last page you will find a link to this film. I strongly urge you to check it out. Our Linguistic Team is currently working on translating this film into other languages.

Mr. Noble said he is not taking video or radio interviews at this time. However he did agree to take some time for a text based interview that I decided to share with you here.

V-RADIO: Please introduce yourself to the readers.

Mr. Noble: Sure. I'm a writer, filmmaker and wage slave currently living on Vancouver Island in British Colombia. My first film, Psywar: The Real Battlefield Is the Mind, was recently released online. It explores the evolution of propaganda and public relations in the United States.

V-RADIO: Can you describe for the readers what was the precipice, the moment that got you "out of the box"? What got you out of the mainstream dream and instead peering behind the curtain?

Mr. Noble: I'm not sure I can pinpoint one moment in time, but I do remember being deeply disturbed by the revelation that my aunt had been used as a human guinea pig in one of the CIA's Cold War mind control experiments – specifically,

"The 'mainstream media' has worked hand in glove with both the state and powerful corporations since the beginnings of the American propaganda industry."

Mr. Noble

experiments conducted at the Allen Memorial Institute in Montreal.

The Allen Memorial was then regarded as the preeminent psychiatric institution in Canada, so my grandparents decided to send my aunt there (a teenager at the time) to help her deal with certain emotional problems. She was only 16. From what I gather, her problems amounted to typical adolescent behavior (typical in our society, at least) – depression, delinquency, acting out and so forth.

Unbeknownst to my grandparents, the center's director, Dr. Ewan Cameron, was being paid by the CIA to conduct "mind control" experiments. He would later become president of the World Psychiatric Association. Techniques included massive doses of electric shock, massive doses of barbiturates, prolonged sensory deprivation, and other tortures. Indeed, one of the CIA's torture manuals, "KUBARK', refers explicitly to Cameron's experiments along with earlier studies in "fear based conditioning" by behaviorists like Hobart Mowrer.

Kubark describes a process of "regression" where "subjects" can be reduced to an "infantile state". I explore these issues in my next

documentary, "Human Resources", which was recently completed and will be online in a month or two. Perhaps owing to her young age at the time, my Aunt was never able to recover from the trauma of her experience at the Allen Memorial. She later took her own life.

V-RADIO: In regards to your Aunt, how did you find out about what happened to her?

Mr. Noble: It was bitterly ironic in that when she emerged from the Allen Memorial she was a basketcase and diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic. This was interpreted, at the time, by doctors, friends and loved ones as a worsening of her symptoms. She cried out that she had been "locked in the basement" of the center for months at a time and viciously abused by other methods -- an absurd idea, it seemed. It was only many years later when the story broke that we realized she was referring to "sensory deprivation" experiments. She refused to participate in the lawsuit against the Canadian government and the CIA due to fears that it was a sinister plot (a few victims such as Linda McDonald received a pittance -- about a hundred grand), revealing that she had indeed become a "paranoid schizophrenic", at least according to the typical diagnostic measures. The question is whether same would have happened if she hadn't suffered through the "therapy" of the CIA. I guess if you've been tortured for months on end, sinister plots where the government is out to get you don't seem so irrational. In any case, I never met her in person. When we visited her house, we were never allowed inside. I was a kid at the time. We all regarded her as a sort of "crazy Aunt in the attic". I have dedicated my second film, "Human Resources", to my Aunt, whose name was Nancy Noble.

