

THE ECONOMICS OF SHARED HAPPINESS Building a Happy Society



Pole Institute
Institut Interculturel dans la Région des Grands Lacs

At the heart of these reflections, we wanted to think of this path of economic happiness shared according to the order of freedom, responsibility and creativity of citizens, through the channel of development and promotion of anthropological enrichment: an energy in which Congo and Africa must invest the best part of their will and their genius.

It is an order that appears to us mainly as a demand to get out of ultra capitalism, this system of which the DRC is currently an easy prey, and Africa, an irresistible magnet. To unravel the imperatives, we offer the Congolese educated public our reading of the book *The Human Cause* written by an important witness of our time: the French thinker Patrick Viveret. His book is both a hymn to the future and a cry of confidence in man's creative capacity. We believe that its substance is of the utmost interest to the concerns of Congolese man and the utopias of the whole of Africa, especially when it comes, like today, to re-found the economy on the values of the human being for the whole of humanity.

At the same time, we propose an African reading of another great European book: *The Economy of Good and Evil*, written by Czech thinker Tomas Sedlacek. It is a masterful work whose ambition is to seek “the spirit of economics” by visiting the entire history of economic visions from the oldest myths of humanity to our present day. Once highlighted what the Czech economist saw and defined, we wanted to know what Africa can offer as anthropological foundations to the economy that the world needs now, in the context of a global crisis of a system less and less able to guide the “economic spirit” in a clear and fertile way.



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Dossier

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Building a Happy Society

Les Éditions de Pole Institute



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Institut Interculturel dans la Région des Grands Lacs

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Building a Happy Society

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POLE INSTITUTE

Pole Institute is an intercultural institute in the Great Lakes region.

The Institute is based in Goma, in the eastern North Kivu province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Institute was established by a group of people originating from North and South Kivu provinces who took up the challenge of exchanging views in a crisis context marked by many unfortunate events, and which is characterized by cycles of violence, poverty, bad governance and insecurity.

As a result, **Pole Institute** seeks to provide a space for:

- Analysis and research on the major local challenges and their national, regional and international implications (widespread poverty, social violence, ethnic divisions, absence of moral points of reference, a culture of impunity etc.)
- Analysis and strengthening of the survival strategies of populations living in a context of war and prolonged crisis
- Analysis of war economies to develop approaches to strengthening local populations and their economic activities
- Action research and lobbying in partnership with local, regional and international actors and institutions.

Purpose:

Promote dignified and inclusive societies in which free individuals and peoples act, in order to contribute to:

- Establishment of a SOCIETY in which each person finds her/his place and rediscovers the 'other', through development of a culture of permanent negotiation and identification of positive, common values;
- Creation of a new type of independently minded PERSON who is anchored in his/her identity but remains open to the world.

Policy:

- Initiate, develop, strengthen and publicize avant-garde ideas on peacebuilding, reconstruction and peaceful cohabitation of populations living in crisis zones;
- Initiate the emergence of a culture of negotiation (as opposed to a culture of death) based on the common interests of each and every one.

Folder

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This book is dedicated to Ka Mana who passed away during its writing in July 2021, for all the loyal services rendered to the Democratic Republic of Congo and to Pole Institute.

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Part One
GREAT WITNESSES OF OUR TIME

Chapter I

THE HUMANIST WAY OUT OF ULTRA-CAPITALISM

I.0. Introduction

On a global scale today, the order of ultra-capitalism exalted under the name of globalization is becoming more and more problematic. There are virulent challenges to his logics everywhere. From everywhere there is questioning of his practices. A very scathing criticism of his vision of the world and his directions for humanity are scolding everywhere. Fundamentally, a deep doubt has taken hold of the minds about its relevance and its fertility. This doubt is no longer merely the prerogative of the protesters of the global system who, in the alter-globalization movement, have questioned the economic and social policies of international financial institutions since the days of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in the early 1980s. It now arises at the very heart of the convictions of specialists, experts and actors who have served the system and know its arcana from within, either as great economists of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, or as senior officials of central banks in industrialized countries, or as patented designers and ideologues of an economy totally governed by market dictatorship and despotism of financial deregulation.

In the concert of these critics and his questioning, the questions that plague consciences are of a triple order.

First, one wonders whether the global system of ultra capitalism, in its basic principles as well as in its substantive issues, is able to respond to the major concerns and essential aspirations of individuals and societies. This is anthropological criticism.

Second, we are trying to understand what the global system, centered on its current vision of the economy, entails as a form of

governance of nations and as a way of managing the planet today facing worse threats. This is political and economic criticism.

Thirdly, one wonders whether it is not time to tackle the excesses and pathologies of a system that is increasingly turning in circles and losing the sense of the future to be built for humanity, from a base of clearly identifiable values. This is ethical criticism.

In a book of great analytical strength and a fruitful power of proposal and innovation, the philosopher and economics expert Patrick Viveret energetically deploys these criticisms and unfolds the stakes. The book's title is: "*La cause humaine, Du bon usage de la fin d'un monde*". It is published by Editions LLL Les liens qui libèrent, in Paris, in 2012.

I.1. Criticism of ultra-capitalist reason and its fundamental excesses

The title and subtitle of the book unfold the entire project. It is a question of defending and promoting the human cause in the face of the system of ultra-capitalism whose failures are such that it can no longer claim to be a way forward for humanity. Patrick Viveret sets out to highlight these failures in a radical way.

His main attack is anthropological. The French thinker exposes the fundamental error that disqualifies in his eyes ultra-capitalism: a false vision of man and society. This error is to place human life under the auspices of the *ego-competitive software* that delivers the social, economic and political space to a warlike and murderous anthropology. Man, essentially viewed from the material perspective of economic vampire, is also essentially seen as *homo demens* and not as *homo sapiens sapiens* that he is supposed to be. This reductionism forgets that man is a fabric of contradictions where the furies of the *demens* and the juice of *sapiens sapiens* are intertwined. Its narrow view can only lead to a misunderstanding of human existence, both in the economic and

political fields. As Edgar Morin writes in his preface to Patrick Viveret's book, the originality of the French philosopher is to "reintroduce the anthropological question into political thought, to introduce "the profound psychology of man into the political question" and to consider the world economic system in the light of a global vision of man. He thus abandons a truncated and failing anthropology in favor of a complex thought that he calls *anthropological realism*. In this realistic vision, the human being is apprehended not only as *homo sapiens sapiens* intended to master the delirium and possessive and dominating excesses of his *homo demens* side, but he is also *homo faber* ("the producer man, the man enslaved by work or liberated by work"), *homo ludens* (delivered to the exuberance of the game of gifts and counter-donations as well as to the dissipative enjoyments of vital energies) and *the man "self-consuming"* in the jet that propels him to death.

From this explosive mixture of the human being, ultra-capitalism knows only the anthropology of competition and the sociology of murderous relationships, in delusional practices of an economic order unable "to impose necessary regulations on financial markets seized by speculative excess". Viveret's terms of excess and delirium are the background lines of his vision of the ideology and behaviors of ultra liberalism as the engine of today's globalization, which he challenges. They allow him to designate profound pathologies specific to the ignorance and carelessness of ultra-capitalism on what is really essential. That is to say the fundamental aspirations of what makes man human: the yearning for love, the yearning for happiness and the aspiration for meaning. Three dynamics through which human beings form communities of destiny and aim for a "living together" of *high quality* and high relational energy. By ignoring these fundamental anthropological aspirations in favor of the *ubris* economy as an excess for material possessions and the instincts of domination for power in all

its forms, the ultra-capitalist vision that is at the base of the current world order destroys the forces of cohesion in societies and breaks the springs of human communities that want to overcome the logics of destruction.

It is in the description of the anthropology of love, happiness and meaning that Patrick Viveret's book shows all its richness of human analysis and lays the foundations of a global philosophy against the economic and political orientations of the world order. When a civilization, like the one that dominates the world today, forgets the essence of human aspirations, it can only plunge the world into deep crises. It produces, maintains, stirs them up and activates them in a kind of unconsciousness and irresponsibility without limits. The scale of these crises is staggering. We know the financial crises that, from *sub-primes* in the United States to the collapse of the economy in Greece and Spain, have sparked the vast movement of the indignant. We know the social crises caused by economic and financial deregulations that disconnect the real economy from the speculative economy and widen huge inequalities between the social strata. We know the enormous weight of tax haven systems on the miseries of peoples. We know the weight of the huge debts under which poor countries are burdened because of the very system of globalization. Structural adjustment programs and their disastrous effects on poor and desperate populations are well known. And we know the disasters of mafia economies in a system of practices closer to financial gangsterism than a quest for a respectable and credible world order. If we add to all these crises the ecological threats and "the warlike and predatory conception of our connection to nature"; If we consider at the same time the deconstruction of the capacities of the political powers to steer the world economy in a geo-strategy of peace and solidarity, we will understand that the system is out of breath and imagination and that it is impossible to reform it from within. It is to this conclusion that those

who served it from within have succeeded, thus giving reason to the alter-globalist movement which has long challenged the lack of ethical foundations and the absence of reliable rationalities for a living together worthy of a true human society.

When we know that, in this system, spending on armaments and advertising is scandalously exceeding the budgets allocated to education, health and the fight against the destruction of the environment, one doubts not only the meaning of priorities and values in ultra-capitalism, but the intelligence of the world itself fuelled by such a vision and practices. We doubt the seriousness and rationality of its “modes of production, consumption, distribution, and more radically, our way of life”. The crisis is no longer just ethical in the sense of inability to feed the system with regulatory norms thought on the basis of love, happiness and meaning. It is a crisis of the capacity of ultra-capitalism to use reason as the normal organizing body of a society that wants to live without destroying itself.

Faced with this lucid observation, Patrick Viveret is part of a dynamic of seeking a credible alternative to ultra-capitalism. He does so not only in an ethical direction that his anthropology of love, happiness and meaning heralds and exalts, but according to the direction of a new economic vision rationally founded and above all in faith in the capacity of resilience and new hopes at the heart of today’s world. He says, “*We must be both totally clear about the magnitude of the risks and able to build a new hope on the basis of the forces of renewal that have begun to emerge.*”

I.2. Building a new hope and a new project of civilization

Patrick Viveret’s critique of ultra-capitalism is a matter of responsible lucidity that clearly describes the six threats to our contemporary societies, formatted by the philosophy of competitive ego and warrior economism. Those threats are six altogether:

- *“The destructiveness of the human habitability of the earth, linked to the ecological challenge.”*
- *“Self-destruction by weapons of mass destruction.”*
- *“The explosive cocktail of misery and humiliation, at a time when the ultra-rich are displaying insolent luxury and traders’ bonuses have gone up again.”*
- *The excess of the financial economy: it is no longer an investment space, “but a gigantic casino that can plunge the world into a dreadful depression”.*
- *“The risk of a war of civilization”, of the outbreak of wars of meaning, which are arguably the deadliest of all the wars known to peoples.*
- *“The gap between science and consciousness, characterizing a humanity plagued by its own inner barbarity, at war with nature because it is at war with itself.”*

Do not resist here the pleasure of reproducing the beautiful and disturbing text that Patrick Viveret quotes to say all the danger that the current world order of globalization represents for humanity. This is the text of the guard page of Patrick Artus and Marie-Paule Virard’s book: *Globalisation, Le pire est à venir* (Paris, La Découverte, 2008).

“The worst is to come from the combination of five major characteristics of globalization: an unequal machine that undermines social fabrics and stokes protective tensions; a cauldron that burns scarce resources, encourages hoarding policies and accelerates global warming; a machine to flood the world with liquidity and encourage bank irresponsibility; a casino where all the excesses of financial capitalism are expressed; a centrifuge that can blow up Europe.”

The images are strong. The constant is hard. The judgment is incisive. But far from leading to the pessimism or immobility of the conformity of the *status quo*, the awareness of these threats should push, according to Viveret, to open a new path: the construction of new hope, in an impulse of ruptures that are deeply systemic ruptures:

- Breaking with the domination of society by the software “competitive ego” in its ruinous impulses, to promote an “alter-cooperative” software capable of engaging all humanity in a revolution of love, in a revolution of shared happiness and in a revolution of meaning, for a peaceful and fertile life-together.
- Breaking with the ubris project and the excess that characterizes the “runaway of productivity” in the current global system.
- Breaking with the couple that forms this “excess of productivity” with “financial capitalism” predatory and voracious.
- Breaking with the ways of life that lead to ecological disaster and the absurdity of a world driven to ruin its own living environment.

It is, in essence, the principle of salvation through the economy and its psycho-socio-political effects that must be taken out. How do we do that? Patrick Viveret’s book is full of proposals in line with the major knots of anthropological crisis, ethical crisis and purely economic crisis. To the extent that these crises destroy the fundamental anthropology that the author refers to as LHS (Love, Happiness, Sense), they must be confronted with a new global dynamic that Viveret defines by another acronym: REV. It refers to “a transformative tripod inscribed in history and which we need to reconstruct: the tripod of creative resistance (R), anticipatory experimentation (E) and transformative vision (V). This tripod aims to “build alternatives to the logics of rivalry” and to promote the logics of vital bonds and solidarity alliances to get out of ultra-capitalism in a human way. “From the top,” as Patrick Viveret himself writes. That is to say by the rejection of violence, destructive furies, “revolts without a future”, “utopian visions without incarnation” and “experiments reduced to limiting the break caused by the dominant system without succeeding in transforming it”. We need more and better. We must “dare to think beyond capitalism”, dare to reverse the logics of ultra liberalism in a concrete way, through strong and fruitful strategies of creativity.

Some strategic assertions are true acts of faith in the principles of humanity at Viveret. It is time to believe again in man and to promote the human cause in our civilization plagued by the evils of ultra-capitalism. *“All centuries-old or millennia-old wisdoms, all spiritual traditions tell us that every nation, every civilization, every community—and every human being - is crossed by the question of evil. The barbarian is not the other, it is on the contrary the refusal of the other.”* Dialogue and the alliance of civilizations for the fundamental values of our common humanity, against all odds, must be used as a strategic path for the future. This is the most fruitful way of ensuring the “creative germination” of the new “at the heart of the ordeal”.

Other strategic statements concern the policy perceived from the perspective of the anthropology of love, happiness and meaning. We can only find them splendid and bearer of a great future. “We need to reinvent desire, a desire for humanity”, Viveret writes. It is not a hollow dream; it is the very heart of political action. It is “the positive logic of commitment, that of the creative yes” where “the life force of the Eros” becomes “creative resistance,” “anticipatory experimentation” and “transformative vision.” In magnificent and resounding poetic impulses, the French philosopher opens the superb horizon of a universal fundamentally nourished by human values, “a universal not imposed, but a universal yet to be built”: that of human cause, precisely.

On ecological action, on money, on debts, on financial regulations, Patrick Viveret is driven by the dynamics of inventing new solutions for the “democratic re-appropriation” of creative dynamism so that existing initiatives and those to be invented are part of the LHS dynamic and in the REV juice, two levers of anthropology without which there is no possible future. The questions of the very meaning of life and human destiny become political and economic questions, in the name of the “joy of living” and the magnificence of being together, which make us “grow in humanity”, we who are changing eras and

enrolling in a new project of the future whose book Patrick Viveret sings the beginnings, paces the promises and makes the morning star shine, that is, the duty to “rebuild a social bond for the new world to come.”

