

Where are we now?

Announcements, Requests & Updates

Critics and Cities and Conflicts! Oh, My!

by Jen Wilding

To clarify a common misconception: The Zeitgeist Movement (TZM) and The Venus Project (TVP) have no problem with movement supporters being a part of intentional communities, getting off-grid, growing food locally, sharing resources communally, etc.. In fact, a number of supporters of TZM and TVP are already doing this and a few have even been doing it since before I was born. However, TZM and TVP are not currently raising funds to 1) build a Venus Project city for supporters to live in or 2) build an entire high-tech global, Resource-Based Economy (RBE) infrastructure. The vision of a technology-based, global RBE far exceeds the annual budgets of thousands of non-profit organizations combined.

The Zeitgeist Movement encourages people to connect with other groups in any way they can, but just asks that official chapters remain true to a global vision for awareness because that is what accurately depicts what the global movement seeks to accomplish right now. Many external local/regional organizations target the movement on a daily basis

seeking financial support of our mailing lists and desire to shift the movement's focus onto their smaller projects. So, it is more accurate to say that TZM is pro-intentional communities (as individual/local projects), BUT is clearly making the distinction that intentional communities are not representative of the complete TZM/TVP goal and should never be labeled as such. These communities are viewed as a temporary step (patchwork) until we have the critical mass resources to move forward and bring these existing tribal efforts into a unified global effort. People can support both and obviously never need any kind of permission from the movement to secure their survival in whatever way they can. I find it interesting that people seek this permission or some ZM/VP mandate in order to act on their own compulsion to start or join a sustainable community, but I also understand it's likely a result of current social conditioning that people feel incapable of acting on their own accord, without the support of a crowd. If you are someone who wishes to explore intentional communities but are too timid to venture out on your own and start one, I recommend checking out: <http://www.ic.org/> and the hundreds of existing communities listed in their directory.

Right now, the Zeitgeist Movement views & promotes spreading global awareness about a worldwide, resource-based economy as the activism necessary for us to arrive at a bigger, unified understanding and I can see the merit in this. Intentional communities have existed for centuries (a sustainable living community is not all that new of a concept) but their existence alone has yet to bring about a mass desire for global unity or a resource-based economy. Intentional communities have their own survival issues due to limitations and challenges that exist within scarcity. TZM seeks to spread awareness of how the solution we propose is directly connected to addressing the roots of society's incredible dysfunction, so we can start planning for a global, systematic approach that will move humanity forward instead of backward.

Also, it should be noted that when a person signs on to support a movement, ANY movement, this expression of support is generally an indication that the person is in agreement with what the movement's body of ideas/approach is about. Those who claim to support The Venus Project and then either attempt to shift the actions or direction of the movement to suit their own agenda or

to openly pass judgement on supporters as "blind followers" of the ideas of Peter Joseph and Jacque Fresco must have not realized that TZM is a voluntary movement. A supporter becomes a supporter because they support the ideas, by definition. The Zeitgeist Movement is not a government or religion you are born into and it's no more cult-like than any other large group of people gathered to support any other common cause. Critical thinkers abound within our movement, which is why I became attracted to it in the first place. Not everyone agrees with every action that takes place, but dedicated activist volunteers remain supportive for a unified direction without sweating trivial details that cause rifts and bruised egos. Does the movement run the risk of being dogmatic? Well, when the position we firmly advocate is the design of an environment that embraces science as something dynamic, to be continually improved upon as new information becomes available, well, that's an interesting dilemma, isn't it? A dogmatic resistance to dogma. If this lovely paradox is what keeps a person from supporting a good idea for a better world, then that is certainly their prerogative.

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Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

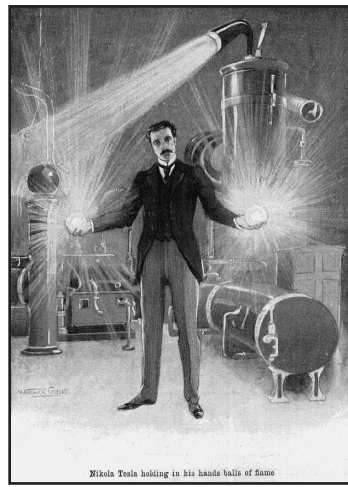
R. Scott Mongrain

"If I have seen further, it is only by standing on the shoulders of giants." – Sir Isaac Newton

Inventions and discoveries today are often treated as property, and in most cases, a single person or team is given credit for, or ownership of, the invention or discovery in question. While this may be an unfortunate necessity in the face of today's capitalist society, it is in direct opposition to the true nature of science. Sir Isaac Newton knew when preparing to write what would become his defining work, the Principia, that he alone was not responsible for the ideas contained within it. Just as an artist draws from previous works for inspiration, so do scientists draw from the entire body of prior scientific discovery. To the layman, great leaps in scientific discovery may seem to be completely original, especially when considering some of the earliest discoveries such as the Heliocentric Theory. In such cases, the prevailing attitudes of the time period were quite nearly opposite in nature to the discoveries themselves. In the earliest periods, these ideals were so widespread and so dogmatically believed that such discoveries were initially decied as blasphemy (Hewitt 3). However, in each case, the advances were made based upon the use of both methods and knowledge of discoveries past. Such theories, as they lay outside the bounds of common thought, would be considered by all but those privy to knowledge of both their precursors and the relationships used to form them as original thought. While the average person, untrained and unmotivated to think in the same manner as those who made these discoveries, might think them entirely novel, the fact is that each scientific discovery after the inception of the scientific method has been an addition or amendment to, and thus derived from, a pre-existing body of knowledge. Scientific discovery, as it is based in expanding, narrowing, or contradicting prior discovery, cannot be defined as original thought.

What, then, is original thought? The online version of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines thought as "the action or process of thinking", thinking being defined as "to exercise the powers of judgment, conception, or inference". It defines original as "not secondary, derivative, or imitative". Combining these literal definitions, original thought can be defined likewise as "the action or process of exercising the powers of judgment or conception in a manner not secondary, derivative, or imitative". I will exclude inference from the combined definition, as it directly refers to derivation of a general idea from specifics, and thus requires a predefined set of examples from which to draw a conclusion, being in opposition to the definition of original. Using this definition, the very existence of modern original thought is debatable. It could be argued that unless something external to our accumulated body of knowledge were introduced (for example, by extraterrestrial life forms), it is highly unlikely that anything thought of by any person could be without influence or precedent. However, this is only to say that it is improbable, and not that it is impossible. From another point of view, specifically that of certain monotheistic religions, original thought has never been possible as God is defined in part by his omniscience, and thus all human knowledge is mere duplication. Considering a human-only frame of reference, I believe that original thought can and does exist, but that one must be careful to make a distinction between true originality, and perceived originality.

Consider, for example, the wheel. Mary Bellis, credited by Forbes Best of the Web for her contribution of information about inventors and inventions, states in an article at about.com that the wheel was very



likely first invented in 3500 BC in Mesopotamia (Bellis). Inventions prior to this had, for the most part, been very basic extensions of the human being such as bone, stone, or wooden tools used to carry out tasks the fingernails or arms alone could not. As such, the inventor of the wheel did not have a previous model to work from. As Ricky Gervais says in his comedy special "Animals", "...it's not like he saw some on holiday and went 'that would be good ...' he made it up!" Despite the comedic nature of Gervais's comments, he makes an astute point about the basis of original thought. A truly novel concept does not draw from previous findings and does not have a parallel in precedent. While the wheel was also "invented" by other civilizations, the precedent had already been set in Mesopotamia, nullifying the novelty in the larger scheme of things. These latter inventors are akin to children, who believe that they are the original creators of ways to get around the rules, in that they perceive themselves to be thinking originally in that respect. In a closed system, certainly they may be thinking quite originally. However, as is often stated by the children's parents, the concepts are not in and of themselves novel. The phrase used by my parents around my house when I was a child was "I pulled the same stunts at your age; don't think you're so smart."