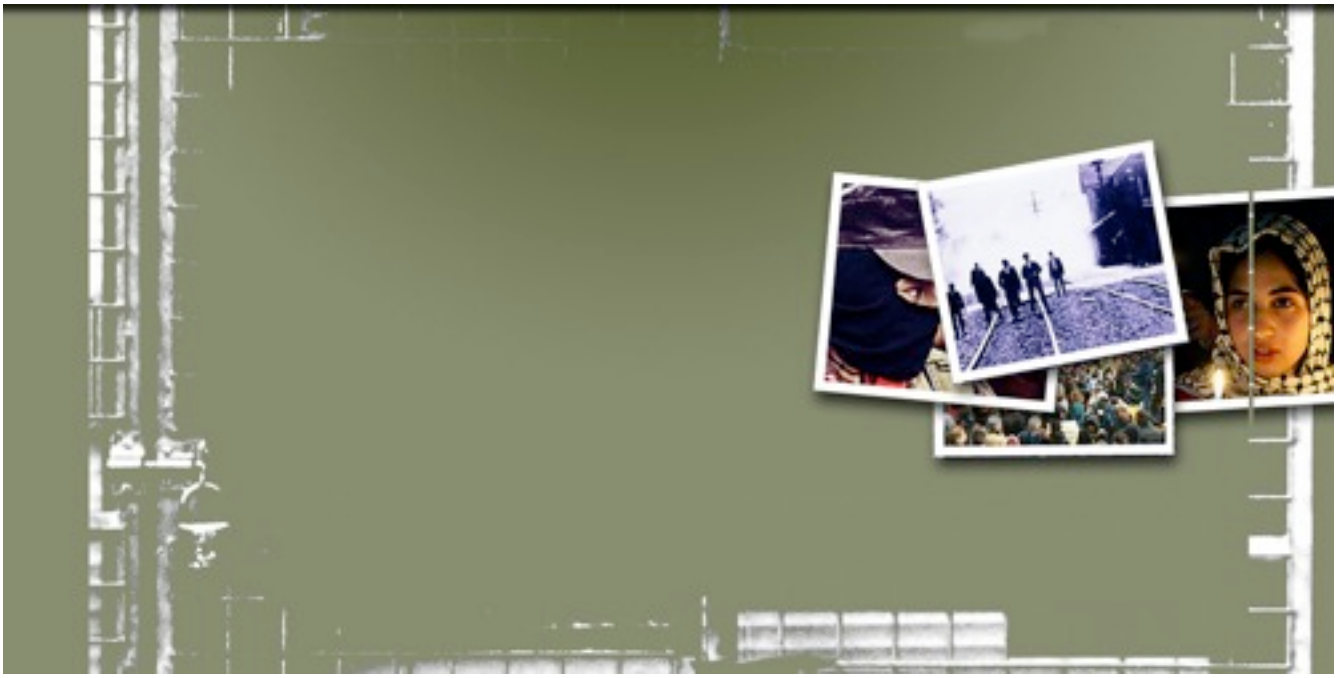
V-RADIO: What motivated you to make Psywar?

Mr. Noble: It was an unusual process in that I planned for a documentary series from the outset: five or six films. So I didn't have a clear idea what subjects I would tackle first. I conducted about 30 interviews with various intellectuals, activists, former spooks, whistle-blowers, etc., and decided to start with propaganda.

Obviously, no one film can properly address so vast a subject, so I decided to design Psywar both as an introduction to the current state of psychological warfare and as a sort of history lesson about the origins and development of PR and propaganda in the United States. Future entries will explore the Cold War period and its bastard child, the War on Terror.

The History Channel is replete with documentaries about the propaganda techniques employed by the Third Reich and the Soviet Union against its citizens, but when it comes to propaganda techniques employed by the American government against *their*s – information we could actually use – we are left with very little to go on; at least in the "mainstream media". Part of this owes to the historical relationship between propaganda and journalism in the United States. The "mainstream media" has worked hand in glove with both the state and powerful corporations since the beginnings of the American propaganda industry. During WWI, figures like Edward Bernays, Walter Lippmann, Ivy Lee – the "founding fathers" of modern journalism and PR – all of them cut their teeth foisting pro-war propaganda on the American people. They worked for the Creel Committee and nascent intelligence agencies such as "The Inquiry", which had three main goals: to demonize the enemy (in this case the Germans), to demonize dissidents in the homeland, and to convince the American public that it was their destiny to "make the world safe for democracy". We all know how well that turned out.

A disturbingly similar pattern emerges after WWII. Fresh from the OWI (Office of War Information) you have the publishers of Time, Look and Fortune; the editors of Holiday, Coronet, Parade, and the Saturday Review; the heads of Viking Press, Harper & Brothers, Straus and Young; the board chairman of CBS; the editor of Reader's Digest and so on. For more on this, I highly recommend Christopher Simpson's book *"The Science of Coercion"*. The virtual uniformity of "intellectual" and "mainstream" opinion during the Cold War should come as no surprise. It wasn't just a



question of shared class interests – though that was probably the most important factor – there was also this deeply incestuous relationship between the American state (and its burgeoning intelligence agencies), the "mainstream media", elite–funded "think tanks", and the corporations and banks which would seem to control all of the above.

By the time the "war on terror" rolled around you had a tiny handful of giant media conglomerates in near complete command of the flow of information. The Internet is throwing a considerable amount of sand in the gears. God willing, the machine will grind to a halt in the near future.