I.3. For Africans

For Africans, a book like Viveret’s does good, much good in the heart and in the mind. In a world where we have tended to divinize the West and its ultra-capitalist view of reality, it restores our confidence in the values of civilization that we have and that the West is beginning to rediscover.

Since the dawn of its civilization in ancient Egypt, Africa has always sought to put at the heart of its culture the primacy of being-together and living-together in the search for relational harmony, despite conflicts, despite clashes and wars. It is to energize this philosophy that it has focused human relationships on the quest for what Placide Tempels clumsily called the vital force but which exactly signifies the energy of the being-strong-together in an ethic of vital bonds: links with transcendence, links with nature as the interior of spirits, social bonds where individuals are fertilized by the intense treasure of the community and links with future generations who flourish in a continuum of existential riches that ancestors transmit to the living. There was a time when this view of the world was denigrated as animism before seeing that modernity had gone wrong in its globalization and that the era of post-modernity should create an alter globalism more sensitive to values like those of Africa instead of locking the world in the ubris of an eternally triumphant West. Being human will not make sense for the future if we do not break with the warlike and murderous excess of ultra-capitalism to give birth, in what African culture has called the “Ubuntu”, the force of a community humanism that must feed every person and every society. What we need

to understand now is that the “Ubuntu” has as its field the entire planet whose wealth will serve all peoples in a community of destiny. Humanity cannot emerge from the rut of ultra-capitalism if the West does not listen to its own thinkers who trace a new path of values in a dialogue of civilizations that Africa can fertilize not only with the sense of community and peaceful harmony, but with the sanctity of all reality as a place of intensification of the powers of life: the powers of the creator. Those who, by morgue, considered that these values are archaisms in a modernity guided by the certainties of progress, scientific domination of nature and man by ubris, those who thought that economics is the ultimate reality and that its logic is the essential substance of society, all those have now learned that man surpasses man and that money is only the pulsation of a cultural construction today. A problematic construction everywhere, judging by all the thought of challenging the world order, in the name of the values of humanity, in the name of a policy of civilization and humanity, as Edgar Morin says, in the name of what for centuries, African societies have always exalted in their global humanism: humanness, as Joseph Ki-Zerbo said.

These values of humanness are those of generous solidarity, enriching conviviality, creative exuberance and happy social bond. Even if they are betrayed by today's Africa, these realities of ethical anthropology are no longer past backwards. These are forces of the future: the silt of the true meaning of humanity to be built. They are the very future of the world. By abandoning them in favor of warlike economic anthropology and murderous policies, the West has taken the shadows for the prey and created a world that suffocates it itself and suffocates the whole world. He sees it now. The best of his minds today recognize that they must open themselves to other peoples and nations, through a new choice of civilization where it is clear to us that Africa has a vital role to play. It is up to us Africans to understand this role and to teach Africa to the world, for the invention of the new planetary

humanism. This means that the human cause is now the cause of Africa. The world that is opening up is the world of Africa, even if the great minds of the West who question the hegemony of the Western world vision do not yet see it. The time has come to make them understand it in a new dialogue that will forge a real project of the future for the world: the project of the invention of the human in the fight against the dementias of the world and the excess of ultra-capitalism. It is a radiant invention that will have to be based on the crucial questions posed by Patrick Viveret:

- “What really matters in our lives?”
- “What gives meaning to our lives?”
- What makes man a *homo sapiens sapiens*?
- What needs to be done to ensure that another possible world is not only possible, but real, in the most concrete sense of the word.

For putting such fundamental and decisive questions into the heart of the world, Patrick Viveret has written an important and salutary book. You have to read it. Absolutely. It must be read in order to embody its breath in new educational places where a new idea of politics, economics and man will be promoted: institutes for human cause. We decided to create one in Kinshasa, for the honour of Africa and our country.

Chapter II

FROM ULTRA-CAPITALISM TO THE ECONOMY OF SHARED HAPPINESS

II.0. Introduction

Here we present our reading of an important book of economic history and analysis. This book is the work of a Czech economist who is unanimously regarded in his country as a high-level expert, a brilliant teacher and a leading thinker, serving the whole world. Title of the book: “The Economy of Good and Evil, The Quest for Economic Meaning”.

From the author of this work, President Vaclav Havel (1936-2011), of whom he was economic advisor, writes:

“In my presidential team, Tomas Sedlacek belonged to this generation of young colleagues who, after four decades of totalitarian communist rule, were about to renew the way of seeing the contemporary world and its problems.”

And he adds, regarding the merit of his compatriot’s thought:

“Through his questions, the author breaks stereotypes. It tries to escape narrow specializations and open the boundaries between scientific disciplines. His forays beyond the confines of economics and the gateways he casts towards history, philosophy, psychology and ancient myths are not only original. They are essential to understanding the world of the 21st century. This book (...) makes economics a work in progress. There is not a precise answer to the constant search for a purpose, but additional reasons to question even more about the world and the role that man plays in it.”

If we found it useful and important to present the book of the Czech economist to the cultured Congolese public, it is not only because it is a great work that renews the vision of the world’s

problems. This is mainly because this renewal of thinking and looking at reality opens up a rich horizon for Africa and our country, the DRC, to pose the crucial problems of African economies in the current order of globalization, with a special look at the quest for economic meaning and the ethical intelligence of the world economy.

II.1. The bottom line

The fundamental question that Tomas Sedlacek faces and on which he wants to renovate the approach and the prisms of analysis is that of the very meaning of the economy in today's world.

The global economy and the large institutions that drive it are problematic, agitated by the turmoil of repeated crises and caught in the disarray of populations in many countries for which the order of current globalization is in no way a chance of life. Many experts wonder whether the economic system in which we live still has a future, if its contradictions and inconsistencies do not lead it straight into the wall, with the risk of a gigantic explosion of misery, suffering and violence. For the people who live in the space of our present world whose political meanderings and economic arcana do not understand, especially in countries like the DRC where we have to seriously consider whether they have a clearly perceptible economic policy in the face of the immense problems of our peoples, what is happening in the upper echelons of economic designers and policy makers has lost all credibility. Even among economics specialists in university faculties and research institutes; even among the economic players who drive the global market in all its jurisdictions (industrialists, bankers, business leaders and the living forces of global trading networks), no one is able to know where today's globalization is going. No one can say whether it will implode in global chaos or whether it will lead to successful solutions to the essential issues of the people. Even states seem to be deeply dismayed, despite their constant use of reassuring discourses and

cabalistic vocabulary designed to make ordinary mortals understand that there are answers when there are none at all, or not really, in the radical sense of things.

Four clues on this point are likely to make us understand the magnitude of the problems at this time, if we are from the Congolese and African point of view.

- *One*: the economies of rich countries have been fighting unemployment for many decades and are taking steps year after year to eradicate evil. Yet we continue to believe that rich countries are heading in the right direction, without thinking at all about the suffering that the employment crisis is having as an impact and as an effect on ordinary people in everyday life.
- *Two*: no one knows today that the global economic orientation, with its glorification of growth and its exponential use of non-renewable energies, mortgages the ecological balances of the planet in more or less short term. From world summits to world summits, this problem is proposed only as derisory palliatives. The substantive issues that concern the reorientation of the spirit of our world civilization are not addressed with the seriousness they deserve. In this area, as the French thinker Olivier Abel said, “We do not believe what we know” in today’s world. We pretend to want to build another great future for humanity when we know, since the alarm call of the Club of Rome in the 1970s, that there is an urgent need to change direction to avoid the disasters that are to come. By intellectual laziness, by stupid morgue or by criminal unconsciousness, we seem convinced that things will get better when there is an urgent need to radically rethink our choices of civilization and the directions of the current world economy.

- *Three*: Since the independence of 1960, Africa has failed to take a firm place in the global economic system that has transformed our countries into a sterile and derisory appendage of the international order. None of our nations has yet succeeded in reorienting its economy to emerge from the dependence and appendage mentality towards the masters of the world.
- *Four*: The Democratic Republic of Congo is credited with a huge potential for development, given its natural and human resources, compared to many other countries. Yet it lags behind in the world ranking of nations in terms of human development, even on basic indicators such as road, health and educational infrastructure. Its economy is teetering on a stormy social sea in a kind of madness and disorientation that could be fatal if nothing changes. However, no one is proposing a credible way out of the crisis, either within the country where people do not invest in change with vigour, nor on a global scale where the Congolese chaos seems to be arranging many people.

What happens to keep these realities what they are when they should have changed from top to bottom, at least in the capacity of the economic leaders of the world, Africa and our country, whose task is to propose fruitful solutions to the economic problems of the planet?

In his book, Tomas Sedlacek helps us answer these questions for our country and for Africa. Above all, it allows us to propose paths of thought and action for another possible economy.

II.2. Economics in Myths and History: Building Economic Science and Mind in the West

“The economy as we know it,” Tomas Sedlacek writes, “is a cultural phenomenon, a product of our civilization. But it is not a product in the sense that it was intentionally manufactured or invented like a watch or an airplane engine. A watch, an airplane engine, we

understand them - we know where they come from. We can (or almost) break them down completely and then rebuild them. We know how they start and how they stop. With the economy, it's a different way. Its origins are largely unconscious, spontaneous, uncontrolled, unforeseen, foreign to the baton of any conductor. Before becoming a field of study in its own right, the economy was adapting to its attachment to branches of philosophy - ethics, for example - far removed from its concept of today, that of a mathematical-allocative science disdainful of the 'social' sciences. But our millennial education is based on a deeper, broader and often stronger foundation, which is good to know."

We must understand in this statement that the original point of view of the Czech economist is to take seriously a fact: the economy as it works in today's world is a product of human history. Precisely from the history of the West as a place of deployment of a certain type of culture and civilization. It is a historical construction that does not belong to any fatalism in its functioning or to any motionless and inflexible dogmatic, but has been built in the debates of ideas and the evolution of confrontations of visions of reality. It responds to particular concerns that are deeply related to the concerns of different historical epochs. It is dependent on the mental structures and configurations of being that characterize the phases of tension towards the future. This means that it is possible and even imperative that we look at the current economic order from a dual perspective, if we want to look at it from the perspective of our current responsibility.

We must first entrench the economy as a social construct in the history of ideas in societies. We must then integrate it into a global understanding of our worldview and the problems that are imposed on our societies today. It is this dual purpose that will enable our world today to make sense of the economy here and now and to open up a fruitful horizon for the future, with a view to another possible world.

II.3. Myths and history suggest

Sedlacek devotes much of his approach to the economy in a work of deconstruction of the historical process where the economy originated and evolved. It starts from afar, from the epic of Gilgamesh, “the oldest literary work of mankind”, which “dates from more than four thousand years” and was produced in the Sumerian civilization, in ancient Mesopotamia. After that, he questions the ancient Hebrew, Christian and Greek conceptions, before the great modern rupture represented by thinkers such as Descartes, Mandeville and Adam Smith. It leads to the problems of the contemporary world where economics has become a mathematical science cut off from its richest and deepest historical sources.

Before the break-up of modernity

In his historical approach, Tomas Sedlacek discovers the foundation of economic questioning, its roots in anthropology. This foundation is made up of the question of good and evil. It is at the heart of this question that the quest for economic meaning in humanity is set.

From the epic of Gilgamesh, we see the economic construction of the human-being being done in a dynamic where what we call economy today is anchored. In the tuff of this anthropologic, the divine side of man and the savagery of his animal nature are joined. This interweaving of the divine and the savage leads to a particular logic of friendship that must be considered inherent in the ontological tessitura of homo economicus: the logic of creative friendship.

Gilgamesh, hero building the walls around the city of Uruk is, in myth, god to three quarters and he is a human quarter. Inkidu, his savage adversary who will become his friend by humanizing himself, reveals another dimension of economic anthropology: the spirit of indomitable instincts that humans must nevertheless tame. In the myth, Inkidu dies and his death makes Gilgamesh discover the finitude of the

human being. Gilgamesh cannot bring himself to accept this finitude and he sets out in search of immortality. His attempt will not succeed, but what he discovered in his friendship with the wild and tamed Inkidu being will forever remain a legacy for humanity: despite the finitude, man is constantly fighting to overcome his existential situation through friendship, cooperation that changes the world.

At the heart of the myth is work-based change. It is first presented as a work imposed by a three-quarter divine tyrant, Gilgamesh, who wants to reduce men into “humanoid robots”. These robots, the tyrant Gilgamesh forced them by his ferocious domination to produce ever more, without rest, in magma of ever-increasing efficiency so that the wall is built around the city which thus becomes a safe space. But something else will happen: the friendship between Gilgamesh and the savage Enkidu, in an exemplary project of common action, leads to putting at the center of the work the imperative of collegiality, cooperation, dynamics “useful to society and business”. Since then, we know that “people work better and faster if they get along at the human level and agree with each other.” More importantly, the myth says that working together leads to a project to change the world and enrich itself. Changing the world is the project of Gilgamesh and Enkidu who go into the cedar forest to kill the demon Humbaba, guardian of the forest, in order to cut down precious wood, the basis for “acquiring (...) a great wealth, to which the hero is entitled.”

The challenge of all this history is the birth of the human and the civilization, the birth of the forces that protect themselves from nature and develop the common living space through cooperation in an artificial environment created by man: the city. It is in this issue that the meaning of economics is part of the myth: man combines the divine and the beast to build a civilization of security.

We are at the heart of the problem that will dominate the entire history of human reflection on the economy. This problem is a founding

problem and the myth that expresses it is a founding myth of Western humanity. Gilgamesh is indeed the expression of an anthropological preoccupation whose economic debate will never be off-the-air in human history: the relationship between good and evil, between the world of values of humanity and the world of anti-values.

This concern will be at the heart of the Hebrew civilization, which the great texts of the Old Testament reflect. The Hebrews are in the same frame as the Mesopotamian myth, but they create a new dynamic where ethics is at the heart of the economy, that is, the civilization of human work. For the Hebrews, ethics is in obedience to God and this obedience is a guarantee of prosperity. In his work is prosperous the one who obeys God's prescriptions in the Scriptures.

We are here in an anthropology where human work, after having been a divine requirement to grow and multiply, yet quickly becomes a burden and punishment after the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Divine punishment brings humanity into a history where it has a duty to take charge of itself and engage in a highly codified economic practice.

What matters most to us among the Hebrews are its new contributions to the worldview? This vision is characterized by the desecration of nature, the de-deification of the gods and the valuation of the here and there as a field of transformation of reality by man. There is also an anthropological realism among the Hebrews that prevents the emergence of super-human heroes, without defects. Man, even exceptional, remains a man, with qualities and defects. Only God is God. The Kings will never be all-powerful. The texts like to highlight their limits and thus make possible a philosophy of human responsibility that will be a breeding ground for the emergence of the economy as a task for a highly valued enrichment. This is part of an anthropology where man must improve divine creation by the strength of his intelligence, the work of his hands and the "morality of well-

being.” This morality appears in some texts as linked to a certain economic spirit of foresight and savings, with cycles of abundance and cycles of scarcity (the pharaoh's dream on fat cows and lean cows). It also appears as a moral of good always rewarded in the face of evil, even here on earth, without reference to any back-world.