In considering scientific discovery in the light of these definitions and examples, a marked distinction is made: the difference between the aforementioned concepts,

and that of the connection of ideas associated with scientific discovery itself. This process is neither truly original as in the case of the invention of the wheel, nor is it original in perception as in the case of the child's isolated system. While Merriam-Webster defines discovery as "the act or process of obtaining sight or knowledge of for the first time", implying that discovery is a process based in originality, I believe this definition to be imprecise when applied to the products of science. I am referring to the body of scientific discoveries which, whether by accident as in the case of chewing gum, or by the fruition of directed and applied research as in the case of the laser, are made by following the scientific method. Merriam-Webster defines this method as "principles and procedures for the systematic pursuit of knowledge involving the recognition and formulation of a problem, the collection of data through observation and experiment, and the formulation and testing of hypotheses". This definition, along with several examples, will help to further illustrate the difference to which I refer.

The Heliocentric Theory of the solar system was first publicly suggested by Copernicus in 1543, the year he died (Hewitt 20). For a period of two millenia prior, Aristotle's theory that the Earth was the center of the universe, and that all other things moved about it had been the commonly accepted viewpoint, with strong backing from the Church. With trepidation, and at the urging of his closest contemporaries, Copernicus presented his findings, which were based on observation and critical analysis. The methods he used to discern the difference and the general concepts that both the Sun and the Earth were distinct bodies, at least one of which was able to move, were not new. Copernicus used both the observational methods of the time and the concept of heavenly bodies in motion to arrive at his conclusion, making a connection, using these pre-existing ideas. While his

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findings were contradictory to the accepted norms of the time, they weren't new as much as they were different. Consider also the dual wave and particle nature of light defined by Einstein's photon. Einstein combined the wave theory of Huygens with the quantum theory advanced by Planck, mathematically proving that light has properties of both waves and particles dependent on what it interacts with (Hewitt 560). At the same time, he made another scientific discovery, the Special Theory of Relativity, modifying and combining the findings of Newton and Maxwell (Hewitt 635). Each of these discoveries, while novel in presented form, is simply a combination of previous ideas. Since the time of Copernicus, who was the precursor to and inspiration for Galileo's scientific

method, Man has made scientific discoveries based on the findings and methods of those who came before them (Hewitt 21).

Whether they contradict, combine, or expand accepted knowledge, scientific discoveries are not original thought. This serves to illuminate a concept which, in my opinion, is worthy of celebration: any student of the scientific method could be the next Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, or Einstein. While it is highly improbable that a person will invent a truly novel idea, it is quite probable, and even likely that future scientists will expand, combine, or contradict previously accepted scientific knowledge. I say this due to the great volume of scientists who have contributed in such a way over the past 2000 years and in ever-increasing numbers within the past century. As science leads human beings directly to technology, the main contributor

to improved quality of life, this distinction can hardly be viewed negatively. Sir Isaac Newton was not ashamed that his discoveries had benefited from the work of his predecessors. If anything, his words paint him as proud to be a part of the bigger picture; the ongoing pursuit of knowledge, and the celebration inherent in discovery. In this light, so-called "intellectual materialism", or ownership of ideas, especially those scientific in nature, is an affront to the enormous body of work leading to each nuance that is discovered about our universe and its properties through the scientific method. The US Patent and Trademark Office claims to "promote the progress of science and the useful arts by securing for limited times to inventors the exclusive right to their respective discoveries" (USPTO). To whom, then, go the rights? Scientific discoveries, being not original to

any one person or team, cannot be attributed to any one person or team. They must be attributed to the entire body of scientists who provided the background research that made the discoveries possible. So states the old proverb, "Credit where credit is due."

Science is a tool meant to help us gain knowledge for the benefit of all people, and is the result of the work of many contributors. Each contributor along the way must remember that the distance of their vision comes from the lofty perch they have attained by standing on the shoulders of those who have come before them, and that they too will provide such a place for future contributors to stand and gaze into the unknown.

Bellis, Mary. "The Invention of the Wheel." *about.com*. The New York Times Company, 2010. Web. 27 Feb. 2010.

Hewitt, Paul G. *Conceptual Physics*. 8th Ed. Reading: Addison Wesley, 1998. Print.

"The USPTO: Who We Are." *uspto.gov*. United States Patent and Trademark Office, 30 Dec. 2009. Web. 8 Mar. 2010.



Venus Project World Tour Update

from Joel Holt, rep. of The Venus Project

In the last newsletter, around July 6th, Jacque and Roxanne were at the Athens, Greece juncture of the World Lecture Tour. They have since gone forward with numerous other stops as follows:

From Athens they went to Eindhoven, The Netherlands wherein a busy and successful round of events was hosted. An exhibit of Jacque's work was set up at The International Center for Sustainable Excellence (ICSE), in Eindhoven. The Venus Project Design Team, headed by Andrew Buxton and Julita Wielgat, assembled this exhibit. They also developed magnificent animations, including a walk through of one of Jacque's cities. Next was the lecture,

which was held outside; a huge success with more questions than time allowed. Several days later, Jacque addressed another audience at Eindhoven for Inspiration Day, an event put on in conjunction with the festivities around the 10th anniversary of the Earth Charter, which originated with the help of Mikhail Gorbachev. Because Jacque spoke in Eindhoven for one of their events, they were invited to the all-day celebration of The Earth Charter held at the Peace Palace at the Hague, where the Queen made an appearance.

Lisbon, Portugal was a quick but nice stop. Before the lecture, they felt the hall would not be very full, due to the amount of tickets sold online, but on

the day were pleasantly surprised. By the time they walked into the venue, it was full because there were about 150 people who bought tickets at the door. Many Zeitgeist members in town hosted dinner and Jacque held the usual meetings with them.

The next stop on July 30th was Valencia, Spain, which was an amazing trip. There was a large group of people that came from all over Spain and surrounding countries to attend the lecture. But this seems to be the pattern at each stop in Europe: People often travel long distances to attend the presentations.

There is always a diverse group of people within each chapter who have many different skills, so a lot gets done. This was particularly useful in Spain. Many of the members stayed up for three nights in a row before the lecture, putting together our Spanish translation of Jacque's book "The Best That Money Can't Buy", which they printed and then spiral bound themselves. They also took the video that is shown at each lecture and crafted a voice-over version in Spanish, then added music of their own creation. After so many nights up they had to redo an audio section because it had picked up someone who had fallen asleep and was snoring in the background! Their hard work paid off as they produced a wonderful piece. The lecture was sold out ahead of time with standing room only. It felt like a success and, like each lecture, people stayed engaged throughout and afterwards.

Graz, Austria was a last minute lecture. Leo Da Silva took this on almost by himself just three weeks before the event and, despite all of the obstacles

he encountered along the way, the lecture went well.

Another wonderful stay was Sweden, as it has been with every stop. They always try to spend as much time as possible to meet with the Zeitgeist members and others who help to make the lectures possible. Very often, they all squeeze into the hotel rooms where Jacque and Roxanne are staying or move to a restaurant for meals. The lecture in Sweden was a success and almost sold out.

Next, Copenhagen, Denmark. As in all the countries they have visited, they made many close friends. There were three events in Denmark, with one in Christiania where Roxanne delivered a presentation on human behavior and Jacque answered questions. There was a large gathering in a park with music and a good meal and then there was the main lecture. Jacque also addressed a group of young people at a local community-gathering place. Several times in-between, they met with the members of The Zeitgeist Movement where there is always a lot of filming going on.