I think a lot of activists tend to assume that most of this stuff is common knowledge. In broad strokes perhaps it is. Yet a close friend with whom I discuss these sorts of issues on a fairly frequent basis was unaware of many of the incidents I cover in Psywar. For example: that the Jessica Lynch story and the toppling of the Saddam Statue were staged by "TPT"'s or "Tactical Psyop Teams", that CNN used military "Psywarriors" during its coverage of the assault on Serbia, that PR hacks now outnumber journalists, that "journalists" themselves spend most of their time regurgitating PR.

"The film is currently being translated into a number of languages, including Spanish, French and Arabic. In terms of viewership, Psywar achieved viral status its first week, receiving 83,000 views in six days."

There's an ironic coincidence relating to the film itself. Literally two weeks after I first uploaded it to the Internet and sent it around to various journalists, the DOD announced that it was dropping the term "Psyops" from its lexicon. From hence forth, they declared, psychological operations would be known as "Military Information Support Operations," or MISO. Doesn't have quite the same ring to it, but of course that's the point. The "Department of Defense" used to be called the Department of War.

V-RADIO: Are you familiar with the BBC documentary "The Century of Self"? Did it influence your making of Psywar?

Mr. Noble: It did, but not in the manner you might expect. Curtis is an extremely talented filmmaker with an immense repository of archival footage at his disposal (some of which I utilized in Psywar), and he puts out a great product. But I also find that he tends to exaggerate the importance of particular individuals, groups and fanciful ideas in lieu of basic class analysis; he also appears to self-censor, often at critical junctures. I don't recall seeing the slightest hint of skepticism about the official story of 911 in "The Power of Nightmares". There was a great review of "The Century of the Self" published by Media Lens. In it, the author quotes a passage from the film:

"Politicians and planners came to believe that Freud was right to suggest that hidden deep within all human beings were dangerous and irrational desires and fears. They were convinced that it was the unleashing of these instincts that had lead to the barbarism of Nazi Germany. To stop it ever happening again, they set out to find ways to control the hidden enemy within the human mind." (The Century of the Self - The Engineering of Consent, BBC2, March 24, 2002)

The critic goes on to state:

"As you'll know, if you've read Elizabeth Fones-Wolf's study of the period, Alex Carey's work, and countless books by Edward Herman, Noam Chomsky, and many others, this could not be further from the truth. Post-1945, as now, the real fear of politicians and planners was the existence of dangerous "rational" desires and fears - popular desires for equity, justice and functioning democracy; popular fears that unbridled capitalism and militarism would once again lead to horrors on the scale of the two world wars. Freud's theories were incidental - useful in refining traditional methods of popular control perhaps, but a sideshow."

In Curtis' film, Bernays is presented more as a cause than effect. In reality he was joined by all sorts of other like-minded mind managers from the time period: scientists like John B. Watson, the founder of behaviorism, for example, and Ivy Lee, the unsung hero of embedded journalism, crisis management and the press release. Public relations evolved as a means of rescuing corporations from the wrath of public opinion, most notably in response to events like the Ludlow massacre. The revolution in American advertising was brought about not by a single visionary but by a crisis in capitalism, namely overproduction, which mandated new and innovative ways of marketing products. There were alternatives. Raising wages and reducing working hours, for example, but corporations were and are mandated by law to maximize profits on behalf of their shareholders. The consumer society is a natural outgrowth of capitalism, not Freud. Endless growth means endless mountains of junk. To sell it, you have convince people that buying objects leads to happiness.

V-RADIO: What inspired you to include such a lengthy section on the American Constitution?

Mr. Noble: People like Walter Lippmann and Edward Bernays are great exemplars of what Peter Bachrach called "The theory of democratic elitism", but they didn't create this philosophy. They merely updated it to correspond with new developments in technology and communication. You can go back to Mosca or Schumpeter or a whole slew of other anti-democratic philosophers from Machiavelli to Plato, but crucially, for our discussion, the Founding Fathers of the United States itself. There is very little difference between Lippmann's suggestion that "the people" are a "bewildered herd" which "must be put in place", and John Jay's remark that the "people who own the country ought to govern it", or Alexander Hamilton's quip that the people are a "great beast" needing to be tamed, or Madison's insistence that a primary function of government is to "protect the minority of the opulent against the majority". The overriding theme is that real democracy might produce "leveling tendencies", in other words, an egalitarian society in which "regular people" might actually be able to participate in the running of their government (or lack thereof, depending how anarchistic your tendencies). What has emerged as the primary form of governance around the globe is what social scientists describe as polyarchy. There's a fancy definition for it, but the basic gist is that we get to vote every few years to elect some rich guy, write letters to our "representatives", and if we're really uppity – attend a demonstration