The Greeks in turn gave economic history fundamental benchmarks to which modern fashion and contemporary times owe much. The poet Hesiod already refers to “the scarcity of resources and the need to allocate them effectively.” Hence the imperative of human work, the very fate of humans, “their virtue and the cause of all good.” At Thalès de Milet and the pre-Socratics, trade is exalted as a source of wealth: this is what “Thales wanted to demonstrate with his *olive business*”. Xenophon truly founded a vision of “the modern economy four hundred years before Christ”: in him, there are not only clear and simple rules for the management of the home, but also ways and means to reap the tax revenues and prosperity of the city. His ideas for maximizing finances are eminently modern. They are not based on trust in expedients such as war and its raids or on what would be called nationalization today. Rather, they are based on commercial activity, trade and the conquest of markets, “a truly revolutionary idea for the time and which will not be rediscovered until much later.” What is truly revolutionary is the strength of conviction in Xenophon that enrichment is made by “common gains” with strangers. Athens wins foreigners too.

There is even more among the Greeks: their philosophical debates. These debates, which seem very speculative, are nevertheless very ingrained in reality. Between the Eleates (Parmenides) who affirmed the immutability of being and the Heraclitians who saw in all only fleetingness and impermanence, the debate is not only a matter of ontology. The issue is also eminently economic, we would say today: it concerns the possibility of discovering immutable laws capable of helping humans to cling to a safe rock in their visions of the

construction of prosperity. Modern science is the result of this debate. As Sedlacek writes, “It constantly fluctuates between two notions of the world, the Parmenian and the Heraclitian.”

On the one hand, it creates models that are reconstructions of reality, where it assumes that reality can be reconstructed, so that it has at least some permanence. On the other hand, many scientists see rational models as “false, unreal” crutches that should still help predict the future in a dynamic reality in constant change.

With Plato and his theory of ideas, the conviction that the supersensitive world as reality and mathematics as a path to knowledge about the true world whose good is the supreme idea will create a mentality from which future generations will be inspired. His allegory of the cave remains at the center of philosophy. It is the story of the construction of radical trust in reason as the fundamental instance of truth. It is not in the outside world that we will discover the truth, but in us, through this very instance of reason: the instance of man out of the cave, who saw the light of perfect and immutable ideas. For Plato, we grasp reality “not by sight or other meaning, but by reason.” It was this idea of reason and its demands that “the rationalist tradition was founded, which eventually took such an important place in the economy.” This in a logic, which tries to discover *rationally* the principle of reality and forms a model behavior. Even today, the economy still shows a clear tendency to enclose the “real” world in “exact mathematical models and curves, constant, valid once and for all.”

In the same field of rationalism but resolutely directing it towards the world of forms here on earth and not towards Platonic ideas, Aristotle has introduced into the philosophical tradition a crucial question that will be at the heart of the economy: the question of happiness. “How can we live happily ever after? What does it mean to live in such a way as to lead a desirable life?” Aristotle’s answer to this

question will dominate the entire Western philosophical tradition. She sees man as “a political animal” whose “private good only makes sense in the context of good for society as a whole.”

Following Aristotle, two strong tendencies will dominate ancient philosophy on this question of happiness: the hedonistic tendency (Epicure) and the Stoic tendency. They all have a relationship with the economy. Both are concerned about the problem of utility, happiness and the creation of sustainable prosperity.

For hedonists, the view is this: “A hedonist is supposed to use his reason to govern his actions according to their long-term end.” “Egoism, foresight, calculation and premeditation are the source of epicurean ethics.” It is the link between good and pleasure that leads to a mentality of seeking wealth to enjoy well-being. As Epicure himself states in his Capital Maxims: “One cannot live pleasantly without living wisely, well and justly, and one cannot live wisely, well and precisely without living pleasantly.” It is an answer to the problem of pleasure as a reward for a moral life. A life that results in a certain way of being, a certain behavior, a certain global orientation of being in relation to the goods of this world.

Stoics are from an ascetic perspective that will lead the world to the spirit of capitalism through the effort of sacrifice, frugality, savings and maximization of profits through investments that create wealth. For them, the emphasis is on the moral constraints that must crisscross individual behaviours and somehow constrain them to virtue. We also have a very clear orientation of mind here, with a certain mode of economic organization also very clear.

Basically, the two schools are like the two roads of the Western tradition always tense between freedom and laissez-faire on the one hand, coercion and coercion on the other, with a view to a free market economy or a planned economy. What is now called capitalism and socialism have their roots in ancient debates that are still relevant today.

Tomas Sedlacek also looked at Christianity, which he describes as the religion of “spirituality in the material world.” It starts from the thought of Christ, which he asserts has a fundamental connection with the economy. The parables of Jesus are largely located in the economic field. Notably: “the parables of the lost drachma, of the talents, in which Jesus reproaches a servant for not entrusting his money to the bankers, the unfaithful thrift, the workers of the vine, the two debtors, the rich fool, etc.” In all these texts and in many verses, it is the reversal of logic: “You have learned that it was said... I'm telling you.” A radical reversal that will open up new ethical perspectives for humanity.

What is the reversal of logic in Jesus? In the option for love as the center of the worldview. A vision that goes out of ordinary accounting logic for the logic of grace and forgiveness, the cancellation of debts, the greatness of the gift, the economy of the kingdom based on gratuitousness, the rejection of the spirit of domination and violence. At the heart of the “You will love principle”, Jesus gives history an ethical pivot that breaks the laws of the Talion and locks in human relationships with mutual expectations of reward. Here, the perspectives of new heaven and a new earth open up, a logic that puts God at the centre of human realities for an eschatological horizon. This is not leaking to a back-world, but forces to energize the logic of vital overabundance through gratuitousness. This logic is so radical from an ethical point of view that it leads to the parable of the chaff and its option to let the chaff and the good grain grow together, until the day of the harvest. God, who makes the rain fall on the good and the wicked, knows what will come to everyone, in the logic of the kingdom.

The teaching of Jesus set in motion a whole tradition. In this tradition, Sedlacek particularly emphasizes Paul’s teachings on the work, that of the asceticism of St. Augustine and that of the realism of Saint Thomas d’Aquin.

Paul insisted so much on the need to “earn a living” through work that he can be seen as a great figure in the economy of production and consequent consumption. “He who does not work, that he does not eat either.” At the same time, he insisted so much on the grace and dynamics of salvation through faith that one must see him as the man of deep spirituality. There is no contradiction; it is spirituality that fertilizes the labour economy and the logic of consumption. As in Jesus, it is the logic of love that gives meaning to everything and economics can be considered as a space of spiritual exercise, to use the expression of St. Ignatius. The economic model par excellence is the first Christian community in its collectivism of charity and solidarity. A model that Paul always has in mind in his pastoral organization of the communities he creates.

As for Thomas d’Aquin, the key questions about the impact of his thinking on economic tradition are the relationship between good and evil and the question of the link between faith and reason. Thomas d’Aquin’s answers contributed greatly to thinking about the economy and its meaning in Western civilization. Located in the Aristotelian tradition that does not postulate the existence of the world of ideas as the world of good, the great medieval theologian takes reason as the basis for the search for truth, but it is a reason that is fertilized by faith and that fertilizes faith. “To revolt against reason is, in the eyes of Thomas d’Aquin, to revolt against God.” At the same time, evil is not considered by him as an anomaly of existence; it has its place in the divine intention which is known to command everything towards good. To the extent that the very nature of man is to be and live with others in society, it is in acts of love and solidarity that the opportunity for everyone to rise and help him to get out of the logic of evil takes shape. Moreover, note Thomas d’Aquin in a now famous statement, “If all evil were warned, much good would be absent from the universe.”

In the vision of the economy within Western civilization, this conception of evil and reason will support the evil side of business and at the same time fight for a common regulatory order for which public authorities are responsible in an order guaranteed by God.

The modern tradition and the emergence of economic science

From the myth of Gilgamesh to the Thomist tradition, to the Hebrews, the Greeks and the Christian tradition, we are at the heart of a world that unfolds in a certain sacramental atmosphere and obeys lines of thought where man and society have a clear transcendent purpose. It is this vision that collapses with the emergence of Cartesian modernity. With Descartes, whose influence on the evolution of Western civilization is unparalleled in the structuring of mentalities, man becomes a simple machine and he is conceived as a being whose mechanics of functioning can be known and which must be analysed as such. The whole approach of Cartesian doubt and its rationalism will deploy this vision that will be crucial in economic thought. Sedlacek notes, with great lucidity and sharpness of mind:

“Descartes’ scientific approach to the world is undeniably a huge step forward, and this is doubly true for economists. We have seen that the notion of the invisible hand of the market predates Smith. Homo economicus owes its (a)moral side to Epicure but its mathematical and mechanical side to Descartes. Mathematics was considered the original principle of all things from the Greek philosopher Pythagoras (...). Descartes’ ideas, of course, have become absolutely essential, if not decisive, for the methodology of economics.”

With Descartes, the method becomes crucial in science and the power of reason is an unparalleled force in the approach to reality. It is since this revolution that the economy will begin its process of mathematization: it culminates today in economics, including language and that of graphs, statistics and models to which ordinary people have more and more difficulty understanding what it is all about. The

thinking being that is man, in a context of approach to reason is essentially mathematical; it is the modern man par excellence. It is only now, with post-modernity that challenges the omnipotence of modernity and rediscovers the sacred sources of reality against the logic of the domination of reality as *res extensa* (a thing extended and handleable at mercy) that we understand the imperative to reorient things. It is also understood that the foreclosure of the ethical question in economic thinking and vision are detrimental to a holistic intelligence of things, according to the vocabulary in vogue.

Another economic thinker will take on the task of basing this question on a new basis: Bernard Mandeville. His perception of things is a kind of exaggerated anti-ethics. Just as Descartes and his method will mathematise the economy, this thinker will open the field to another benchmark in the economic vision in the West. He is the real father of the idea of the invisible hand of the market and he has also advanced the idea, scandalous to many economists of his time, which asserts that private vices contribute to the collective good.

His thought stipulates “that private ethics do not matter; everything that happens, moral or amoral, contributes to the general well-being (...)” With Mandeville, we began to pretend that the more vices, the greater the material well-being can be. The parable of the bee hive by which Mandeville exhibits his thought has become famous. It recounts how, as long as each bee followed its instincts in the swarm, in the sense of its individual interests, everything contributed to the collective good of all the other bees. But from the moment the bees were forced to make the beautiful moral maxims of forgetting oneself for the love of others, nothing could work. The hive lost its engine of individual interest and private vices. It became poor, amorphous and was defeated and crushed by another swarm. Machiavelli in economics, neither more and nor less. Mandeville that is Machiavelli of economics is in fact the “first modern economist”, whose ideas are at the heart of the world

order where “necessary greed” is a source of progress, where vices of greed are the sources of aggressive market dynamics, where competition is the principle of wealth production and the search for novelty.

“Mandeville was clearly a supporter of the hedonistic program: if there is a mismatch between what we want and what we have, we must increase our assets until they correspond to our demands. He goes even further than the hedonists: he pleads for our demand to grow even further, because, in his view, it is the only way forward. In this respect, the modern economy is a descendant of this reasoning. Economics as a science postulates that human needs are unlimited (demand grows endlessly), while resources are scarce. So we have to try to use these scarce resources to meet the demand.”

In a context so defined, it is easy to see why private vices contribute to the public good.

Another key landmark in Western economic history is Adam Smith. Falsely presented as the inventor of the theory of the invisible hand of the market, it is actually important to have thought radically of self-interest, “the role of sympathy in social cohesion and the concept of impartial spectator.”

On self-interest, the famous phrase is in all the anthologies of economics:

“It is not for the affection of the butcher, the brewer, the baker that we are waiting for our dinner, but for the attachment they have to their personal interest. It is not to their humanity but to their self-esteem that we address, and we never talk to them about our needs, but about their advantage.”

Smith sees this self-interest in this self-love not as a private vice, as Mandeville did, but as a virtue. It is this private virtue that is at the heart of development. Smith links this virtue at the same time to sympathy, affection and a kind of “social contract as a global rational construct”

whose anthropological basis is the close relationship between emotions and reason. From this perspective, it is wrong to interpret Smith as if he were the author of Mandeville's thought. On the other hand, he has given a new dimension to economic anthropology, whose ambiguity of approach at home would make this economist both the path to individualism and the path to collectivism. Man can be seen as a being of emotions and a social being whose actions are guided by an invisible hand. "You get the impression that Smith is engaged in a schizophrenic heartbreak and that one of his books contradicts the other," Sedlacek writes. In reality, its strength in this dichotomy is to put the ethical question at the heart of the economy while thinking about economics according to the line of a certain rationalism specific to modernity.

II.4. Africa and the New Horizons of Economic Anthropology

If one asks the question of what purpose the Czech economist wrote his book and to whom he intended it, the answer is that of an ambition to respond to the current crisis of the economic order and the Western economies with new avenues to open and a global reorientation to assume. These tracks and this reorientation require seeing where one comes from in order to understand the great drifts and major disasters of the current situation.

The first disaster is how the economy in today's world has cut itself off from the big ethical issues and their demands. These questions are at the heart of the human being and ancient myths give them meaning. There are, as Jung would say, archetypes of extraordinary psychic power. The forces of fertilization of spirits for millennia should be studied "in their first raw form, in a kind of nudity, at a time when our civilization was younger-and then to follow their transformations in the context of historical evolution." We then discover the points of collapse that explain the current situation. Thus, the study of Mesopotamian, Hebrew and Greek myths opens the ethical depths of

which the economy cannot unravel without losing the sense of the human. Indeed today, with the drying rationalism and the heightened mathematization of the economy since the Cartesian era, the economy has lost its soul, more precisely; it has separated its body from its soul. Without her soul of the quest for meaning and value, she makes men zombies. “A zombie is a human being, or rather the body of a human being, who has lost his human dimensions - compassion, humanity, gentleness... - and thinks only of feeding and reproducing (...).” The West has created a zombie economy and its whole problem is there today.

He wants robot men as in the time of Gilgamesh, who work for the tyranny of the market and his masters without giving any meaning to his life as human life. From an African point of view, it can be said that the Western economy has zombified entire peoples and entire populations whose fate is completely that of puppet robots, always at the service of the implacable logic of mad capitalism as in the days of Gilgamesh. For the glory of endless production, limitless growth, senseless progress, men have been made slaves and they are in an economic dynamic of which they do not understand any meaning. On a global scale, zombie Africa is in a situation of coercion and slavery that must be a problem for us Africans.

“When the body is separated from the soul, you get not only a zombie (a soulless body), but a ghost (a soul without a body). Ghosts are as scary as zombies, but for other reasons: ghosts don’t attack us. What frightens us in them is their silent, empty, reproachful, accusatory gaze.”

Today, the victims of ultraliberal capitalism are like motionless ghosts, looking at the world order and judging it. The ghosts of Africa are there, they want to understand the whole history of colonization and slavery, and they want to understand why reason, progress and science have created the wildest inhumanity. And in front of them, the West has

no answer, or rather, it gives only false answers. It makes us believe that it is the future of the world when its economy has become the death of the world, the very collapse of the human, values for which the great Spiritual traditions of Hebrew, Greek or Christian were created in an anthropology of human truth that we would be better off rediscovering today.

Zombies and ghosts turn to the living and wait for the real answers. Sedlacek does not pretend to have them, but he indicates which way to look for them:

- Rediscovering the sense of moderation, of prudence, of this middle ground that the Greeks have bequeathed to us as their ability to control the desire for completely senseless consumer abundance, these greed and voracities that have made consumption a drug, especially the consumption of what we do not really need.
- Getting out of the debt-based economy, a world whose subprime crisis in the United States has shown all the horror and inhumanity.
- Refusing to be possessed by the demons of unnecessary progress and growth that leads nowhere.
- Devoting ourselves to producing more being and less passion to have it, above all, for futile and useless assets.
- Relearning the true logics of the cycle of abundance and the cycle of scarcity, as in the dream of Pharaoh, to create an economy of foresight and organizer, this on a global scale where the major issues of today's life are played out.