As of this writing, August 15, they are in Dublin, Ireland and I will skype with Roxanne and Jacque soon for an update.

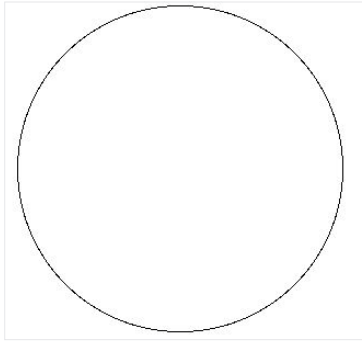
Thanks to everyone who has facilitated in so many ways in helping to bring this tour and message to so many places. In conclusion, Roxanne said, "people have been asking if this traveling on the World Lecture Tour is difficult, but the most difficult part about it is saying good-bye to so many extraordinary people we establish a close relationship with at each stop." I am sure that feeling is mutual.

Economics

The Sphere, the Bell Curve and the Infinite Curve

by Brick de Bois

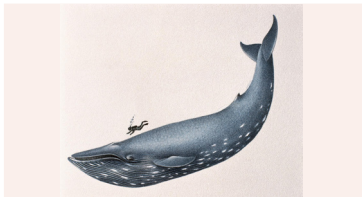
The Sphere
OK. A drawing.



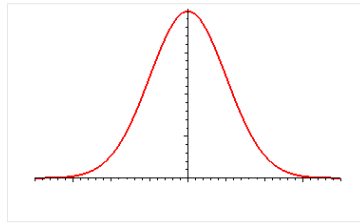
So. Here we find ourselves on the planet during the most exhilarating period in human history. The world population is exploding, the Earth's resources are rapidly being depleted, and the environment is being overburdened and demolished at ever-increasing speed. Wonderful.

The Earth is round. It is a sphere; a ball. We live on a finite world. There is only so much water, so much soil, so much iron, so much of any natural resource. We can do a lot, but we cannot make iron, we cannot create air, we cannot create oil. Impossible.

In fact, almost all of what we use is finite. Everything we get from the Earth is of limited supply. First we found it. Then we started finding it in vast amounts. After a while, now for instance, many of the things we first found easily, we find less and less of, and with ever increasing difficulty. This goes for resources like metals and fossil fuels, but just as well for the Blue Whale and the Stinkhorn.



The Bell Curve
So. Another drawing.



If you graphically show the availability of resources, you get this: a Bell Curve. It starts from zero, grows to a peak, and then declines back to zero. There is nothing we can change about that. When all the iron has been found, that's it, there is no more. Gone. The Bell Curve is the graphic symbol of living on a planet with a finite surface. There is only so much of anything.

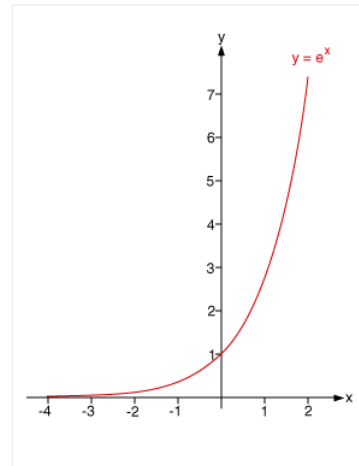


Today, humanity still acts, on the whole, as if things are in infinite supply of everything. Our mindset still strongly resembles that of the renaissance man, who realized he was discovering the secrets of nature, and finding a vat of boundless possibilities. Boundless, yes; endless, no. Sorry. In the meantime, we put ever-increasing demands on the planet. This worked fine for quite a while. There were not too many people and there were still lots of resources to be discovered.



The Infinite Curve

But. Another drawing.



That we seem to count on an infinite supply of everything has a lot to do with something we invented ourselves. Humans developed a system for facilitating the exchange of goods and services. It is called Money. Eureka! Born was the production and distribution system of all human activity we called 'Economy'. Over centuries, the monetary system developed alongside the development of an ever-increasingly complex human society. Today we live in a world where everything humans do is measured in terms of money. Our food, our clothing, our actions, the time we spend doing anything at all - everything is translatable, calculable, into a certain amount of money. Dough.

'Economy' runs on money and, furthermore, it only runs well if it is growing. This means there is always a demand for more money. An economy that is growing asks for ever-more money. No problem! Since money is not a natural resource, we can just create it out of thin air. We have created an infinite system. Our entire economic system does not use a finite sphere as a concept, nor does it use a finite bell curve. It uses an infinite curve as the basis for its existence, an exponential function. "A what!?", you ask? An exponential function is a curve that, over time, rises indefinitely and at the same time rises ever more quickly. So it goes

ever steeper and faster upwards, and it never stops doing that. Never.

This means that the whole of the world's economy is run on the assumption that there will be always more and more of everything. Nice idea. Great election slogan, even, but simply untrue. Utopian.

Because: Everything, truly everything we have, sits on a finite sphere and is subject to a finite bell curve.

In short, money is an invention and a convention. It does not exist in nature. Money is a human contrivance for the sake of facilitating human existence and development. We can create money out of nothing, and we do. Handy. And by now just about every adult on the planet thinks of money as the most important asset in his or her life, for it seems to be the gateway to health, safety, happiness, and everything else she or he strives for. We have come to the point where money seems as natural a phenomenon as water or air. Money seems to us to be a natural resource. It is not. Money is a fiction. An agreement.

But: The way we deal with distributing any finite natural resource to any individual (except the air we breathe, for now) is through money. The monetary system thrives on growth, and not simple growth, but on ever-increasing growth, even. It thrives on the exponential function. This is impossible on a round planet.

Because: I repeat - everything, truly everything we have, sits on a finite sphere and is subject to a finite bell curve.

So: It is time to rethink the system. It is time to question money as the means for doing things on this planet. Money has served us well for many centuries. Now it is in our way.

Your turn.

The Basic Economic Problem

by Liam Blee

"We paid the cover charge of life with our birth, and we all pay the full cost with our death, so everything else in between should be free."

- Bill Hicks

When the use of money as a means of resource allocation first occurred in ancient Mesopotamia (now Iraq and Syria) around five thousand years ago, a theory, which has since plagued humanity's understanding of the world, was born. It has been named 'the basic economic problem' and is taught as gospel to all students of the free enterprise system. Sadly, challenges to its validity are thus rare, and economists of all levels are continually indoctrinated with a well-manipulated lie about the fundamentals of human sociology. It states the following:

"The world's resources are finite, but human wants are infinite."

The truth that so few ever learn is that there is no 'basic economic problem'. To better understand this, some terminology must be first defined: most importantly, the erroneous phrase 'human nature'.

Human nature is often defined as 'the psychological attributes of humankind that are assumed to be shared by all human beings'. Like 'the basic economic problem', the truth is that there is no such thing as 'human nature', at least to the misguided and exaggerated extent understood by the majority. Humans, as a species, are actually born with virtually nothing that is 'common' to all. Arguably, the only thing that we do share is a basic need for survival, through the consumption of nutritious food and clean water, and shelter from danger. No human is born wanting to die, and so we can reliably claim that the desire to survive is part of 'human nature'. That, however, is where humanity's universal characteristics end, and that is why there is truly no such thing as 'human greed' or 'the basic economic problem'. These are all myths designed to maintain your faith in a broken system.

Secondly, the term 'monetary-ism' must also be defined. Monetary-ism is used in this document in place of all the other 'ism' ideologies: capitalism,

communism, socialism, fascism (and so on and so forth), for they are all fundamentally the same. They are all irrelevant ideologies with the same deep-rooted core: an unyielding faith in the monetary system. Communist China and capitalist America are really no different in this sense, and so this term will be used to more accurately describe the market-based free-enterprise system, where labour is sold for wages in order to fuel cyclical consumption. This general economic process will henceforth be referred to as monetary-ism.