– but by no means should we be permitted to actually make decisions collectively on matters of any importance. Important decisions are the purview of the enlightened ones – people like Henry Kissinger, Dick Cheney, Alan Greenspan. Or, if you like, the Founding Fathers and their "responsible set of men" – the wealthy. I have received some criticism that the section on the Constitution and the American power structure is a "departure" from the other content. In my own view, it is impossible to understand modern propaganda without understanding the theory of democratic elitism. Indeed, the idea that modern governments (whether labeled a republic or parliamentary democracy) are or were in any way "democratic" is perhaps the greatest psyop of them all. These structures are based on the premise that the "powers" can be "balanced by each other", a concept which should, at this point, be recognized as a monumental failure. The majority recognized it as a con at the time of the constitutional convention, and indeed the anti-Federalists predicted quite accurately what would occur as a result.

There is a good deal of myth-making associated with colonial America. We are invited to imagine the halcyon days in which some sort of "free market" existed alongside "limited government". Granted, it is acknowledged, there were minor problems in the form of slavery, the oppression of women and the genocide of Native Americans, but by and large you had something approaching a legitimate meritocracy: an honest to goodness bootstrap society.

The reality was quite different. As Norman Livergood explains, "In Colonial America, the rich were getting richer and the poor were getting much poorer. In 1687 in Boston, the top 1% owned about 25% of the wealth. By 1770, the top 1% owned 44%. In those same years, the poor--those who owned no property--represented 14% in 1687 and 29% in 1770." So you had a system of rapidly increasing inequality and class conflict, culminating in the Shay's Rebellion and other debtor riots, which necessitated a strong Federal Government to crush the nascent spirit of democracy flowering amongst the American people. In some ways, it should not be surprising that many Americans regard the word "democracy" with contempt. The absurdist PR spectacles known as "elections", in which issues like gay marriage can actually sway the balance of power, deserve nothing but disdain. But we would do well to remember that the Soviet Union also called itself a democracy.

There are alternatives, touched upon in the film that do not necessitate either tyranny of the minority or tyranny of the majority, but which rely on concepts like decentralization, anti-hierarchy, consensus decision-making and other modes of social organization. For those who would simultaneously worship the founding fathers and turn property into an idol, I recommend the words of Benjamin Franklin: *"Under presence of governing, [Europeans] have divided their nations into two classes, wolves and sheep"*. Whereas, amongst Native Americans:

"All property, indeed, except the savage's temporary cabin, his bow, his matchcoat and other little Acquisitions absolutely necessary for his Subsistence, seems to me to be the creature of public Convention. Hence, the public has the rights of regulating Descents, and all other Conveyances of Property, and even of limiting the quantity and uses of it. All the property that is necessary to a man is his natural Right, which none may justly deprive him of, but all Property superfluous to such Purposes is the property of the Public who, by their Laws have created it and who may, by other Laws dispose of it." [see my article on Dissident Voice, *Ayn Rand in Uganda*, for more on right wing libertarianism] *You can also view V-RADIO's own article on Ayn Rand and listen to the companion radio show.*

V-RADIO: What kind of reactions have you had with regard to the film? Any memorable feedback, good or bad?

Mr. Noble: Overall the response has been very positive. Numerous professors from numerous countries have requested hard copies for use in University courses ranging from communications to sociology to Native American studies. The film is currently being translated into a number of languages, including Spanish, French and Arabic. In terms of viewership, Psywar achieved viral status its first week, receiving 83,000 views in six days. Unfortunately its momentum was scotched when Exposure Room (the hosting site) removed it for reasons that were not clearly explained (I'm guessing bandwidth cost was the culprit). I have since re-uploaded the film to other websites.

The only significant negative feedback I've received so far has to do with the medium itself. It is argued that Psywar – a film about propaganda – is itself propagandistic. It contains moving music, slick editing and provocative imagery.