Some of Sedlacek's great assertions deserve to be quoted here, to give more emphasis to his convictions and the directions he proposes. This includes:

"We need to change the overall target of economic policy, replace the MaxGrowth with the MinDet. The often undisputed mantra of our generation has been MaxBuilding, even at the cost of debt, overheating

or overwork. Instead of MaxPIB, we should have reasonable levels of growth. »

This other statement is rich in stakes and strongly carries meaningless virtualities:

“The dominant economy of recent years has abandoned the initial subjects of economics such as ethics or morality and has more or less lost its way away from its techno-analytic apparatus. Simply because we started using a new language, we have upset - or radically shifted - the attention of science. In short, economics overestimated mathematics in us, and neglected non-mathematics. The normative economy has been replaced by a positive (descriptive) economy.”

This other important statement must also be carefully pondered:

“I affirm that there is at least as much to learn from our philosophers, myths, religions and poets as from the strict and accurate mathematical models of economic behaviour. I say that the economy should seek, discover and present its own values, whereas we have been taught to regard it as a science devoid of values. I say that it is not and that there is less mathematics in it than in it of religion, myths and archetypes. I say that today's economy cares too much about method and not enough substance.”

The substance we are talking about, we must know, is the man in search of happiness and meaning, in search of fulfilled relationships with his fellow human beings in happy societies. The man of value and creativity. The man of smile and beauty. Man rooted in the deepest and most silty humanity in his being.

When one is African and understands what Tomas Sedlacek sought to grasp of the economy and its being, one regrets that he has restricted his research to the western area and that he has not opened himself to other areas of culture and civilization. Especially to African culture and civilization, whose ethical ferment could have opened up wider horizons in the economic field. Instead of remaining a prisoner

of the West, his “exorbitant and unbearable pretension to impose himself as a privileged place of human universality, as a single instance of the engendering of meaning”, to use the beautiful and just thought of Achille Mbembe¹, he reaped the riches of his tradition without enriching them with the riches and traditions of others.

In an African reading of his book, we must first of all acknowledge that he has revealed to us the substance of a science that we have an interest in knowing in depth and studying with passion so that the tradition it represents is truly ours. Indeed, this science is ours in its sources on which Sedlacek does not dwell. The Czech economist gave Mesopotamia the primary role that actually belongs to Pharaonic Egypt. Just because this region produced the first written myth of humanity does not mean that it is the matrix of the economic vision of the world. The Mesopotamian myth is important, but it should have been enriched with the pharaonic experience that Sedlacek does not even speak in depth when he uses the Hebrews and Greeks, peoples whose intellectual, ethical and spiritual roots in Egypt are well known to historians. What does this oversight and omission mean? Are they voluntary or involuntary? The answer does not matter; the main thing is that it reflects a certain de facto marginalization of the African tradition when it comes to assessing the contribution of civilizations to the constitution of the silt that makes man a human. Few Western books, on this subject, recognize that where humanity is the cradle of humanity, there too is the cradle of science and civilization. Yet the debt from the West to Africa in this area is infinite. It will be objected that Sedlacek’s goal was to understand his own cultural and civilizational tradition. It is true. But an African who reads *The Economy of Good and Evil* cannot fail to repair Africa’s oblivion.

¹ Achille MBEMBE, *Critique de la raison nègre*, Paris, La Découverte, 2013.

Why fix oblivion? To clearly indicate the African potential for economic transformation in the name of human cause.

In his speech at the globalization symposium organized by Saint Augustine University in Kinshasa, Tshiamalenga Ntumba wrote:

“May the religions that dominate the world today - Judeo-Christianism, Islam, Hinduism - have decisive elements that can be said to be at least formally related to those of the ancient Egypt, its cultural standard-bearer, does not seem to be in doubt. It is only to take the trouble to read the many texts of the heliopolit, hermopolitan, memphite, theban and black Bible traditions, and compare them to the Judeo-Christian Bible, the Islamic Koran and the Hindu Vedas to be convinced.”

It is good for us Africans to return to the matrix originating from our myths, religions and worldviews to define our contribution to humanity. We must do so on the scale of the founding myths of human humanity. The myth of Isis and Osiris offers us a fundamental anthropology whose starting point is not the construction of human robots as in Gilgamesh, but the happiness provided by a king of goodness, generosity and magnanimity, a divine-human being who unified his country around an incomparable prosperity of the Nile Valley transformed into a space of abundance. This king, Osiris, is the victim of a ‘Coup d’Etat’ by his brother Seth, in an anthropology of competition between brothers that will be found among the Hebrews with the myth of Cain and Abel. The King’s wife and sister, Isis, will do everything to find her husband’s dislocated body and recompose him to re-fertilize and give a son to her husband: Horus. He will face his uncle and defeat him in a singular battle at the end of which the kingdom will regain its unity, its prosperity.

This is the myth, but why is it important from the point of view of economic anthropology. It is important to know the important economic role of the Nile Valley and the river itself to know that it was human labour that transformed them into a space of abundance. This work was

not only a task of man against nature, but a spiritual task guaranteed by the double character, and divine and human, of the King. Irrigation, meteorology observation, land-sharing after the Nile floods and the peaceful action of the territory have made Egypt the land of invention of sciences such as geometry, mathematics, astronomy and effective political organization. Human work has a holistic dimension that the myth brings to light. It also involves a permanent fight against the risks of social disorder by forces of dislocation: this struggle refers to the spiritual, mystical, ethical, scientific and political elements at the same time. Africa's great contribution to the economy in myth is this holistic conception of work, life and the world.

In the myth, two other elements are important for thinking about the anthropological foundations of the economy: it is the link between the desire for enrichment and the risk of decay of being on the one hand and on the other hand the link between tyranny and spiritual, material and moral underdevelopment.

Seth organizes his coup with a particular strategy: the greed of the human heart in the face of gold. He made a solid gold sarcophagus which he offered to all dignitaries of the kingdom as a gift on the occasion of the great feast of the empire. The dignitary whose measurements correspond to the dimensions of the sarcophagus would be the direct owner and thus have a sumptuous place of rest for eternity. Gold serves as an exciting desire, not only of the desire for material wealth here on earth, but of eternal satisfaction and spiritual abundance.

The desire for wealth is rooted, from this perspective, in a metaphysical dynamic that gives the economy as a power of enrichment an orientation and perspectives of vital links with the spiritual sphere. Only, this desire can lead to death, outright. It can lead to the decay of the whole being and its decay. This is what happens to King Osiris. Stretching into the sarcophagus without knowing if he himself corresponded to the measurements of the golden coffin, he falls into the

trap of the plotters. They lead the sarcophagus into solid gold, thus suffocating the sovereign and throwing it, filled with humiliation and decay, into the mud of the swamps. The thirst for gold leads to the fate of mud instead of opening the way to blessed eternity. We must understand here that the meaning of economy, wealth and material possession is to be an economy of life, an economy for life, not an economy of death, an economy for death.

The economy of life is the one that, in the possession of the gold of this world, puts it at the service of a sense that transcends this world. That is why the ceremony of presenting the sarcophagus to dignitaries takes place in the heart of a banquet, a place of fiery joy, resplendent conviviality and radiant celebration of all the splendour of the kingdom. But the banquet, thanks to the presence of the sarcophagus, turns man towards the vision of eternity as a real place and horizon of the meaning of life. Eternity is dynamic in the judgment and evaluation of human life by the gods, where the truth of existence is measured from the great human values of love, justice, equity, respect for the rights of people and service to the poorest, the poorest, the most miserable and the left behind in society. Thus reveals the human orientation of wealth: the power to do good and change the living conditions of the socially marginalized and to enrich the life power of the entire community of men.

Seth, once the coup consumed, becomes a bloodthirsty and relentless tyrant. It is in his way of governing that the great texts on Moses in the Bible refer. He established a reign of enslavement of his own people and foreigners inhabiting the kingdom. This tyranny is gradually proving to be an economic and social catastrophe: a process of underdevelopment of the kingdom. A total underdevelopment, woven with human misery, psychic disarray, mental decay and natural disasters. It is the underdevelopment of the whole being that appears here and it has a clear economic significance: tyranny, despotism,

autocracy and dictatorship lead only to underdevelopment. They lead to this catastrophe because they destroy the true energies of creative freedom and responsibility, in favor of futile and drying slavery. For the economy to prosper, it needs leadership in respecting the rights, values and spiritual orientations of the entire community. In Pharaonic Egypt, the king is the guarantor of a certain type of governance that the biblical account of the Dream of Pharaoh reveals: the governance of abundance, foresight, prosperity, just social organization, mobilization of all the living forces of the kingdom and confidence in the forces of intelligence and competence. Such governance fruitfully generates and coordinates synergies for what we now call sustainable and full development. Osiris was this typical king and Seth was the antitype. Seth's economy must be killed to promote Osiris' economy: to bring down the economy of misery for an economy of abundance. It is a vital imperative in Congo, Africa and around the world.

In the myth, it is Horus who is responsible for the task of demolition and reconstruction. He assumes it by confronting Seth, in a terribly epic battle, from which he emerges victorious, to re-found the kingdom in its true being: vital harmony. Tshiamalenga Ntumba describes this harmony in this way:

“In ancient Egypt, the state was personified by the king or the PHARAOH, himself the incarnation of Horus, sons of Osiris and Isis. The political order was supposed in harmony with the cosmic order and represented by the Goddess Maat. Here, therefore, the political-religious dogmas are those of unity and the perfect harmony of religion and politics as normative dimension (Maat), institutional (Khermet) and programmatic or processual (administration, worship, etc.).”

Here is described the political economy of the imagination that is the foundation of African political anthropology. When one is not rooted in this anthropology of spiritual strength, economic energy and ethical power, one builds insignificant, inconsistent, poor, miserable

and infertile societies. This happened to contemporary Africa, which forgot its vital foundations in Pharaonic Egypt.

Horus recasts the kingdom on values and human development in the full sense of the word. Society once again becomes a society of abundance, harmony and influence, a society to which other peoples come to buy in a business where ethics is the heart of business. It is to this kingdom that the father of the Hebrews, Abraham, will come to settle. The Hebrews will benefit from the economy of abundance, before the “Seth-type” policy is established and imposes on these strangers the evil fate of which the Bible speaks. A spell of relentless slavery, contrary to the fundamental principles of anthropology and the political economy of the pharaonic imagination.

Another fundamental dynamic of the myth of Isis and Osiris: the power of creative femininity and anthropology of gender, to use today’s concepts. It is about the positive role of women in building social peace and in inventing solutions to life’s great problems. Isis is nothing like Eve. It is not the cause of the catastrophe but rather the regenerative power of vital energies and the fighter who fearlessly confronts the forces of evil and division. It is the foundation of an anthropology of the kind that the world today is gradually discovering. It is on his mythical figure that great queens like Nefertiti and Hatchpsut were able to rule the empire without any problems, in a policy of unity and prosperity inspired by the original values of the empire: the ideal of true humanity. It is symptomatic that throughout Sedlacek’s book, the place of women in the vision of creative work does not appear in myths or in the major stages of Western history. It can be induced that it is important to dig the myth of Isis to think of an economy fertilized by the great values of femininity in our contemporary societies. Economics would no doubt benefit in flexibility and humanity, as would the current global economic system in its jurisdictions.

II.5. The meaning of our ancient mythological foundations

All the elements we have highlighted in our reading of the myth of Isis and Osiris are the foundation of a specific type of economy: the human economy of shared happiness. This is defined by the following essential features:

- A global vision of the world centred on building humanity in solidarity and on the orientation of life towards another possible world.
- The presence of ethical men, vertebrates, as they say in our country, people free of human vanities that plunge them into inconsistency and insignificance, make them futile and blind to the real problems of society.
- Governance that aims for human development through work options for the development of the whole society.
- An education fertilized by norms and values of life that society must share when it aims to be a human society in its depths.
- Institutions fertilized by a firm will to put together the creative energies of all the people, in a project geared towards the happiness of everyone, as was said in Côte d'Ivoire in the 1990s.

Today's Africa, and the DRC in particular, do not seem to have a great vision of these demands of shared happiness that are rooted in the deepest sources of our being in its mythical origins. It is urgent that these origins revitalize us and revitalize the imagination of our societies.

II.6. Economics of being, economy of life and economy of meaning

When we want to enlighten the economy with myths as a common thread, Africa not only offers the myths of its origins, it also offers the myths of its own historical evolution. We studied these myths among authors who had the opportunity to gather the most significant stories in several African cultural areas. Blaise Cendrars collected some of the myths and legends of West Africa. Amadou Hampâté Bâ opened

to the general public the initiation tales of the Fulani people. Fork and Morlighem published a very rich anthropology of the myths of the Luba Kasai people of the DRC under the beautiful title of Black Bible. Even if it is impossible for us to analyze here the richness of these myths, it seems to us that by taking economics as an angle and grid of vision, it is possible to present the essential which, in them, constitutes the anthropological substance useful for a reflection on the quest for economic meaning, in Sedlacek's words.

Recurrent themes emerge from a careful analysis of the mythical accounts of the African tradition:

- The global struggle between good and evil, or more accurately, the battle to the death waged by the heroes of good to defeat evil.
- The more specific confrontation between the dark powers of witchcraft, who eat the vital substance of people, and the energies of protection and strengthening of life, with a whole pedagogy of the education of man-forces, metaphysical pillars of existence through their links with geniuses, spirits and ancestors.
- The exaltation of the creative forces with the myth of the man who creates himself and personalities who change their shape and substance in multiple metamorphoses whose challenge is to change society for good.

We are here in front of fundamental anthropological patterns: those of the life force as an issue of existence and those of the creation of which the figures of heroes abound in African myths and constitute their deepest substance. This substance reveals life as destined, in the words of Engelbert Mveng: a struggle to strengthen in every man and in each society his life forces and a dynamic to change oneself, to transform, to

transform according to the situations and opportunities that inhabit existence.

If we have been able, in Africa, to go through the dark and tragic periods of slavery, colonization and neocolonialism, it is because these mythical schemes, archetypes of the collective unconscious that they are, as Jung would say, have forged in us anthropological structures of strength. It is these patterns that constitute, if we can say, the engine and the ferment of our imagination, even if we no longer have full consciousness and firm knowledge of it. They are our life economy and the significance of this economy is much deeper and much more significant than the modern market economy, with its focus on money and material enrichment.