No human being is naturally greedy. In the same way, no human being is good, bad, smart, stupid, or any other variable characteristic; this simply stems from the primitive religious expectation that there are only 'good' and 'evil' people. As an overall race, human beings simply are. Every boy and every girl is born into this world equal, a blank canvas. No human being is competitive or materialistic as a result of – depending on how you value those traits – any genetic advantage or fault, and this is why 'the basic economic problem' is essentially nonsense; people can be conditioned to believe that their demands are infinite, but this is not an inherent, unchangeable or fixed trait.

"The first man, who, after enclosing a piece of land, took it into his head to say 'this is mine', and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of our current civil society. How many crimes, wars, murders, misfortunes and horrors would the human species have been spared had someone pulled up the stakes or filled in the ditch and cried out to his fellow men: 'Beware of listening to this impostor. You are lost if you forget that the fruits of this earth belong to us all, and the Earth itself to nobody.'

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau

History is filled with examples of wars, invasions, genocides, and

all manner of abuses of power that have been waged by men and women who desire to steal what they do not already possess, and in this way, it is easy to see why it is so widely assumed that humans as a race are implicitly competitive, acquisitive, and self-serving. Despite the implications of this evidence, however, this is simply superficial and untrue. I believe that the best way of explaining this is through a particularly excellent quotation, which came from the Belgian economist Bernard Lietaer, who worked closely on the creation of the EU currency system, and who succinctly summarises the issue:

"Greed and competition are not the result of immutable human temperament; greed and fear of scarcity are in fact being continuously created and amplified as a direct result of the money we are using. We can produce more than enough food to feed everyone, and enough work for everybody in the world, but there is clearly not enough money to pay for it all. The job of the central banks is to create and maintain this scarcity, and the direct consequence of this is that we have to fight with each other in order to survive."

- Bernard Lietaer

What exactly does Lietaer mean by this? Firstly, he points out that greed, competition and all similar characteristics are 'not the result of immutable human temperament': in other words, they are in no way fundamentally incorporated into the human race, which in turn means that they can be changed and removed. Secondly, he addresses their true origin: 'the money we are using'. Essentially, his point is this; people are conditioned to be greedy and materialistic because monetary-ism is designed to create competition through scarcity: if there isn't enough to go round, people will work harder in order to obtain that 'stuff', even if it is at the expense of others. This is why people become greedy, or, as Lietaer poetically puts it, why 'we have to fight with each other in order to survive'.

How, exactly, have we been manipulated to believe that our wants are infinite and that our greed is primordial? Modern

culture is, in fact, riddled with institutions that perpetuate this myth, although we rarely stop to question either their motives or their methods. Perhaps the biggest contributor is the advertising and marketing industry. Their simple procedure is to make people feel inadequate, inept, and inferior because of what they do or do not own, and then offer their particular product as the 'cure' to these insufficiencies. They constantly bombard the population with messages and images of models and celebrities who are 'better people' than you because of the labels on their clothes. Vast expenditure is used to achieve this: ZenithOptimedia reported that over \$542 billion will be spent on advertising globally by the end of 2010, whilst "it is currently estimated that a child sees more than 40,000 television commercials a year". The simple fact is that, in surrendering to their suggestions of inferiority and purchasing their products, consumers are parading those labels on their behalf, becoming a walking advertisement with no earned wage.

The entire fashion industry, and the advertising agencies with which they work with, have created and installed an artificial system of values within all of us, convincing the population that a person can be deemed good or bad, worthy or unworthy, simply because of their ability to purchase the latest designer goods. Thus, we constantly lust for more: our idea of self-fulfillment and achievement becomes so clouded and illogical that we believe that the greatest sense of accomplishment in life comes from purchasing certain commercial articles. 'Fashions' are thus created: endless advertising manipulates our values, creating trends that people are forced to adhere to, simply out of fear that they will be mocked for failure to conform. We lose all sense of perspective and balance; the way we continually evaluate our self-worth on some imaginary, materialistic, commercial scale fuels our need to constantly purchase more in order to be the apparent best person that we can. The manifestation of our values is quantified by the fact that, in

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Economic Problem

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the USA alone, over \$250 billion is spent annually on fashion, whilst the US Department of Education's 2010 budget was only \$46.7 billion.

"The only true lasting American value that's still around today is buying things; people spending money they don't have on things they don't need." - George Carlin

Yet, we continue to believe that 'this is just the way it is': that greed is natural and thus acceptable. This ridiculous notion is what all of the text books are based upon, this 'me against you, us against them' mentality is where the absurd and fallacious 'basic economic problem' comes from, and this incredible lie is what makes people maintain their nonsensical support for monetary-ism, despite its plainly horrific flaws. To truly put this into perspective, 'the basic economic problem' causes 34,000 people to die every day because of poverty, and forces around 3.4 billion people (half of all people on earth) to survive on less than \$2 per day. How anyone can be aware of these statistics and still refuse to seek alternatives is nothing short of a disgusting and unsane disregard for human life. If you still believe that human wants are naturally infinite, rather than the result of the competitive environment in which we are raised – the environment which 'forces us to fight with each other to survive' – I will now attempt to provide some other broader examples.

A better analogy than the 'blank canvas' to which I earlier referred is the idea that all children are born holding a mirror; they reflect the society around them. A child born into an Italian family and raised in Italy will develop the mannerisms of the Italian culture; the accent, the traditions, the tastes and all other aspects will be 'mirrored' by the child. He was not born with an 'Italian' gene which made him this way. Similarly, a child born to German parents in Germany who is then adopted by English foster parents in England will reflect the English culture in which he is raised, rather than developing a German

accent, etc. Characteristics such as dialect, tradition and taste are in no way more inherent in humans than greed: a man who lives alone on an island and has no competition for food and water will not develop the same 'infinite wants' as a man raised in a village of one hundred people who only have access to one fruit tree and one well.

Additionally, through further analogies, we can see that this is not just a trend limited to humans. In World War Two, dogs were trained to attack and kill Japanese soldiers; simultaneously, dogs were also trained to guide the blind. The dog that kills soldiers is not bad, just as much as the guide dog is not good: they are simply the products of training and conditioning, in no different a way as we are the products of the indoctrination of the monetary system. A frequently raised question is: 'I've worked for what I have, why should people in the less-developed world be given the same for free?' Let me simply remind you that you were born into modern Britain, where electricity, running water, hospitals, schools, cars, telephones, televisions, computers and every other piece of technology which betters your life had already been created. You contributed nothing to this, yet still have total access to it.

The vital understanding is that 'the basic economic problem' that we have been presented with is simply not accurate in the way that most people understand it: human wants are not infinite. Rather, the wants of humans raised in a competitive environment – where fighting others for survival is the norm – may be infinite, but to label this a natural facet of all men is simply inaccurate. In the world as it is today, our only motivation and measurement of success is monetary reward, and so to constantly seek more (even when we have no tangible use for it) seems a natural process. In this way, however, 'the basic economic problem' is not some ultimate obstacle to a transition to a Resource-Based Economy. If people can be conditioned to believe that they will demand materialistic gratification indefinitely, they can just as easily be conditioned to think the opposite. This is not even

an alien methodology without grounds in the present system; in a 2010 speech to students at Oxford University, American studier of motivational patterns Dan Pink discussed the following unconventional approaches to employment.