I suppose it depends how we define propaganda. If we use the simplest definition: "information that is spread for the purpose of promoting some cause", then Psywar is indeed propagandistic. In Brave New World revisited, Aldous Huxley wrote that:

"Mass communication, in a word, is neither good nor bad; it is simply a force and, like any other force, it can be used either well or ill. Used in one way, the press, the radio and the cinema are indispensable to the survival of democracy. Used in another way, they are among the most powerful weapons in the dictator's armory."

To me, the word propaganda contains a sinister

connotation: the intent to deceive. Since I didn't set out to deceive anyone with my film, I don't consider it an example of propaganda. Agitprop might be a better description, referring here to the politicized artwork that flourished in the first half of the twentieth Century. We would do well to consider the idea that the most insidious forms of propaganda do not come in the form of a plainly stated thesis or obvious political viewpoint, but in the art of pseudo-objectivity. I am far less offended by the ridiculous bombast of Fox News than many a BBC or PBS documentary: films which pretend to examine issues in an objective, detached, rational manner but employ subtle propaganda techniques to mislead viewers. Censorship by omission is the most widely used device. The use of audio/visual techniques in Psywar that might be interpreted as "manipulative" are, to me, simply an expression of my own creativity -- no more propagandistic than a clever turn of phrase in an essay, and no less necessary -- especially to today's audience. It is difficult to maintain a viewer's interest in what Bo Filter describes as our "post-literate society", and I make no apologies for attempting to move and entertain in addition to educate. I'm no more interested in making a boring documentary than watching one.

V-RADIO: Now that Psywar has been out for a while, is there anything you wish you had put in the film that you missed, or anything you put into it you wish you had not?

Mr. Noble: I had originally intended to cover the entire Cold War period in the film, but I soon realized that would be impossible. Instead, I will be examining the Cold War in my third film, "Counter-Intelligence", which I began work on last week. Of particular interest to me in this respect is the rise of "black propaganda". The term is used in a variety of contexts, often benign, but a lesser known definition comes from a declassified document obtained through the Freedom of Information Act and published in Chris Simpson's seminal work on the subject, "The Science of Coercion". Here, black propaganda includes "clandestine warfare, subversion, sabotage, and miscellaneous operations such as assassination".

Later Counter-insurgency manuals explicitly refer to "false flag operations" such as occurred under Operations Ajax and Gladio. False flags are acts of terrorism and or other forms of violence carried out by hidden actors which are then blamed on a designated enemy. Planted evidence and patsies are usually involved. Many scholars argue quite plausibly that the "War on Terror" amounts to Gladio redux, with Muslims replacing communists. Black propaganda remains the biggest taboo in journalism. There was an interesting sort of unspoken debate that occurred between Walter Lippmann and Harold Laswell in the aftermath of WWI. Lippmann advocated the "manufacture of consent", which he regarded as a more humane and effective means of managing the public consciousness than brute force. Laswell, on the other hand, recommended a blending of the old and new: media control would be paramount, but selected acts of covert violence would also be necessary. It is Laswell's vision that ultimately won the day.

One other regret about Psywar: I have a great clip of Christopher Simpson discussing the etymology of the word "communication". I was intending to include it in the film but simply forgot about it until it was too late. The Latin roots of the word suggest the "sharing of duties" or "sharing of burdens". So we have terms like commune, or communion, or community and so forth: words that describe who we are and how we survive as a species. Somewhere along the line, the meaning of "communication" changed. It was no longer about the sharing of ideas but about their transmission by a select group of elites to the mass of the population. In other words, propaganda. So the relationship was altered from one of equality to one of hierarchy. The people on the receiving end are rendered fundamentally passive in this relationship. They are not participants but spectators. The same analogy can be drawn to the entire edifice of modern government. We are not allowed to participate in any meaningful way. But we can watch television to our heart's content. When I made Psywar, and when I imagine people watching it, the hope is that I am not merely transmitting a message, but that viewers will become participants by engaging with the ideas, debating them with others, and hopefully taking some sort of action in response – even if it's just sending the link around.

There's a certain beauty to the blog and the Internet forum. It doesn't matter if you're a VIP or a janitor; you have equal space to express your opinions. It's almost like the old town meetings in colonial America, prior to the constitutional convention, where slave owners and land speculators lamented the fact that the "lowliest craftsmen" were allowed to participate in debate and policy formulation. If we are ever to end the madness, we will have to recapture that spirit of real, participatory democracy and put it into practice en masse.

To view Psywar, and all of Mr. Noble's upcoming film projects please visit:
http://metanoia-films.org/psywar.php

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