Thanks to these schemes, we know that when the forces of evil unleash themselves to destroy humans or dispossess them of their powers of life, as Ndjeddo Dewal, the mother of all calamities in The Peul initiation tales, does, a young hero will emerge to thwart evil, defeat the evil and unleash the vital energy of the people. The figure of the hermaphrodite (evil man-woman), programmed for destruction, is always finally destroyed itself by young heroes, personalities-forces who open the horizon of a serene and fertile future. The young hero is always presented as a being of intelligence, inventiveness and early wisdom. Everything is done, thanks to mythical stories, so that the strength of this hero enters the being of each child, especially during the seasons of initiation where the sacred forest becomes a *thicket of meaning*, as Bimwenyi-Kweshi would say. This hero, man-force, is in every child that comes into the world. And since we know that the myth is not only for children but for society as a whole, it is to fertilize the social imagination by the ambition to create the force societies that it is about, with a view to solidarity power. The economy as a human activity for enrichment work is part of this perspective. It is a force for anthropological enrichment to produce wealth in the strong and diverse

sense of the term, from the individual sphere to the entire planet, in a global-force whose market is only a modality. Economics only makes sense if it is assumed by a man capable of creating himself and constantly transforming himself, in order to sow his creative power in all areas whose changes are necessary, useful and fertile, that is, life as a dynamic of fullness. The economy of money and material goods must be put at the service of this great economy of anthropological enrichment where knowledge, knowledge, values, human assets and interests strengthen society and individuals in their power of life, full life, and life in abundan

It is with this perspective that it is necessary to interpret the current myths that are being invented in Africa and which are the fruit of the new African imagination. They are not codified somewhere as myths. It can be seen in novels, essays, social sciences and historical sciences.

All this production tends to rethink Africa from the point of view of its former greatness transformed today into the energy of the imagination. Hence the omnipresence of the reference to ancient Egypt in African research, through a resplendent neo-pharaonism. Hence the faith in Afro-centrism, a new way of seeing Africa as the center of its own life and destiny. This neo-afro centrism is exhibited everywhere as a desire to build a new Africa, without complexes of any kind. Hence the discourse on the emergence of the African continent as an economic lion and political tiger. All these myths, their meaning is clear: Africa is reborn and asserting itself in the world as a continent of new hopes and great realities at the service of all humanity. In them is built an alter-globalism of the mind that must now create its own economy: the economy of the new world humanity.

We are here in the great dream of the African continent. Africa must educate and train man-forces and power societies who can embody the energy of new institutions of life as a space of humanity.

Chapter III

AFRICANS, LET'S REJECT THE ZOMBIE ECONOMY

III.0. Introduction

What are the economic ideas that have dominated and led the world in recent decades and have led the planet to the catastrophe of the crisis of recent years? What assessment will we have to make today in relation to the past of economic theories and the future of the international financial order? Given the scale of the problems facing all countries and the inadequacy of the responses that international financial institutions offer, is it possible to imagine more fertile solutions and to open up more promising horizons? Specifically: is there a way out of the current neoliberal system and its disastrous effects on the world order?

Is to these questions that John Quiggin, professor of economics at the University of Queensland in Australia, devotes an impressive book of lucidity, intelligence, theoretical solidity and concrete sense of economic and financial realities. For him, it is a matter of taking an acute look at what he calls “market liberalism”, a set of ideas “manifestly false and dangerous”, but whose blind momentum has carried and still carries a ruinous financial system, responsible for the violent financial crisis that the world order has suffered since the year 200. In this system, “tens of trillions of dollars have been engaged in closely intertwined operations and developed on the basis of speculative investments that were merely a decoy, resulting in a global economy where nations and households live well beyond their means.”

Despite this gigantic failure, these ideas continue to circulate in the economic world, like a bunch of zombies springing from the dark world of their theoretical and practical defeat to haunt the financial

world and academia, at the risk of causing a collapse even more catastrophic than the one that shook the economic and financial foundations of the world order.

To prevent this catastrophe from happening, it is necessary, now, to reflect on the causes of what happened and to break the springs of the zombie liberalism that caused it. We must learn from a disaster for which false theories are responsible. These theories are known and their names are charged with intense ideological power, positively or negatively: *Neo-liberalism*, *Thatcherism*, *Reaganism*, *Washington consensus or economic rationalism*. John Quiggin prefers the more neutral expression of market liberalism. Against the bundle of ideas that structure this theory, he rebels in order to propose a way out of the future.

III. 1. Two visions of economic reality clash

To understand market liberalism, we must go back to the Great Depression of 1929 and the way it was managed by the world's economic leaders at the time. The international economic institutions that carried the years of prosperity referred to as the "Thirty Glorious" were born from the management of this crisis, under the leadership of economic ideas of which the English economist John Maynard Keynes is considered to be the great figurehead.

Economists have long been accustomed to looking at economic history with a grid of "expansion and contraction" cycles, booms and regressions, lean cow times and lean cow periods, according to a rhythm that theorists observe and analyze in many forms. The central problem is whether these cycles can be controlled rationally and whether it is possible, at one time or another, to ensure that the expansion phase lasts not only long but irreversible.

With the great crisis of 1929, due to a huge stock market crash, the issue took on a whole new dimension. The usual recipe for

“lowering interest rates and unlocking funds for banks until confidence returns” could not be of any help in the face of small crises. It was then that, in the Orb of Keynes, analyses and measures were proposed that ensured the world economy thirty years of continuous prosperity: the Glorious Thirty.

According to Keynes, *“Recession and depression are the result of a mismatch between the effective demand for goods and services and an ineffective monetary policy to increase demand. Governments can address this problem through public works and spending programs. This rapid return to full employment during the war seemed to confirm the analysis.”* This is all the more so as the recipe lasted beyond this period.

The role of the state as a crisis regulator became from that time on a central idea of Keynesian vulgate. It was at the heart of the Bretton Woods system, leveraging “rigorous financial regulation policies” in “an international framework that sets exchange rates and closely controls capital movements.”

Keynes gave the economy, at the heart of the state’s responsibility, another important lever that Quiggin defines as follows: *“Economies can collapse to the point where large-scale monetary expansion and financial incentives can resuscitate them.”* This means that the state can and must intervene to stabilize the economy and maintain full employment (or even the natural rate of unemployment) through some monetary policy. At the same time, the role of incentives for subjective and emotional elements: “animal spirits” must be taken into account, in the jargon of economists.

The system nurtured by this vision held firm until the early 1970s, when, under the pressure of a new crisis, it imply. It was at this time that his fundamental stabilizer, the gold standard, was broken. U.S. President Richard Nixon had decided to disconnect the dollar from the gold standard stabilizer to allow the monetary system to float, with no

guarantees now. The Bretton Woods years ended in manifest failure, as if its duration, even long, only confirmed the theory of cycles of booms and deep crises.

Why did this system collapse? Beyond the countless technical data and strict economic and financial analyses that Quiggin provides with all the rigour of specialist and all the theoretical wealth of expert, a view of things from the point of view of a clear understanding of the economic imagination and financial philosophy retains two explanations, which the Australian economist clearly highlights.

First, “a possible, pessimistic interpretation is that cycles are so strongly embedded in the logic of the market economy, and perhaps of all modern economies, that they cannot be mastered. Success feeds pride, and pride leads us to forget the lessons of the past: resources are always limited, budgets must ultimately be balanced, wages and other income cannot, for a long time, exceed the value of production (...).”

Let’s put it simply: the Glorious Thirty have been victims of their own successes. Their logic has made leaders forget the most basic precautionary and prudent principle regarding the fundamentals of economic functioning. In addition, an atmosphere of boundless confidence has developed an imaginal addiction to success, as if you could fly a Jumbo Jet without worrying about control instruments.

The second line of explanation is more strictly linked to economic intelligence: “Mistakes that could have been avoided through a better understanding of the economy and strong social institutions” were made. Despite the fact that the management adopted by rich countries during the glorious thirty provided most of them with “a period of full employment and unprecedented economic growth”, the machine betracked in 1970. *“The Bretton Woods system is starting to falter. In the face of U.S. inflation, keeping the gold price at \$35 per ounce is proving unsustainable. Until then, inflationary episodes had been halted by Keynesian measures of contraction. But such measures*

become less effective as inflation prospects are confirmed and the social moderation generated by the memory of the Great Depression unravels.” In addition to the problem of inflation that its revenues could no longer manage, the economic system of the Glorious Thirty is facing the emergence of a “speculative capitalism fuelled by the rise of financial markets.” This leads to this: “*Companies raise prices to meet social demands, resulting in other wage demands to compensate for rising prices.*” In this mood of gloom the oil crisis of 1973 erupts. Within a few years, the entire edifice of post-war prosperity crumbled. The Keynesian golden age is over. Inflation is soaring. The unemployment rate is rising inexorably. These two related phenomena will be referred to as *stagflation*.

Just as the Great Depression of 1929 gave rise to a new economic theory that managed and led the Bretton Woods institutions, the crisis of the 1970s gave rise to a practical and concrete response to market liberalism. Just as John Maynard Keynes’s name took the place of the post-war economic dynamics in the economic imagination of the Glorious Thirty, it was the American Milton Friedman who became the guardian figure of the period of market liberalism.

Milton Friedman is considered “one of Keynes’ greatest modern critics” and the period that opened under his leadership was marked by the rejection of Keynesian analyses and measures. Basically, it is to question the very foundation of the vulgate of Keynesianism that Friedman’s disciples will work: the regulation of the economy by the state. The corollary is “a margin of devolution to the private sector.” A new era is opening up. A new theoretical and ideological atmosphere is taking hold. During this period, Quiggin is working to deploy very detailed analyses that concern both fiscal policies, monetarist solutions or interest rate controls that would be tedious to unfold in an analysis of the economic imagination, our field of research and reflection. It can simply be said that, in the face of stagflation, Friedman’s “main

arguments” are these: *“the increase in the money supply is responsible for inflation and macroeconomic policy can only affect real variables such as the unemployment rate in the very short term.”* We need to open up another economic direction with new measures. In our view, the important thing here is not in these technical measures, but in the ideological philosophy that underpins them. The essence of this ideological philosophy, John Quiggin presents it when he summarizes the ideas of Friedman’s disciples, masters of a new era.

In their view, as Quiggin writes,

“State intervention only increased the uncertainty and instability of the economic system, and in the absence of such intervention, fluctuations such as booms and crises were rather beneficial, as they reflected economic adjustments to technological or consumerist developments.”

Everything is said here: the principle of deregulation, the liberation of financial vampirism, the foreclosure of ethics, the dictatorship of the market and the omnipotence of structural adjustments in a laissez-faire economy. These are the fundamental realities of market liberalism.

Add to all this the psychological morgue displayed by the political masters of the new system that were Margaret Thatcher in England and Ronald Reagan in the United States; if we also consider the insouciance of Thatcherism and Reaganism in the face of the social consequences of their economic decisions; if we take into account the state in which these theories have plunged weak and poor countries, it is clear that market liberalism has established itself as a true economic, financial and ideological totalitarianism. His domination over the whole world was a disaster and all the light he tried to offer in speeches to legitimize his hegemony was nothing but powder in the eyes of humanity. With the crisis of 2008, the powder has fallen out of sight and we have been able to make and we are indeed making a really

serious and serene assessment of the liberalism of the market. Quiggin clearly gives the result of his assessment: market liberalism is just a zombie economy.

III.2. False certainties of a zombie economy

What is this zombie economy? In the glorification of false theories that the Australian economist has analyzed with insight and acuity. He defines them himself precisely by taking them as theoretical dynamics that played a fundamental role in the 2008 financial crisis. These theories are:

“*The Great Moderation*, which believes that, since 1985, we have been experiencing a period of unprecedented macroeconomic stability.

- *The market efficiency hypothesis*, where the prices generated by the financial markets represent the best possible estimate of the value of an investment.
- *The general dynamic and stochastic balance*, according to which macroeconomic analysis should not take into account economic aggregates such as the trade balance or the level of debt, but must be based on micro-economy models on individual behaviours.
- *The runoff economy*, which considers that policies that benefit the rich ultimately benefit everyone.
- *Privatizations*, which are based on the belief that no public initiative will ever be as effective as private initiative.”

John Quiggin sets out to demolish these theories one by one, both from a purely economic point of view as well as from a social and cultural point of view. With the genius of a brain-bulldozer who tackles a field he knows perfectly, he delves into the history of the economy, dissects the facts, confronts specific personalities and leads to the astonishment that all these theories that the crisis of 2008 killed still

come back like zombies in the economic and political fields. The problem is not only that these theories are false. The problem is that they are also inefficient and ruinous as a zombie system. They have led the global economy to disaster and they no longer have any basis for credibility. Their world has collapsed and we must not accept that the economic and financial imagination of the future is placed under their sign of lies and destruction.

III.3. What can be done?

John Quiggin has a way out: to revisit economic history from the 1929 crisis to the 2008 crisis and to identify the points of collapse that would allow us to think optimistically about the future.

His entire book carries out this essential task of providing, as his publisher's presentation of his work says, "a thorough and well-argued analysis of the errors of economic science," dismantling "a series of theories that the spectacular fiasco of the last global crisis should have discredited forever." In the same vein, it proposes to develop a type of mind that must be that of any future analysis in economic and financial matters. Quiggin defines this spirit by using a beautiful metaphor from his compatriot David Gruen of the Australian Treasury. He compared the pre-crisis situation of 2008 to "*Titanic navigating among icebergs: those who had the skills to sound the alarm slammed into a cabin without windows, perfecting the design of ship hulls... designed for a world without icebergs.*" This metaphor proposes the spirit of lucid intelligence to understand the world in which we live and to be able to navigate it according to the realities we do not face. The world in which the economy must be thought of now is a sea overloaded with icebergs and it would be ruinous to lock oneself in cabins without windows, with false theories for a context that is not that of today.

The zombie economy died in 2008: it's time to imagine solutions that break with its springs. In John Quiggin's book, solutions are

nothing like magic and easy recipes. Rather, these are broad directions for the future.

The first major focus was inspired by the success of the program established after the Great Depression of 1929. That is, the establishment by the State of stabilizers and regulators in the face of risks. The state has played this role and needs to be rethought in response to new individual and collective risks that require safe. But the role of the private sector must also be rethought in the light of a duty of responsibility and justice without which society can only fall prey to deregulated and crazy markets without a reliable compass. “Economists need to focus on understanding how market imperfections have been able to increase the cost of equity to this extent.” From there they will be led to imagine a mixed economy worthy of the name, within a framework of a vision of permanent prudence in the face of the constant risks of implosion of the world order under the weight of false and dangerous theories such as those of market liberalism.

“One optimal solution is to combine better social security that addresses individual risks with fiscal policy that stabilizes the economy as a whole. These two elements should go hand in hand. Social risk management policies should serve as automatic economic stabilizers in the Keynesian sense, while fiscal policies should be tasked with helping those of us hardest hit by the recession.”

III.4. For us Africans

The misconceptions of the zombie economy, Africa and Congo know the agonies. During the 1980s, we suffered the remedies of the structural adjustments that destroyed our countries in their economic and financial dynamics, with immense suffering caused by ruinous choices. These choices included breaking the financial regulations of the state, privatizing the major sectors of the economy, compressing public services, anemic educational and health structures and making

debt repayment a priority. Our countries collapsed in their financial capacity and their economies became depleted. The misery reached unimaginable heights, especially in Congo where the economic and political incompetence of the leaders prevented the idea of adequate strategies in the face of the crisis.

Strangely, the worse the situation, the more the masters of structural adjustments strengthened their measures and saw their calamitous theoretical framework as the only way forward. The protests of African economists did nothing: the zombie economy flourished, protected by African states without a compass and supported by international financial institutions that had only their zombie ideas as therapies. Africa's economic tragedy since the triumph of market liberalism is due to the inadequacy of the zombie economy.

If we do not yet succeed in Africa to contain this tragedy, it is because we live ourselves in our countries with zombie ideologies in economic and financial matters.

In the DRC, for example, we live with the conviction that we are a rich country, because of our soil and our basements, which are endowed with countless raw materials. This idea forgets that the strength of a nation is more in its grey matter than in natural products: it makes us completely amorphous in terms of our capacity for creativity, invention and organization.