In the past few years, an Australian software company named Atlassian has introduced a scheme called 'FedEx Days' – presumably stemming from the idea of delivering an overnight solution – to their business. The idea is that, several times a year, their entire workforce is given 24 hours of totally free time in order to engineer a solution to a problem of their choosing. They are allowed to work on absolutely anything, without limitations, targets or budgets, as long as it does not relate to their everyday paid work. Atlassian admits that some of its most successful software solutions have stemmed from these 'FedEx Days'. The engineers who develop these ideas are motivated by the chance to fulfil their creative potential and express their ability, rather than by monetary reward or the need to meet a given expectation.

This concept has been taken further by Internet giant, Google, who operates a policy known as 'Twenty Percent Time'. Instead of being given a day or two each year to work entirely freely, without set aims or objectives, Google's engineers operate totally independently of management for twenty percent of their overall employment time. From this, some of Google's biggest successes, including Google News and Gmail have arisen; in a talk at Stanford University, Google's Vice President of Search Products and User Experience stated that "half of all new products are the result of 'Twenty Percent Time'".

These trends have led to the development of an entire philosophy regarding motivation and work, known as the Results Only Work Environment (ROWE). ROWE accepts the fact that in both business and the wider world, results are often the only recognized factor in measuring success. As such, businesses that have adopted the ROWE approach do not set their staff hours,

offices, targets, objectives or any other requirements that paralyze creativity. Employees are allowed to work when they choose, where they choose, to whatever means they choose, as long as they reach the specified final result. They are not taught how or when to do things, allowing them to develop their own uniquely creative methods and motives. Thus far, in all cases where the ROWE philosophy has been enacted, worker satisfaction has increased, worker engagement has increased and overall productivity has increased.

In 1993, Microsoft began a little-known project to create a digital encyclopaedia, named Encarta. You may have correctly assumed that Encarta is little-known because of the fact that it was largely commercially unsuccessful. This lack of success came despite heavy investment into paid professionals to create the encyclopaedia entries by strict deadlines in excellent working conditions, contrary to what we are told about monetary incentive driving human achievement. Eight years after Encarta's inception, another encyclopaedia project was launched, this time utilizing an entirely different model. In this model, there are no wages for contributors, nor is there any other sort of tangible, materialistic reward. It is based simply on the fact that people enjoy expressing their creativity, and relish the chance to contribute to a cause larger than themselves. As a result, Wikipedia is undoubtedly the best-known digital encyclopaedia in the world today, far out-stripping the achievements of Encarta.

What these successes all prove is that allowing our beliefs about how the human race can operate creatively to stagnate in the outdated pool of monetary-ism is simply unproductive and inefficient. Until we accept that, we will continue to live in a society where decency and ethical behavior are fundamentally impossible.

"We were saying how very important it is to bring about, in the human mind, the radical revolution. The crisis is a crisis in consciousness; a crisis that

I Want to Live in the World it Ought to Be

by Anna Krokhina

I was born in the Soviet Russia in 1978. Now when I reflect on it, I believe I was born free into this wonderful world just like anyone else. I was born a human being with a life in me, intelligence, virtues, talents, ingenuity, and potential. I knew nothing about the country in which I was born into, which other countries it bordered with, which political, monetary, and social systems and agendas it followed, which war it was involved in at the time, which human beings it was depriving of homes and lives, which nations it hated and considered its enemies, what its religion and superstitions were, which laws its citizens were forced to abide by and what it will cost me in financial, intellectual, spiritual, and sexual means to be allowed to exist in that particular environment. The first breath I took, I became a Russian Orthodox female, born into the Soviet Union with an authority shouting out loud and confident that everyone never disregarded the fact that their lives, property, talents, and even thoughts belonged to the state. The first breath I took, I became a slave to a society, its culture, prejudices, and expectations. My freedom was suspended right then and I was well on my way to being transformed into a robot with as few aspirations, dreams, passions, beliefs, and principles of my own as possible; the obedient citizen who lacks critical, analytical, skeptical, and daring thinking; and a “drug addict” that doesn’t question the outside authority or norms of the society.

I believe many can envision a person put under hypnosis. The more I observed the world and its inhabitants, the more clearly I could recognize zombies moving around, overdosed on deceit, wars, blood, agony, misery, death, financial booms and busts, racism, sexism, patriotism,

nationalism, antidepressants, reality shows, consumerism, super bowls, and video games to name a few; and drowning in their own fears, worries, insecurities, complexes, sexual frustrations and uncertainties; and what was puzzling to me, pleading for more.

Who is the magician and why on earth does his interest lie in such a boring and unrewarding activity? Who and why would want to surround himself with uninspiring and spiritless creatures that perish without ever discovering their talents, without ever bringing their share of greatness, brightness and sharpness to the table of our collective wealth of intelligence, wisdom and ingenuity, and making this world as strong, beautiful, prosperous, resourceful, progressive, and rewarding as it ought and could so much easily be so that we could all enjoy it, including the hypnotizer?

I do not know but I have a few thoughts on who or what it could be, how the world manipulated into insatiable killing, deceit, abuse, destruction and even self-hatred, and what is the benefit that the hypnotizer seeks.

What happens between that first breath of freedom we all take and the moment we are released from propaganda factories as highly qualified & specialized machines trained to follow precise instructions and react in certain ways when exposed to specific sounds, body shapes, colors, odors and flavors? Kings, queens, tzars, sultans, emperors, presidents & prime ministers, TV & radio sets, newspapers & magazines, literature & poetry, educators & parents mouths discharge a steady and contagious flow of hypnosis that flows into the ears of those who are tuned in, reaching, confusing and corrupting their

minds and hearts. Some are faster and more susceptible to this deadly cancer than others. May I speculate that most of these sources and individuals manipulate the perceptions of others simply because they have been intimidated to do so by the hypnotizers of their own time and they should be considered victims of their own conspiracy and circumstances they find themselves in? I don’t believe that we should mistake all queens, tzars and others of blue blood, so they believe, for being the main generator of deadly poison. If we do, this will be an overestimation of their intellectual and character abilities. My observations could be wrong and conclusions made too early but I highly doubt presidents’ exceptional or superior intellectual powers. I do believe that there is much randomness in every aspect of our life and the existence of our planet. However, I also believe that we are lead by some in certain directions. Do we doubt that we are manipulated into wars which allow a small clique of elites to make incomprehensible profits; divided & made to believe that one nation aims to destroy another? Or that one culture, race, sex, religion or intelligence is superior to another, while we are made frightened of another social class, allured into a financial bliss, taken advantage of and then let go crashing in a midst of the next bust; spirit broken into devastating acceptance of our own worthlessness and obediently enter of torture rooms or gas chambers, walk to a firing squad, acceptance of to be burned alive, hanged, stoned to death and or beheaded?

We are often allured into loving god, state, family, friends and even enemies before we love our own selves; taught that we are inferior to god, are dirty sinners that should beg for forgiveness on our knees; are worthless; that it is wrong to love oneself; that selfishness and pride are vices even if it means to stand for one’s own rights or disallow anyone to insult one’s intelligence; and forgiveness is

a virtue even in cases when a state chooses to unjustly steal one’s life to which they have no right but the one they have granted to themselves in their imagination, while shamelessly hiding behind state laws and religious prejudices. Haven’t all borders, countries, national traditions, costumes, beliefs, cultures, food, regulations, rules, policies, expectations, prejudices, superstitions, laws and even histories been created and or interpreted by us, our own selves with our own biases? Haven’t we been born free into this world of no borders, laws, prejudices or religious fanatics claiming that millions have been and are being slaughtered in the name of god according to his divine plan? Why allow anyone to submerge, destroy or corrupt our intellectual and spiritual power; deceive us into ever doubting our own potential; insult our intelligence or abuse our human rights? I believe and also propose that we abandon the illusionary road of love of someone else, whether it is god, state, man, friend or enemy and accelerate towards a road of love of one’s self. We must discover our own selves first, our beauty and ingenuity, find ‘I’, introduce ourselves to our own selves and develop a high sense of self-respect, build confidence and self-awareness. No one is better than I; I am no better than anyone else. I have no right to anyone’s life; no one has a right to my life.

So, finally, who are the mysterious masterminds? I am entering an unknown territory – I truly don’t know – I can only speculate. I believe there is a very small group of people, the smartest of the smart and I by no means refer to the average person that graduated from ivy-league schools and are occupying high posts such as the presidency and so on. I believe there are men who possess the sharpest vision of the world, how it operates, a very clear understanding of

to Live in the World it Ought to Be

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human nature & behavior and how to manipulate it. They have a particular agenda driven by an insatiable greed for money & power. Here I am referring to the power of owning the world and nothing less; and in their eyes there is nothing that can or have ever stopped them from being victorious. I could be very wrong but at this level of my awareness, I admire their skill in running the whole world as if one was running a family, corporation or country and believe that there is much wisdom that can be learned from the strategy. What I cannot tolerate is that these men operate this endeavor at the expense of others' lives and most importantly my future. I find this mesmerizing game governed by unfair and dishonest rules; therefore, it is unacceptable. I could be wrong but I do believe that there is a great chance of these men being lost and tortured souls and that all their money and power will bring them nothing but never ending anxiety, fear and hysteria over its preservation.

Therefore, I would like to state: these men are not worth our attention, they are in very small numbers whose weapon is simple hypnosis. They are very powerful, no doubt about that, but we must understand that they are imposing their philosophies on millions of also lost and tortured souls they manipulate. They are incapable of operating on their own; they must have the support of those queens, presidents, priests, and obedient and frightened citizens of the world who accepts the obsolete ideologies of Marxism, communism, fascism, patriotism, nationalism, and terrorism and shovel their absurd and laughable theories down our throats. But I have noticed that less and less people of different cultures, backgrounds and aspirations are willing to absorb that

propaganda much longer; every new person deprogrammed and awakened will bring us closer to liberation. Therefore, we must focus on our primary goal - our minds must be revolutionized - we mustn't fight - we must simply reconsider our culture, gain knowledge which is power, open our minds to the views of others, learn from experience and apply that to the everyday decisions we make!



The Way of Science and Sustainability

by William Oliver Rubin

"If you would take, you must first give, this is the beginning of intelligence."
- Lao-Tzu

Regarded as the most likely author of the Tao Te Ching, Lao-Tzu wrote this in the 6th - 4th centuries B.C. The title is often translated as "The Way of Virtue". However, this translation is lacking depth due to our definition of virtue, which fails to elaborate on the oneness it implies towards a person's actions and values. What did Lao-Tzu mean by this? How relevant are the topics discussed in writings so old that they can hardly be said to have been written by the people living on the same planet? Truly, the reality of the world has changed so greatly that these writings would, at first glance, appear to have little to tell us about life at present.

Men and women have lived their lives for such a long time on the basis of location-driven survival that integrating world views and variables have had little consequence. Being a part of the generation that grew up watching the Internet being born, I had a front row seat to the show. The world logged on and the Internet was built brick by brick, bit by bit, and server by server. All over the Earth, connections were being made and there developed a network, which was fragile, but resilient - a webbing of people and resources, both always available,

and both redundant (most of the time).

We began seeing information prior to hearing about it on the local news. This was right around the time that the general public realized that AOL was not the Internet. Consequently, this new realization stimulated the creative forces of the people. No longer being merely aware of events, the general public was also interacting with these events by voicing their opinions on the Internet.

Ted Stevens, the Republican Senator from Alaska, once said that the Internet is a "series of tubes". Not only is this a false statement, but it undermines the very essence of what makes the Internet what it is, which is people. People are the driving force behind the Internet and the reason for its existence. In the event of a global Domain Name System (DNS) failure, where all Internet sites became unavailable at the same time, the people of the world could simply turn their wireless routers into ad-hoc systems to create a free and open Internet, which they could share with their neighbors and a new network based on geographic availability would be created. It would be the equivalent of the movement of a tribe to a new location in order to find food or water. In this case, the people would be relocating their

communications, which in our current century, has become an essential part of life.

Some might argue that only food, water, and arable land are essential for survival. However, due to the importing of resources and the removal of people from the production of food and water, now the members of this earth calling themselves humans have no choice but to rely on other humans for survival. It is not the case anymore that you may simply travel into the wilderness and find what is needed. In some areas, the wilderness has vanished as a result of human activity. Moreover, most do not have the skills necessary for surviving in the wilderness.

In this sense, we can find meaning in ancient proverbs. We are one planet and one family, and in order to survive we will need to give before we can take. We must recognise that a foster child is our child; that all the children who have been abandoned are the children of all the humans living on this earth; that we are abandoning ourselves when we abandon that child, even if we were not the ones who originally displaced that child. There is no time for blame to be placed on the unidentifiable guilty. When he or she becomes a gang member or a soldier, we are giving that child up to the forces of violence and

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Science & Sustainability

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coercion.

Knowing that the universe created humans as its eyes, ears, and mouth in order to look back on itself and find meaning can allow for each one of us to not just think, but know that the only path to survival is in cooperation and in displaying our patience and compassion. The intelligence we hold within us allows great actions to be accomplished in great numbers. The stupidity we are taught is to be better than everyone else. Competition will not be the key to our survival, but to our destruction.

Perhaps it is self-defeating to edit the title of Lao-Tzu's greatest achievement in order to make a point about simplicity. I would, however, like to offer a new title to anyone thinking about writing a follow-up to this often-ignored book of intelligent thoughts. A title which may help define the mission of such a manual for a way of life could easily be called, "The Way of Science for Sustainability" ~~~~~

Economic Problem

- cont. from pg. 6

cannot anymore accept the old norms; the old patterns; the ancient traditions. And, considering what the world is now, with all the misery, conflict, destructive brutality, aggression, and so on, man is still as he was: is still brutal, violent, aggressive, acquisitive, competitive, and he has built a society along these lines." - Jiddu Krishnamurti

The other half of the 'basic economic problem' is arguably less ambiguous: 'the world's resources are finite'. However, this should not be interpreted as 'money is the only way of distributing something of a limited quality'.

It is true that if we continue to fuel approximately 300 million automobiles with oil, we will run out. It is true that if we continue to heat our homes with coal and natural gas, we will run out. It is also true that, in his work *The Republic*, Plato identified

that 'necessity is the mother of invention'. This essentially means that, whenever humanity runs out of a resource, an alternative will be sought. This is no less true today than it was in 380 BC: realizing that our energy sources are dwindling, massive investment has been made in 'green' fuel – perhaps more so than you even realize. The fact is that we could stop burning all fossil fuels tomorrow and never run out of energy using today's technologies. Geothermal power alone has been proven to be a source of potential energy potent enough to fuel the world as it is now for the next 4000 years.

Additionally, the world's core heat constantly renews itself, allowing geothermal energy to realistically power everything on earth infinitely. Although I have only briefly addressed the issue of energy, it does not require a well-qualified scientist to even begin to guess at the limitless number of possible alternative materials and resources that could be harnessed, given man's incredible known propensity toward innovation.

When Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 32nd President of the United States of America, first started seeking ways for his country to enter World War Two, the US owned roughly 600 fighter jets, and lacked the money to invest in more. Yet, what they did have access to was the resources to produce fighters, and by the end of the war, they were creating 90,000 every year. What this shows is that, in times of war, we are more than capable of producing arms at incredible rates, regardless of the availability of money. Imagine if this same efficiency was applied in times of peace, and we instead chose to produce food and build schools and hospitals instead of fighter planes. This is a testament to our true ability to produce abundance when necessary.