At the same time, we believe that trade in our raw materials is our only development horizon. Yet it is clear that, in today's world, it is the intelligence transforming raw materials into competitive finished products that opens the way for people to develop sustainable.

We are also convinced that it is foreigners, through their abundance of international assistance and support to our government, who must invest in our economy and ensure sustainable financial prosperity for our nation.

This leads to an economy of extraversion and a mentality of refusal to be the centre of our own economy and our own financial structures. People are locked in a destructive wait-forth, believing only in luck or random opportunities that can make that at any time, “*you can sleep poor and wake up immensely rich the next day,*” in the words of Aloys Tegera, a researcher at Pole Institute.

Across sub-Saharan Africa, the same zombie ideas work minds and consciences. Few nations where the economic and social imagination is not structured on a wait-and-see mentality, with the conviction that without today’s global structures, it is impossible for our continent to impose itself by its own capacity for inventiveness, making Africa a competitive continent. All we have to do is be what the international financial institutions ask us to be, to do what they ask us to do, to live as they ask us to live. The greatest compliment for our countries is to be designated as good students of these institutions, as if it were impossible for us to be masters and creators ourselves.

This structuring of our African imagination is a force of extreme zombification not only of our economy, but of our entire being, with zombie ideas about our fragilities that have become endemic.

There’s more. Africa is bent under the weight of a fatal conviction: it now believes that its weakening and destructive integration into the global economy as it works is inevitable. She does not realize that this zombie global economy is going nowhere and that the imperative is to dare something else. When we talk about something else, we refer to very specific realities:

- The construction of a new economic imagination, with dreams of strengthening African creative power through an African education capable of promoting assets to invent solutions other than those of zombie neo-liberalism.

- The development of a new economic philosophy free of any spirit of fatalism on who we are in the world and any mentality of extraversion of our minds regarding the possible new world.
- Promoting an economic ethic of self-confidence, with citizens who become competitive forces mastering the order of the world and developing strong strategies to act on it by freeing themselves from its pathologies.
- The establishment of a self-centered and open economic and financial policy, driven by inventive minds freed from zombie ideas that destroy our internal forces in terms of creativity specific to our nations.

Building new and dynamic economic structures, geared towards a possible new economy.

These requirements are now indispensable for Africa and for Congo, but they are linked to three major revolutions that John Quiggin's book allows us to highlight today.

In his book, what is blamed on the zombie economy is to live on dead ideas that come back disastrously to life despite their falsity and their catastrophic effects. This means that they are our only cut off from real life and its demands of another possible economy, but that they are really not compatible with the new economic rationalities that the world needs: especially the rationalities of an economy of responsibility where the state takes on a fundamental role as a regulator of collective life and where the major players in the economy understand that the justice provided by "the fairer distribution of income" is more profitable than the current state of inequality fostered by a crazy financial economy. Because of what it has suffered from zombie economic ideas during the period of structural adjustments, Africa is able to revolutionize new economic rationalities guaranteed by a responsible state and economic actors aware of the urgency of behaviours "useful to society".

Community utility and public responsibility can thus become the levers of a strong African economy, a powerful Congolese economy.

John Quiggin also leads us to put the issue of values back at the heart of the economy. His thought is, in its deep fibers, an invitation to an ethical revolution in the world economic order. He writes:

“The economy of the 21st century should put the priority:

- *realism, rather than rigorism,*
- *fairness, rather than profitability,*
- *To humility, rather than arrogance.”*

These imperatives are not mere indications to do better. They define a new ethic in which market liberalism appears as a useless dinosaur in its violence, predations, plunders and instances of domination of which Africa has been a victim. Faced with them, Africa, which has suffered all these horrors, is the society best placed to conceive, live and promote this revolution. It needs willpower, it needs endogenous means and it needs committed and determined actors. This means that today’s times are the times of a radical questioning of the zombie economy in its ethical deficiencies and the invention of an economic ethic based on the requirements of realism, fairness and humility. In Africa and Congo, it is about building an economy that responds to the concrete problems of society, that guarantees just human relations and that gives citizens the opportunity to lead a fulfilling life, where basic needs are met, where fundamental rights are guaranteed, where the existence of everyday life is an existence sensitive to the values of humanity.

Quiggin’s book finally makes us sensitive, in Africa, to a revolution of meaning. The problem with the zombie economy is that it leads nowhere. She goes round in circles in her own contradictions, in her own lies and in her own atrocities. It promises prosperity while developing structures of injustice and inequality. It wants to guarantee an eternal period of abundance when its policies are destructive

policies, judging by the latest financial crisis, which is not said to be the last. It claims to be an economy for life when in reality it is a saving of death. It is in this that it is pure and simple nonsense. Africa and Congo must emerge from this nonsense by the audacity to invent a human economy, an economy to build a happy society, an economy whose meaning is precisely the development of this society, not in a naïve faith with impossible ideals, but in the effort so that life is worthy of being lived by every person and by the whole of society. We have the means and the assets to build such a company. We now need ambition and conviction.

Chapter IV

THE ONLY WAY OUT IN THE FACE OF THE CRISIS IN THE WORLD TODAY

IV.0. Introduction

In the powerful flow of intellectual production of today's West, a small book has caught our attention as Africans sensitive to the evolutions of world thought today. Its title is: *History of Modernity, How Humanity Sees Its Future*. Its author is one of the most vivid, lucid, extensive, prolix and curious intelligences of everything in contemporary France: Jacques Attali. Economist, banker, philosopher, historian of ideas, political analyst, advisor to the Princes and novelist, this erudite and creative spirit strives to think of modernity as dynamic throughout history, from the farthest past to the great threats to humanity and the great hopes that open up to the future.

IV.1. A book that fits into a particular context

If *History of Modernity* has caught our attention, it is because it is part of a particular intellectual climate of the present West: the climate of searching for new ways for humanity in a context of crisis, thanks to a new look at history and its riches. It is indeed impressive to see how the Western world today builds and fertilizes a new historical consciousness of itself through its most prestigious and productive thinkers. In Europe as in America, at the rhythm of literary seasons and ways of thinking, books of very high quality are devoted with remarkable constancy by Western thinkers to the West as a force of spirit: its history, its culture, its civilization and its arts of living. A kind of tradition of questioning oneself and analysing one's own being in history has been formed into a library that is vigorously enriched and abounds in intellectual gold nuggets that Africa would benefit from

knowing and questioning for its own direction and prospects for global influence. It is as if, in the current context of the radical crisis of its economic model and its capacity to still be the great beacon of humanity that it has been during the last five centuries of human history, the order of the westernization of the world is now seeking a new lease of life by a new look at its own history. He wants to open a new path and draw from his philosophical energies and vital wisdoms the silt of confidence in the future, a new force of the future.

When you are an African, you cannot help but wonder what profit our continent can derive from the West's view of itself today. We cannot fail to see that this Western historical re-questioning effort is a work of building a new imagination. An imaginal destined to give the rising Western generations a certain awareness of the greatness and power of their civilization in history, with a view to a project of the future where the West should still play a leading role, given its own history and the meanings that must be given to it. In this way, we want to ward off the temptations of doubt and despair in relation to the current crisis of the world order, in the face of a certain discourse on the decline of the power of the West.

Clearly, Jacques Attali's essay on the history of modernity is part of this project of "boosting" the Western imagination in the invention of the future.

IV.2. A history of modernity for the general public

What is striking from the outset in *History of Modernity* is its modest dimension, in a small consumer format and a style aimed at the *vast world of popular culture*. Nothing to do with the economic essays of great erudition that mark the intellectual life of Jacques Attali. Nor does it have anything to do with the large volumes of political analysis that the French thinker devoted to François Mitterrand or French politics in the context of globalization. The book exudes a great desire

to inform and convince, with an educational and pedagogical will perceptible on each page. It is written in a clear and light-hearted style, as if the author wanted to be read and understood by “Mr. Everyone” to which he addresses to talk to him about Western civilization and its modernity that has become the western power of the world. One can guess that among the mass of people likely to read it, Attali particularly targets young Westerners to whom he wants not only to give a certain awareness of the West, but to propose a great plan for the Western world today.

We can also think that in this vast world of our time, where the West is less and less perceived as the light of the universe, the French thinker hopes to arouse a new adherence to the new project of civilization based on the history of Western modernity. This project is that of an altruistic globalism, a civilization of conviviality, a new culture of solidarity and generosity that the West still carries, given its specific consciousness. It is built and fortified by a triple modernity, in a complex, prolific, explosive heritage, and still carrying new hopes: *the modernity of being, the modernity of faith and the modernity of reason.*

The whole book revolves around this triple modernity from which emerges a new project of civilization, the only truly human, that no alternative among the possible today open can really exceed in relevance and fertility.

Attali’s thesis is cloudless on this point and it is posed with an impressive quiet force, as was said in the time of François Mitterrand. Here it is, this basic thesis:

“After the reign of three modernities (those of being, faith and reason), the question now seems definitively settled: on most of the planet, most people, modernity will increasingly identify with Westernization. Not that it means a victory for the West. Quite the contrary: on the one hand, because the appropriation by others of its values that have become

universal and in particular the right to individual freedom will deprive the West of its specialty, and its advance. On the other hand, because in the West as well as elsewhere, many people are waging a complete struggle against this conception of modernity and this direction of history.”

It is clearly and distinctly said: the becoming-West of the world is the framework in which the future is thought, but this becoming-West has in front of it obstacles that must be considered not as an alternative project but rather as attempts that will lead nowhere. These are protests and refusals without much consistency.

“In particular, they will blame Westernization for violating their moral and religious principles, of destroying cultural specificities, of devastating nature, of ‘merchandise’ all social relations, including man himself, by gradually transforming him into an artefact, in a ‘hypermodernity’ where the prosthesis will be the measure of modernity.”

All these reproaches presuppose that the adversaries themselves have already been shaped by the westernization of the world and that they highlight its excesses and pathologies without being aware of a fact. Namely, that the very dynamics of the westernization of the world are a positive and inescapable project when we seek to know what world it is today good, useful and imperative to build. It is impossible for the new world to be born to be against the force of Westernization. All that would be thought of in such a perspective will be a cul-de-sac, a path that leads nowhere, a sterile and vain agitation against a “hypermodernity” that could only be surpassed by the civilization of altruism fertilized by the best of the westernization of the world.

Attali affirms:

“Opponents of this hypermodernity will invent six more projects for the future, six more modernities. Five of them (nostalgic, instantaneous, theological, ecological, ethnic) will by nature be incompatible in the long run with individual freedom and will fail in the face of this irrepressible claim; and we will return to hypermodernity and its delusions.

Only one,(...) altruistic, can enable humanity to preserve its identity, creativity and freedom, and to constitute a sustainable project for the future. The path to achieve this is very narrow fatally narrow. »

The strength of Jacques Attali’s book is in this last statement: “The path to achieve this is very narrow, mortally narrow.” This means that the new project of civilization involves imperatives that are not solely the responsibility of the West, but of the effort that all civilizations fertilized by the westernization of the world will provide, in the face of many obstacles, to build a planetary altruism and create new perspectives.

By opening this path, Attali puts the conscience of the West before its responsibilities for the future and calls on other civilizations to think about the future in an innovative way.

To read fruitfully History of modernity by Jacques Attali, it is necessary to be part of this perspective of invention of a project of the future, especially when one is African and one carries in oneself a great dream for Africa. A dream that is not that of the rejection of the West, but that of the fulfillment of the world in a civilization of altruism based on the most meaningless Western values and African values rooted in a fertile historical consciousness, specific to Africa and its historical trajectory.

IV.3. The Three Modernities

In the structuring of his book, Jacques Attali distinguishes three modernities that constitute three ways of conceiving the future and bringing out the new in the fabric of the life of peoples and civilizations: the modernity of being, the modernity of the Faith and the modernity of Reason.

A. Modernity of the Being

The modernity of the Being means the configuration of the spirit that three cultural areas have built and imposed in human history: the area of Jewish tradition, the area of Greek tradition and the area of Roman tradition.

The Jewish cultural universe and the Greek cultural universe have given humanity a new vision of time and a new perception of man. In them, time is no longer a cycle of the seasons: it is a linear time looking to the future, with the idea of progress. At the same time, man caught up in this linear dynamism “*exists as an individual.*” Among the Jews, man’s vision makes him a being of “*transgression*” of the forbidden. This is what the book of Genesis tells in the fate of Adam and Eve. As a being of transgression, man is a being of freedom, of decision, of responsibility. Likewise, he is a working being, called to inhabit the land and cultivate it through work. In this work posture, the human being “*must use reason, rationally study the world, the human body and the universe.*” It is thus part of a dynamic of the creation of the new. He has in him the “*desire for nine*”; “*not to change to change, but to amass, transform, and improve, in the interest of man engaged in the transformation of the world that God has left imperfect by withdrawing.*” It is with such a man engaged in the transformation of the world that history begins, as a process “*under the control of men,*” which, like the kings of Israel, “*advance only in the transgression of the laws that God has given them.*”

Among the ancient Greeks, modernity is to be thought of under the sign of man as “*being free and rational*”, thrown into a tragic world where he is capable of evil, confronted with a fate where the gods “*despise men, make fun of them and enjoy the spectacle of their pressures.*”

When the Greek world and the Jewish cultural world come into contact and inter-fertilize, they create a new vision of the world, with values that system and gradually fertilize the historical consciousness of the West. For Attali, the “*dialogue between Jewish and Greek thought gradually builds a system of values, a social utopia, glorifying the individual, the accumulation of knowledge, the improvement of the material world, the freedom to be and to think. Always, in the background, the supreme form of freedom: the crazy project of escaping the compulsion of death. To be modern is already, and it will be again and again, in the final analysis, conquering immortality.*”

To this nucleus worldview, Rome will add a double dynamic: centralization and urbanism. That is to say the art of the strong organization of permanent progress, with a new idea of the future: the greatness of Rome and its universal power. The West acquires here a dynamic of universalization of its project and its future becomes a future of conquest of the world in a logic of empire.

B. The modernity of faith

It is at the heart of the modernity of the Being, in an unexpected burst that arises the sect of Christianity whose breath changes the worldview in the Roman Empire. Change is about seizing the future not from the perspective of improving the here on earth, but from a vital push towards eschatological hope and judgment in the afterlife.

Thinking of the future from a perspective of transcendence, the modernity of faith has pushed back the gains of the modernity of being. The Church has become an authoritarian power with a pathological hold on spirits, in the name of God. A break with the Greeks was established:

“Modernization will be limited to the conversion of all peoples to Christianity.” More precisely: *“freedom, logic, wealth, and technology are no longer valued; material progress is seen as the enemy of spiritual progress.”* Even if the emergence of Islam in history attempts to restore knowledge and research to the power they should have at the heart of faith, modernity embodied by religious impulses remains a step backwards from Greece. Despite the efforts of Muslim philosophers, Islam *“admits as modern only its faith.”* His vision for the future is that of universal faith.

C. The modernity of reason

With the advent of the bourgeoisie as the main social force of opposition to the spirit of the Middle Ages, with the emergence of the scientific mind and technical inventions, the modernity of faith has given way to a new modernity: that of reason. It puts *“rational progress as a utopia”* in the reason for the future. This modernity reconnects with the Greeks and opens a new era:

“Progress is no longer moving towards messianic times, or even contenting oneself with Judeo-Greek soap, but patiently accumulating new, rational knowledge, putting into practice more efficient techniques, work, produce, trade, trade, sell, sell, eat well, better clothe, house. To be free, to improve one’s rights and freedoms. Owning it. Follow fashion, freely choose your spouse. Also and above all: to live longer and bequeath one’s property to one’s children and not to the church.”