I hope that you will assess this article with an open mind. Evidently, it is difficult to accept that everything your teachers and text books have taught you about the way Man operates within this system is a combination of lies and nonsense, but I hope that you are intelligent enough not to accept the first thing you hear or read as gospel. In a world where so

much is concentrated in the hands of so few, at the brutal expense of so many, it is easy to see that something is very wrong. Your duty to yourself and to everyone around you is to never stop asking questions. 'Be a teacher and a student; inspire everyone around you through your example'.

"Money is only important in a society when certain resources for survival must be rationed and the people accept money as an exchange medium for the scarce resources. Money is a social convention: it is not a natural resource, nor does it represent one. It is not necessary for survival unless we have been conditioned to accept it as such."

- Jacques Fresco

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Critics and Cities and Conflicts!

cont. from pg. 1

Suffice to say, people who read about The Movement and do not support this direction maintain the absolute freedom to not participate in our activism or even interact with us at all. If critics are genuinely afraid of the influence we may have on the masses, so much so that they feel they must devote their every spare moment to developing and maintaining YouTube channels, blogs, chats and radio programs to set the public straight about the dark, misguided, and corrupt ways they ascribe to us, well...let's just say I couldn't appreciate more their sincere confidence in our ability to successfully influence the masses with all of the awareness activism we are doing.

It is my view that we'll all come around to a global unified system eventually, perhaps not in my lifetime, but sometime in the future of humanity. Yes, I'm an optimist in this way. Good ideas are good ideas and a global RBE is an idea whose time has come. It seems that movement supporters share this view with even some of our toughest critics. TZM / TVP represent one of many ways of attempting to bring about the huge paradigm shift that would eradicate dependence on a monetary system. The events that are unfolding in the world right now are unprecedented and getting off the monetary system

is the comprehensive solution we can make happen with massive support. It's just a game, after all. And while there is no guarantee that the TZM/TVP approach will be THE approach to bring about a global RBE, to-date I am unaware of any other global movement or effort that can offer any such guarantee as the only way to achieve this. If one mysteriously surfaces, I'll probably deem them too overly-confident to be trusted. Why? Because we all have so much left to learn and we are learning and correcting course as we go, sans fortune tellers.

I appreciate the efforts of activists attempting to bring about a RBE by encouraging the organizing of operational intentional communities. Efforts to become less dependent on the modern consumerist structure are certainly worthwhile on many levels. TZM and TVP are essentially after the same end result as those who advocate activism by creating these communities; we are simply taking a global systems approach to creating abundance and sustainability, addressing problems at the root cause. However, it should go without saying that no movement or effort that seeks to bring about global unification and a global systems approach can escape the need for massive awareness through all of the many channels that ZM supporters are actively pursuing every day. There is just no way around it: no matter how challenging, mass awareness is paramount.

At the end of the day and given a choice, I'd still rather endure verbal equivalents to pissing contests that are centered around the best ways to bring world peace, abolish poverty, and create sustainable living, rather than heated debates as to which country is entitled to what resources, which political party's President most resembles Hitler, and whether or not bombs should be dropped now or later, etc. Critics and conflicts will inevitably arise as the idea of a RBE gains mainstream momentum and, as this happens, it can be counted as a sign of progress made. Ladies and gentlemen (supporters and critics alike); fasten your seat belts and enjoy the transition to a better world. ~~~~~

Letters

Peter,

What about “Democracy” in a RBE?

[Before we begin, the subject of social participation in a RBE is extensive and to those unfamiliar with other discussions of this issue in our materials it can seem complex and foreign. It isn't the scope of this essay to be definitive as it would be substantially long. The following presents a basic overview along with select points for consideration. However, soon after the time of this writing, a very extensive entry in our Knowledge Database on TZM.com's website will be in place. This will show the actual technical specifics for public participation along with the contexts.]

The participatory structure of a RBE is very different from what we know today. While the system of social involvement in the current model (for most countries) is given the title of “democratic”, a thorough review of these traditional practices and effects tends to find that the so-called “democratic process” we see in the so-called “free nations” of the world is really a misleading notion.

A common point made within The Zeitgeist Movement is that our social problems are, in fact, “technical” and not “political”. Poverty, war, educational imperatives, starvation, cancer, energy scarcity, unemployment and the like do not exist as “political” issues in reality, even though they are generally addressed as such. They are, in fact, technical by nature and hence each issue can only be resolved by a technical/physical solution. This goes virtually without exception when one is able to see past the cloud of distracting political noise and hence “opinionated” rhetoric coming from both the hardened public norms and archaic political machine - - stubborn “baggage” from our ongoing social evolution.

Jacque Fresco was the first to ask me, when the subject of “democracy” was brought up, “Did you vote for the wars?” “Did you vote for the president's cabinet?” “Did you vote for the space program?”, etc. His point is very simple: In the current system, we don't vote for anything but other people - “politicians” to be exact - who also are often devoid of any applicable technical skill set.

It is worth noting that politicians who are voted in today also have no legal obligation to fulfill any of the “promises” they made to the public when running for office and they can usually only be removed from their positions when their term ends. This can take years. So, to say we live in a “democracy” is quite a stretch from the standpoint of the public actually contributing to society in a meaningful, active way.

Furthermore, politicians, along with everyone else, are “victims of culture”. We cannot consider the integrity of any human without considering the integrity of the environment within which they were raised and live. The reinforcement mechanisms of that environment generate and amplify intent and motivation. This understanding, when considered in detail, explains why those in positions of power within the current social system lend themselves consistently to monetary and power-oriented corruption. It is rewarded,

reinforced and invariably needed to sustain select groups and their values.

Remember, generally speaking, the human being is no different than most other animals on this planet, as we are governed by certain laws of nature which facilitate our survival. Evolution has made it clear that animal behavior, and hence motivation, is ultimately a direct, learned consequence of external conditioning and reinforcement. (Please note that we are not denying genetic or biological attributes here - there is no “blank slate” - we are simply pointing out the minor relevance they have when it comes to specific human thought, active referential experience, values and hence so-called “moral” or “amoral” decision making.) For example, as a child, we might innocently stick our finger into a flame and get a painful burn. This operant conditioning typically secures the understanding that “fire burns and causes pain” and hence we learn to stay away from touching fire. This basic “organism to environment” interface has come to be known by modern psychology as likely the most critical factor in human behavioral expression.

Sadly, however, it still isn't given the social weight it deserves, for to view ourselves and each other as extensions or products of a given culture/environment is to detach from the traditional “freewill” and “genetic predisposition” theories which often ignore the environment as a cause of any given human behavior. These implications are like saying a tree is “guilty” for destroying a house it falls on... after it is hit by lightning. In other words, it irrationally puts the blame on the individual and dismisses the environment. In fact, this is how the entire American legal system intrinsically operates, for example, as it imprisons more and more people every year, ignoring the circumstances which generate their behaviors.

So, given this physical reality, coupled with the self-serving, socially Darwinistic values reinforced by the global social system today of Open Market Competition - aka Open Warfare - we find that humans acting as “political officials” are really little different than board members of a corporation in mentality. They operate on the same basis of self-preservation and financial influence. If they didn't, for example, monetary “lobbying” would be illegal. It isn't, because money is the ultimate facilitator and Government as we know it is really a business, in part. It is often erroneously assumed that Government is more powerful than the corporate/monetary establishment. This is naive and illogical. Government can only operate through the monetary system and hence it is equally as subservient to the imposed structure as the individual. This is why we hear the words “moral” and “ethical” within the political sphere constantly. Such notions become moot when the causal behavioral “reinforcers” are taken into account. These reinforcers ensure that monetary and hence power corruption within the political circles will continue, just as they do with general “common” crimes we see on a daily basis.