We recognize here what constitutes the substance of Western culture and its spirit whose triumph is everywhere visible. The values invoked by this spirit have led the whole world throughout the last centuries. Especially thanks to the explosion of scientific inventions and technological prowess. Experimental science is paving the way for new utopias and the future is now thought of as the horizon that will make *“all things possible.”* It is for man to *“make himself master of the*

universe, to put nature at his service.” With the era that opened the modernity of reason, the fields of freedoms widened: democracy became “*the best in governments*” and “*the governments of the best,*” in the words of the abbot of Saint-Pierre in 1719. Basically, the new world order will now be the order of “*faith in reason and freedom, that is, in democracy and the market.*”

We recognize here the triumph of the centuries of the lights from which sprang the contemporary vision that the West has of itself and its role within humanity.

Unfortunately, these values quickly derailed and their triumph gave rise to the barbarities of the 20th century: totalitarianism, of which the Holocaust and the Gulag are cancers in the history of mankind. All advances in science, thought and art cannot make these cancers forget. Even in the social field, movements such as Marxism and socialism are signs that the modernity of reason has not given humanity the happiness that was expected of it. What was a great “*universal hope*” became “*a nightmare.*” Especially when the West imposes itself on the whole world as a civilization of domination, predation and denial of human rights, in the name of its own values of civilization.

We have seen the rise of these values of civilization no longer the reign of happiness but the risk of a phoneme of hyper-sophistication of the modernity of reason under the name of “*hyper-modernity.*”

What’s this all about? The “*dictatorship of productivity.*” The disorder associated with the advent of the “*hyper empire.*” The precariousness of decisions, employment contracts, agreements of all kinds, situations, places of residence. From “*acceptance of all kinds of sentimental relationship*” From the generalization of “*access to all objects and services, made commercial, connected to each other, nomadic, and then integrated into the human body.*” From the commodification of man who has become an object like any other consumer object. From a world

led by a new financial and cultural elite to “*the search for thrills always.*”

In short, it is the “modernity of the artefact.” Faced with this evolution, Attali writes:

“When this kind of evolution begins to take place, many will not accept the consequences on democracy, on climate change, on the ill-being of a society that will be made up of only necessary disloyal, let alone the consequences on the transformation of human beings into a genetic artefact, on the very nature of the life of the human project. Revolts will take place against this suicidal expansion of the modernity of reason.”

IV.4. The time of positive revolts

Today we must think of the revolts against the excesses of the modernity of reason. Positive and constructive revolts, to prevent archaic and violent revolts from imposing on the planet the reign of disorder and terror.

The temptation is great in the contemporary society of seeking false paths in the face of hypermodernity. Attali presents five false paths:

- *Amodernity*: the outright rejection of the modernity of reason.
- *Retro-modernity*: to turn to the ways of life, ways of thinking and the arts of the past, in a nostalgia for a beautiful old time purely fantasized.
- *Ethno-modernity*: to lock oneself into ethnic identity and to make it a juice of one’s own vision of reason, in a “tightening against globalization, nomadism and the interbreeding implied by hypermodernity.”
- *Eco-modernity*: believing only in an ecologically sustainable world, even at the expense of individual freedoms and democracy.

In the eyes of Jacques Attali, to believe that salvation is in all these ways is to refuse to think deeply about the legacy of being, the legacy of faith and the legacy of Reason in what they have best as the seed for a possible new world. We must rediscover this seed in terms of vital

values in the face of the new choice of civilization to be made: altruism as the only reliable path. “A seventh conception of the future” is essential: “*alter-modernity*.” It requires a great height of view and a very thorough reflection on altruism, especially with regard to future generations. It makes the happiness of the other the condition of his own.

Now the challenge of westernizing the world is essentially that of building the civilization of altruism.

IV.5. A world in the making

Let us see for ourselves: this civilization is being born. It is the new reality to which people gradually have faith, despite the predominance of individualism and commercial ideology. This reality can be found in the conviviality advocated more and more as an ideology by thinkers, researchers, people of cultures and politicians from all walks of life, as evidenced by the convivialist manifesto that is circulating all over the world today. This reality can also be found in what Frederic Lenoir calls “the third individual revolution.”

Frederic Lenoir writes:

“Something began to change in the late 1990s and early 2000s with the concurrent rise of democratization, personal development, Eastern spirituality or philosophy as wisdom, but also with the birth of the alter-modilist movement and the emergence of social forums, the development of consciousness, the eruption of many initiatives on a global scale such as micro credit, solidarity finance or even more recently the movement of the Indignant. These various movements are indicative of a need to restore meaning both to one’s personal life through a work on oneself (...) and to the common life through great collective ideals.”

Our dream is to see Africa take a big place in consolidating this quest for meaning, for a humanity of solidarity. But how will this be possible? Through education.

IV.6. An African Education for a Civilization of Altruism

The great requirement of this education is to make known to the rising generations in a profound way, the modernity of the Being, the modernity of the Faith and the modernity of Reason. This knowledge is important and indispensable: it opens up the vast world of values that have become globalized by the westernization of the planet. Values that must be mastered by all civilizations. It is the mastery of westernization that is now becoming one of the challenges of the African future. It makes Africa see its own weaknesses in relation to Being, Faith and Reason in their creative power, the very engine of the power of the West throughout human history. When one is sensitive to the type of relations that have been forged between the cultural area of Africa and the Western cultural universe since modern times, one quickly realizes that the values of Being, Faith and Reason have given the Western world a direction that Africa has not been able to face with its own creative dynamism. We have a duty to invent new mechanisms in our continent to live up to the three Western modernities. This means that we must give birth to the West by reinventing ourselves by reinventing the values by which the westernization of the world has imposed itself everywhere. It is appropriate that this requirement is integrated into us by inventing a new destiny, through knowledge. But this integration through knowledge can only succeed if it is a critical integration in the radical sense of the term: a distance from the profound process that has shifted the West from the world from three modernities to hypermodernity as a disastrous anthropological structure. A structure whose harms are known with the deregulation of the world economy, the policies of predation, the culture of “narcissistic individualism”,

endless social violence, scientific and technological research without conscience and a globalization that does not know where it goes or what world it wants.

African criticism of the world order must aim, in the face of all its evils, for the emergence of a profoundly human sense to change the order of a world that questions its own future, To do so, Africa must draw on its own historical consciousness to discover the riches of its own modernities and make it the ferment of a civilization of altruism to which the best minds of our time aspire.

IV.7. New African Horizons

From this point of view, reading Jacques Attali's book has a dual interest for us Africans.

The first interest is to see how the construction of a historical consciousness for a people is to establish benchmarks where basic values are exalted that must irrigate spirits from generation to generation. To the extent that these values are a juice for the construction of social personality, they constitute a dynamic without which the people cannot grow or flourish. These values must be taken up, rethought, revitalized and made available to future generations so that they can invent a destiny in the light of the demands of a being-together based on collectively shared norms. Attali defined these values as the foundation of successive modernities: the modernity of being, the modernity of faith and the modernity of reason.

If we borrow from it its pattern of building historical consciousness, we Africans can define our own modernities that can become our foundation for the invention of the future.

Our first modernity is the modernity of the pharaohs. It is based on the values of unifying society in a common project of a being-together for prosperity and abundance. The act of unification of the upper and base Egypt 31 centuries B.C. in the founding of one of the

most radiant and strongest empires of ancient times was for Africa a dynamic of building a project of the future: building a powerful society for community happiness.

If the unifier of Egypt, Menès Narmer, represents for Africa a great figure of its history, it is because it bases the African being on the requirement of shared happiness. He is the pharaoh of a policy and an economy to live together in a space of power and security. Another important figure of pharaonic modernity is that of Ramesses II, whose important presence at the heart of the history of the pharaohs is a foundation for the entire African consciousness: the foundation of a reign of stability and political solidarity where power is built by the ability to open spaces of conquest for the expansion of prosperity. It is not the conquests of predation or barbarism as we know of thousands in human history, with the Hittites, the Mongols, the Greeks of Alexander the Great or the Rome of the Caesars, but the development of a safe area for the economy of abundance. With Ramés II, the model of a modernity of the policy of life force takes shape and builds for Africa of the future the benchmarks of a policy of humanity.

Another important landmark of Pharaonic modernity is Amenophis IV, the famous Akhenaten, inventor of monotheism. With him, Africa gives fashion a spiritual modernity whose seeds will be sown throughout human history: among the Hebrews, among the Greeks and among the Arabs, in a religious fertilization whose world today still lives, and powerfully. It is good to add two figures of women in this modernity: the queens Nefertiti and Hatshepsut, whose names are in the history of politics as the fertilization of humanity by the spirit that the very current term of gender refers to. That is, the construction of an order of relations of justice, equality, equity and solidarity between men and women. In the majestic and imposing history of the pharaohs, these women shine as demands of the values of a united humanity as the power of the genre. We have to look at them as such.

With all these figures, we are indeed, for Africa today, in the modernity of our historical foundations. Since Narmer, a new world has been born: the world of culture, the world of African civilization where politics, economy and spirituality combine to create a type of mind whose summit is the invention of an education in science and science. If the Greeks, the great minds of the ancient world and the most famous scholars of the ancient universe went to Egypt to learn the great and high knowledge, as we all know today, it is a sign that the Pharaonic civilization had the status of foundation for the Greek world and that its modernity broke the springs of an earlier world whose spirit had ceased to be a ferment of culture and civilization.

For today's Africa, this truth can no longer cease to be invoked to think of African modernity in its sources and in its evolutions, as Attali does for Western modernity. This is all the more important since pharaonic modernity had already established the dynamics of writing, the foundation of a lasting and clearly detectable translation over more than three thousand years B.C.

After the modernity of the pharaohs, another modernity is imposed in the construction of the African historical consciousness: the modernity of the great kings and emperors of traditional Africa. It is rooted in the pharaonic modernity that it takes up on two essential points: unity for power and being-together in the economy of abundant prosperity.

The epic of The Emperor of Mali Kankou Moussa visiting Mecca in the 14th century AD is in historical memory as the manifestation of a certain Africa: a rich, prosperous Africa, open to the world and strong in the relationship of trade with other political, economic and cultural universes.

King Nzinga Nkuru, from the Kongo kingdom in the 15th century, is also a figure in the African takeover of the pharaonicity of power. The Portuguese who entered his kingdom at that time left testimonies of great value. They saw a land of organization and abundance, whose

ethical benchmarks built a being-together of lasting peace and solidarity happiness.

Nzinga Nkuvu and Kankou Moussa are positive benchmarks for highlighting the modernity of the great kings in the wake of the pharaohs. But they are important in another respect: the African invention of nationalities of diplomatic inter-fertilization and international relations nourished by the ethic of giving, apart from the logics of the savage trade which the West has nurtured its barbarity throughout history. Kankou Moussa's gold is the triumph of the gift economy in Africa's relationship with the East. At Nzinga Nkuvu, the same economy founded a serene diplomacy that the Portuguese broke, destroyed and replaced by the horrible slave trade.

In this dynamic of violence, the West has imposed on Africa another modernity: the modernity of barbarism, with its gloomy massacres in the name of reason, commerce, science, predatory conquest, senseless progress and the destruction of humanity through the emergence of totalitarianism. This modernity, Africa has suffered in a traumatic and deadly yoke, in a real era of darkness from which it still has enormous difficulties to get out and emerge.

But in the midst of this darkness, stars have shone to embody the values of resistance, revolt, dignity and responsibility. The names of the stars are known: Kimpa Vita, Simon Kimbangu, William Wadé Harris, Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Emery Lumumba, Nelson Mandela and many others. They are figures against the negative of modernity, but they are also messages for all the possibilities to live this barbaric modernity differently, to change it from top to bottom, positively, to rethink its presence at the heart of contemporary African history. This modernity that has crushed Africa is at the same time a carrier of liberating energies: the energies of reason, freedom and other possible choices of civilization, the configuration of high values and great ideals

that Jacques Attali refers to as altruism, the only real way forward for humanity.

If we are in the perspective of this civilization of altruism, Africa has a duty to invent in it another modernity: one that liberates the West from its barbarities and breaks in the minds of Africans the traumas and pathologies of the era of darkness that goes from the era of the black trade to the present era of triumphant neocolonialism in the form of ultra-capitalism. The modernity that Africa can bring is a social, political, economic and culturally friendly revolution, within African countries, among African nations and in Africa's relations with the world. It is the modernity of the new African dream, starting from a vast historical consciousness that has digested the Western modernities of being, faith and reason and which has understood that these modernities have meaning only in the great revolution that must still happen: the modernity of altruism, the only challenge to the other possible world that all civilizations and all peoples have a duty to build.

We must look to the future and invent this new modernity. This is the current vocation of the African continent.

Part Two
HUMAN BEING : THE ETHICAL QUESTION AND
ECONOMIC IDEOLOGY

Chapter I

ETHICS AND ECONOMICS

From the power of the obvious to the conquest of meaning

In order to account for the current way of thinking about the relationship between ethics and the economy, we will examine two major facts that seem to me to characterize the debates on this problem.

I.1. From moral Manichaeism to ontological questioning

First of all, we take the most superficial and obviously questionable evidence: which is of the Manichean prejudice, which opposes an apparent ethical requirement and economic logic.

At the heart of this evidence, what is generally referred to as the term ethical requirement is always ideally posed as a forum for judgment in the face of economic logic. As a set of moral values proposed to the human experience, ethics enjoys a favourable prejudice that gives it strength of original truth and a certain irradiation of humanizing tenderness. Fundamentally and to a large extent, it is the vital place and the existential forum whose intimate energy tends to spontaneously question the great options of contemporary economic systems and all the ideological armour that these options surround themselves with. As a power of norms of humanity, as a blessed spark of great thirsts for happiness and fullness, as a demand for harmony and peace in the social fabric and in the depths of the person, ethics are iridescent and rhythm with great delight and seduction. It is shrouded in charm and enchantment that impose it as a categorical requirement. Thus it dominates any discourse sensitive to the imperatives of humanization of the world economic order. For many of us, it flourishes as a fertile energy that we cannot get rid of without giving the

impression of re-owing ourselves as men, at the same time denying centuries of civilization that have built our moral conscience and laid the foundations of our consciousness at all: the very order of our being-in-the-world and our will to inhabit the earth humanly. To this extent, everything ethical seems to be the lifeblood of our utopias of well-being and our aspirations to be men. Whether we think of it as a moral force or a logical force for respect for the human being, whether it is called a power of wisdom or a desire to be together, whether it is founded speculatively in philosophical discourse or monetized in religious systems, ethics always seems to be the center of our concern for humanity. That is why his language resonates with a certain happiness in our ears and constantly places us before the measure of ourselves whose moral values are inextinguishable paradigms. Speaking in the name of human dignity and truth, speaking - in the name of human rights and freedom, speaking in the name of the need to create a friendly world where it would be good to live, ethics seems ideally to ignite our hearts with all aspirations of vital fullness. It is thus rooted in instances of depth where we think ontologically coincide with the silty truth of our being. To this extent, it is the inescapable dynamic of our desire to inhabit the world and to fertilize the horizons of our destiny.