There is no such thing as “ethical”. Animals will generally behave in a manner that supports their survival and in the current monetary, scarcity-based paradigm, human beings become socially isolated and serve as slaves to the need for more

and more money and the means to get it has no boundary. Morality and Ethics are empty ideas. Again, in the words Jacque Fresco, the new definition of a criminal is simply “one who gets caught”. In fact, the correct orientation to judge any human act/value would be if it is “sustainable” or not. More on this as we proceed.

Now, as most know, the USA is often called a “Democratic Republic”, meaning the democratic process as we know it is bound by a series of seemingly immutable statements and rights declarations upon which most everything else is built. The founding fathers of America did understand the importance of not relying exclusively on “mob rule”. In the other words, a pure democracy, in the context we know today, can be cynically exemplified by considering that 10 white men hanging a black man is a “democratic” decision. So, it is critical to realize why the “republic”, and hence the constitutional structure, exists - it is there to try and deter mass mistakes with the assumption of preexisting empiricals by which the legal and democratic processes must adhere.

Not to mention, as an aside, that mass behavior, or “herd” behavior, is far more malleable and controllable than individual behavior. Historically, mass consensus is often wrong and misguided. Numerous studies have been done on this issue and the book- “Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds” by Charles Mackay- is recommended for review. The majority, in concert, can behave in a far more destructive and irresponsible way than the individual and the founding fathers likely understood this.

So, they created the US Constitution. But, who is to say that the US Constitution is universal? Is there anything in that document that shows a chain of reasoning? Can it be quantified?

No- it is an intuitive document, not a technical one. Yet, there is a very important gesture which the US Constitution alludes to and that is the idea that there are, indeed, governing empiricals - or at least “near empiricals” - upon which all other choices must reference. It is here we will bring in the subject of the “Scientific Method”.

The Scientific Method, which respects the orders of Natural Law such as physical science & mathematics, the need for nutrition & clean water - and everything else required for our personal and social survival and progress, can be considered the real “constitution” of social governance for species survival on the planet. It is the methodological referent that has stood the test of time- it is likely the greatest intellectual human discovery ever and each year scientists perfect and refine these understandings.

Given this, we now find that there is a real, near-empirical, testable measure upon which all of our concerns can be contextually considered.

This, then, is the platform for true social participation and a RBE presents this method as the basis for “arriving” at any and all decisions. It is the inherent “Social Constitution” by which our decisions must be referenced for clarity. Majority opinion is secondary to Natural Law. It doesn't matter how many people vote on outlawing Gravity- Nature doesn't care. Nature is not a democracy.

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Letters

Given this reality, participation in a RBE is hence not to simply “vote” for a person or idea - it is to also interface with the process of logical inference and tested, proven proofs which show what works and what doesn't in the natural world. In other words, it is not based on the whims or opinions of an ideological group - but based upon physical law and causal reasoning.

As denoted in our Orientation Guide, we present what is termed a “Central Database”- a referential hub for all human ideas to be evaluated. This database operates through pattern recognition known today as AI (artificial intelligence). For those who are not familiar, AI, on a basic level, is nothing more than code which can find and link relevant patterns for the logical culmination of a particular recognition. When you spell check a document with a word processor, a simple AI engine is referencing a series of patterns which seeks to correct a misspelled word based upon searching around the fragment presented. It is that simple. A more complex version of this idea, which closely mirrors the TZM/TVP model, has been created by Wolfram Research [see: www.wolframalpha.com]

Now, on a more tangible level (for example), in the future, automobiles and the like will not be “designed” by anyone. They will be generated by AI in one shot, based entirely on the desired function and maximum efficiency/sustainability. All that would be needed is essentially the insertion of “Function” into the program, with its built in and ever updating database of knowledge, which will generate the needed vehicle design for production as a single equation/solution. Again, it is a technical process. We humans only recognize and reaction to patterns and nothing we do today, on this level, cannot be technically emulated by AI in the future.

In fact, trends show that machine intelligence will exceed human intelligence in the near future in certain ways. This is not a threat but a powerful tool we can use to help ourselves in ways we can barely consider today. It allows for the removal of dangerous human opinion, replacing it with a

quantitative feedback mechanism that “arrives” at conclusions based on as much input as possible... that is what an “educated” decision really is- to logically take into account all known variables.

Now, it is at this point you are probably saying “what does this have to do with democracy?!” Well, once we realize that all real problems are technical and all solutions are resolvable by taking in as much data as possible, organized by causal reasoning and pattern recognition and evaluated/ tested by the scientific method, we then begin to understand that true social involvement is mostly only relevant in the process of subjective human need. What do we want and why? Here is where values come into play and why values, as has been discussed at length in TZM materials, is the central concern in the current stage of The Movement. The need for this is due to the “baggage” we have left over from prior periods of ignorance - not to mention the despotic reinforcements existing in the current monetary paradigm which continue to perpetuate social warfare (un-sustainability) on a daily basis. This is why TZM/TVP pushes to remove the system as fast as possible. In fact, we will likely self-destruct, otherwise for the maturity level of our current society is too poor for us to handle these new advanced advents in a responsible way, given the selfish perpetuation inherent in the current model... but that is for another essay.

So, democracy is really about finding consensus with values and, I'm sorry to say, values are not equal. Some are more “correct” and hence sustainable...while others are outdated, wrong and unsustainable. While the prior statement might seem like an opinion, it is not in the broad historical view. Demons do not cause illness, we don't need to burn “witches” and people with Tourette's syndrome are no longer considered possessed by the devil, as they were in the past by a culture who didn't know any better. Hitler's values were not sustainable for they generate division and any value which generates human division will generally lead to conflict and conflict is a staple of un-sustainability, etc. If the goal is human survival - then values can be assessed and qualified based on how they effect that process of survival. Those that interfere should be removed. As a basic example, if you value being able to pollute a local stream with toxic waste, you have a value which is unsustainable to nature/yourself. Values are not equal and the real revolution is

the revolution of human values shifting towards scientific understandings, to put it simply.

To summarize the issue of democracy within a RBE:

We arrive at decisions by The Scientific Method, not mass consensus, using a referential database which can calculate technical solutions. Since democracy as we know it incorrectly assumes the mass public is adequately informed on every given technical issue, along with the historical reality that mass influence/propaganda can steer the public in an entirely irrational way, we also see that “mob rule” simply cannot be trusted.

Now, this isn't to say public opinion has no place, if they are correctly informed of the variables. In this context, public opinion has a place, but it must be balanced against the “Natural Constitution”, which is The Scientific Method.

Another caveat with this issue, beyond the issue of value consensus, is the recognition of the emergent nature of reality and how our informational database (the totality of human knowledge) will always be incomplete in some way. It is in this context that public consensus/new research and input is also needed. In other words, during periods/contexts where variables are not clear/complete enough, a solution is generated by the perspective of the people. Beyond that, demands of human opinion will always be second to demands of physical law if our collective species' goal is to survive on this planet. We cannot impose our views on the world - we can only extract them.

Please see our Knowledge Base in the near future for more on this issue.

- Peter Joseph



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Quote of the month...

He who floats with the current, who does not guide himself according to higher principles, who has no ideal, no convictions -- such a man is...a thing moved, instead of a living and moving being -- an echo, not a voice. The man who has no inner-life is a slave of his surroundings as the barometer is the obedient servant of the air.

Henri-Frederic Amiel

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