It is within this spontaneous perception of ethical energy that the challenge to economic logic is born and organized in many of our contemporaries. As much as the very idea of ethics seems obvious in its transparent necessity, the logic of the economy suffers ethically from an unfavorable preconception. Linked in our imagination to the emergence of capitalism and industrial civilization, served by the multiple impasses of the current world order, the economy appears on the whole as the place of fatal dehumanization for many men. A field of insurmountable social inequalities for economic thought itself, a jungle of man's exploitation by man, an arena where all the appetites for domination and all our desires for power are revealed, it can only be

ethically captured under the world of anxiety and disenchantment, under the mode of questioning that makes it a machine to shred the social fabric and natural solidarity. Is it not she, one asks, who today maintains the heartbreak of the planet between the scandalous opulence of the North and the insulting misery of the Third World? Is it not she who secretes the hell of the quarter-world in some marginalized strata within rich countries? Is it not she who ignites class antagonisms and tensions between rich and poor? Is it not it that endangers the future of the world by the financial interests it puts at stake on problems concerning ecology or the arms trade? Is it not she who, to a large extent, is at the foundation of ideological wars and the struggles of influence between East and West? More radically, is it not she who, by her abstract laws of the market and profitability, by her logic of profit and her mercantile fetishism, makes man a wolf for man and the world an unrelenting jungle? Today, especially when it seems incapable, through the internal play of its rationality and its organizational principles, of curbing the phenomena of unemployment and poverty, can we fail to believe that it pushes many men into despair and disarray? Is it possible not to maintain the state of mind described by Mr. Czerny and J. Swift when they write about unemployment?

“It has gradually become clear in people’s minds that the economy is not organized to provide jobs. Unemployment is not an aberration or a temporary failure in a market otherwise assured of economic growth. It seems to be an economic condition that gets worse with every turn back the economic pendulum?”?

Is it not possible to take to heart the cry of the Catholic bishops of Canada who, in their Reflections on the Economic Crisis, note?

² M. CZERNY & J. SWIFT, *Getting started: on social analysis in Canada*, Toronto, Between The Lines, 1984, pp. 73-74.

“By creating the conditions for permanent unemployment, an ever-widening fraction of the population is at risk of losing human dignity. Indeed, there is a tendency to treat people as an impersonal force of little or no importance outside the economic destination in Le Système3”(5)?

Can one not be tempted to think of the economic in a fundamental pessimism, as if, “responsible for the texture and structure of the modern universe”, in the words of Serge Christophe Kolm, it was therefore “*the primary cause of its discordances and dissonances, its ugliness and anxieties, its sorrows and its sufferings, the anxiety of the unemployed or the alienating work, the misery of true poverty or relatives’ frustrations, the destruction of nature, the social fabric, cultures, the disintegration of solidarity, disenchantment with the strong universe of myths and the boarding of dreams*”⁴.”

Perceived in the light of these questions, economic logic appears, in its very configuration, in structural opposition to the ethical imperative as we have mentioned it. A principle of land antagonism pits them in front of each other in a radical confrontation. To put it bluntly, many of our contemporaries believe that the economy is not ethical and that it is not an economic logic.

This is, one might say, the first evidence which, at the most superficial level, imposes itself on the philosopher. This evidence is of such force that it determines in advance how an audience of managers and financiers (as you are) receives ethical discourse from a thinker. Somewhere in this audience burns a secret expectation linked to a kind of anxious consciousness privileged to those who build economic logic and feel at the same time concerned by the cries of contemporary man. Instinctively, they tend to expect philosophical thought to bring out in

³ Quoted by M. CZERNY & J. SWIFT, op. cit., p. 74.

⁴ S.-C. KOLM. *Philosophie de l'économie*, Paris, Le Seuil, 1986, p. 8

themselves the fundamental dimensions of the human being that the economy tends to obscure, extinguish and erase completely. They wait for the philosopher to make resound in them the vociferations of all those that economic logic shatters, harms, emasculates, maddens and dehumanizes. They expect the words of justice of humanity, solidarity, sharing and conviviality to be sung in them. They wait for their conscience to be challenged to make it sensitive to the needs of humanity, that they must live within themselves so that man becomes more human and the world more united. They are waiting for the need for moral values and spiritual realities within the economic jungle to be shouted in time and against the odds.

We understand the strength of such expectations and the imperatives that set them ablaze. We understand and hope that they have an essential place in the common reflection that we are undertaking in this symposium. The concern not to disconnect the management of the whole human life, we cannot shy away from the task of taking seriously the moral values and spiritual realities that inhabit them.

We would like to say, however, that the direction of my reflection is not limited to these legitimate expectations and the silt of their questioning. In this depth of my approach, we do not intend to enter into a conceptual scheme that risks becoming an outright moralization of the problem of the relationship between ethics and economics. Keeping as a frame of reference the quest for a new humanism of which our meeting here is one of the major signs, we stand in the plan of a philosophical quest concerning the destiny of contemporary man, on our destiny. This implies that it is impossible for me to endorse the Manichaeic principle that we have presented in the form of an obvious ethical and economic opposition as good opposes

evil. This evidence seems to me philosophically sterile and semantically poor. It is so insofar as it implements two fundamentally reductive assumptions:

Angelism that idealizes ethical reality by posing it as a world of sparkling but economically illusory norms and ideals.

The pessimism that encloses the economy in a kind of ethical hell irretrievably dehumanizing.

If, instead of entering into the logic of these assumptions and the evidence that underlies them, we are rather in the perspective of a problem of destiny, it appears that the Manichean principle is not only superficial, but that it is, in its very essence, a falsification of contemporary ethical reality and economic experience. Superficial, it is because it really cannot adequately account for what ethics and economics really are in the structuring of the mental and practical universe in which we live today. It cannot help us to understand that ethics is by far more than a net of norms and ideals that enscribe the individual by enshrining him in the fabric of the social fabric, that it is the juice of a way of being and living, that it is the fundamental question of our humanity, of our truth as human beings, of our efforts to embody in us the highest measure of ourselves in a concrete practice based on a dimension of absolute and a unity of consciousness in the invention of our future. To implement the Manichaeic principle in assessing the relationship between ethics and economics is in fact to forget all that ethics thus understood has as a land ambition: the desire to generate a type of man and a type of culture whose center is the dynamics of the mind that melting the human person in his power of historicity and in his projection into the heart of the future. It is to forget that ethics is the place of a total idea of man as the capacity to create a world enlightened by all the aspirations that sing in us as the highest goal towards a reign

of humanity. At this level of questioning, ethics places us before the most crucial questions concerning human existence.

- It asks us the question of the depths of our idea of man: What, in fact, man? What, basically, is the essence of human life? What is it for us to be a man and to live as such?

- It asks us the question of the “for what” of our being-in-the-world, this question that Blondel already posed with all the challenging vigour and all the agonizing lucidity: Yes or no does life have a meaning and does man have a destiny?

- It even refers us to the philosophical question par excellence, the one whose emergence in the fabric of our experience upsets our certainties and plunges us into doubt on our most certain evidence: Why is there something rather than nothing?

If we consider it as the practical answer, we give to these dreadful questions, ethics ceases to be a domain of wishful thinking and sweet illusions to be an organizing force of destiny. It establishes an order between man and his history, between man and his present, between man and his future. It then involves all the constituent dimensions of this order of being: the political, the economic, the social, the cultural, the psychic, etc. It becomes the center of the existential constellation where men pace their being-together and weave concrete solidarity that measure them to the deepest idea they have of their existence.

For obscuring this total dimension of values, the Manichaeic principle has moralized the question of the relationship between economics and ethics. It has located it at its most superficial level.

Just as it does not reflect the radical issue of ethics, the Manichaeic principle does not grasp the centrality of economic reality in the structuring of the universe in which we live today. He does not

understand that instead of being a particular dimension opposed to ethics as a particular dimension in the binary logic of good and evil, the economy secretes a whole aim of normativity that makes it very close to the highest aspirations and the fertile of the human heart. He does not understand that through a specific logic and a particular turn of mind, the economy legitimizes itself by a humanizing intention that is its highest end and that this intention is alive despite the impasses of the economic logic that governs our contemporary experience. As a practice supported by a whole of theoretical research and a whole pursuit of rational management, it cannot be reduced to what Manichaeism does. Like ethics in its living depths, it is also a global vision of the world involving an idea of man and life, a vision of being and destiny, a perception of meaning and values. It is as such that it is today our “*collective obsession, the dominatrix activity that relegates religion and art to the dark ranks, enslaves politics and science, expels traditions and natural socialities*”⁵.

If so, moral Manichaeism can only be a falsification of the relationship that ethics and economics have with each other. It is to a double extent:

- By posing ethics as an ideal of good and economics as a reality of evil essence, it remains on a moralizing scale that masks the ontological depth where ethics and economics oppose and bind as centers of total visions of the world.
- By locking ourselves in a primary and naïve moralism, he risks making us believe that the opposition between ethical vision and economic vision of the world is a radical antagonism that does not develop any meeting area. In reality, the meeting area does exist: it is man himself as the creator of the economic field and the ethical field; it is man as a social being and a desire for happiness. If ethics and

5 S.-C. KOLM, op. cit., p. 7

economics live in the mode of antagonism, the reason is not of moral Manichaeism, but of their global ambition as worldviews: the ambition that each of them caresses to be the ultimate body that integrates the other into its own dynamic. It is because they each want to be the foundation for the other that they oppose and confront each other in the concrete.

Thus, by moving from the level of a moralizing scheme where good and evil are waged war to an ontological level where two worldviews are at stake, we capture the relationship between ethics and economics in a more fruitful light. It is no longer a question of indulging in a moral appreciation of ethics and economics, but of knowing what their mutual claim to establish an order of being and a global vision of the world implies.

From this perspective, we are led, in order to fully understand the issue of the relationship between ethics and economics, to root them in the depths of the contemporary imagination, in its most fertile reality, where there are at stake not only problems concerning our idea of good and evil, but the essentials of our conception of being and life. It is by fully understanding the function that they each play in the organization of this imagination that it will be possible for us to initiate a critical work and a fertile reflection concerning the face to be given in the future ethically and economically.

To better conduct this work, let us approach the Manichean principle in another way. Let us take it from the moment he changes his coefficient of appreciation by seeing in the economy the place of good for contemporary man and in ethics the place of outdated and infertile norms. This reversal takes place not only in the way in which ethics and economics are perceived as realities of our imagination, but above all in the concrete experience of contemporary man.

The frame can be articulated in three essential moments. At first, man settles into a mental pattern that pits the past against the present.

He links moral values to a certain vision of the world that he considers outdated and believes dominated by unfounded spiritual instincts, by illusory projections of man towards fictitious transcendences. On the other hand, the present becomes the positive ground of reality, a world free of gods, of all metaphysical instance, from any meta-historic point of view. In such a present, the economy as a space for organizing production relationships becomes the foundation, the truth of the lived, the central norm, the place of splendor and beauty.

- Secondly, the logic of economic dynamics is absolutized and established as an ethical principle. To live then is to submit to economic reality as the most dominant mode of contemporary production thinks and organizes it (that of capitalism in the primacy it grants to economic rationality). It is a question of assuming, in desire or in reality, one's vision of the world, of adopting one's way of life, of trusting one's creativity and its possibilities to resolve one day or another its own impasses. Obviously, we are here in the presence of a practical Manichaeism that is carried out in the fetishization of the economy. In the face of this fetishism, any cry of economic logic risks appearing as a desire to return to the past, a refusal of the concrete and a harmless reverie.

- As long as the economy is thus absolutized and fetishized, the marginalization of ethics reaches its peak. What was at the heart of the search for moral values dissolves into an existential practice entirely dominated by the worship of the economy. We still talk about ethics, but in the mode of folklore.

If we have referred to this process of reversing the appreciation of the economy and ethics according to the Manichaean principle, it is not simply a matter of nuance and balance my first position. It was mainly to bring to light the fundamental paradox of contemporary experience: that of standardizing the practice by the economic while

intensifying the use of ethics, which leads to a concrete folklorization of any question concerning moral values.

This means that our relationship to ethics and economics is always, in any way, affected by the Manichaeic principle that any option for ethical reflection on economic reality risks, unconsciously or not, playing the game of the paradox we have just pointed out.

To this extent, we wish for our meeting a different direction of thought than that of the Manichaeic principle. To do this, it is important for us to realize that ethics and economics today are not neutral realities that we could address in a neutral way, but places of passions, fields of representation that work the depths of our imagination and require, when we approach them, that we remain sensitive to the entire irrational halo that surrounds them.

This means that they are part of matrix realities whose antagonism gives us a certain idea of our identity today (matrix realities through which we perceive our internal divisions and reflect for ourselves the image of what we have become).

On this scale of the imagination that reveals us to us, philosophy comes into play and asks essential questions about our destiny: Yes or no do we accept as fatality the Manichaeic structuring that seems to dominate our imagination about ethics and economics? Yes or no are we ready to project another reference space and another field of reflection to find another articulation between moral values and economic rationality? Yes or no are we able to define for ourselves purposes that we deem human enough to form the basis of our future?

To ask these questions is to open oneself to a reflection on the very meaning of ethics and economics (a sense that Manichaeic logic cannot give and whose essential dynamics it can only hide).

How can one manage to generate such a meaning and to inhabit one's energy in today's economic practice and in the concrete nature of ethical questioning?

It seems to us that the Symposium that took place six years ago right here⁶ provides a basis that we would like to take up by registering for their intention. We will repeat three principles of research that seem to me to indicate a fundamental direction for philosophical thought:

- The *principle of questioning* on the purposes of life and the qualities of human existence. Maurice Dufour defined it well when, at the end of his remarkable prolegomena, he asked his own question of FREUD and the questioning of the Indian chief of North America, Vine Delora: Freud

“What are the designs and vital objectives betrayed by the conduct of men, what do they ask for in life and what do they tend to do?”

Delora

“What are the supreme qualities of Life man? That's the question.”

- The *principle of friendly humanism*. It is Alain Chanlat who asks principles through a question: “Are we conducting ourselves in such a way as to ensure the survival of our species, are we doing what is right to promote the development of every human being?” As much as this question, Sartre’s reflection that Chanlat takes up is very illuminating: *“We’re in the middle of a battle right now - and it's likely to last for many years. But we must define this battle: we seek to live together as men and to be men. So it is through the search for this definition and action that would be truly human in this way humanism of course that we can consider our effort and our end. In other words, our end is to arrive at a real body made up where each person would be a man and where communities would also be human.”*

- The *principle of love as a necessity of being and dynamics of cohesion* between science, metaphysics, mysticism and economics. We our self have laid down this principle as the basis for research on the

⁶ Proceedings of this symposium on life sciences and management are published under the title: *la rupture entre l'entreprise et les hommes*, Québec-Amérique, 1985.

possibilities of emerging from the crisis in which the contemporary world is numb.

What is striking about these principles is that they do not offer themselves as purely ethical positions in an outright challenge to economic rationality, but as horizons, as seeds of horizons for the discovery of a place of questioning that would link scientific disciplines to each other and open them to a new meaning in relation to the mental universe of the contemporary world. In essence, these principles pose a radical requirement: that of generating a new order of imagination through which ethics and economics would be articulated in a more fertile way for human destiny.

The problem we are deploying here is part of this global framework. It is in the name of this framework that she refuses to give in to the logic of moral Manichaeism and tries to ask the question of our being-in-the-world in a different way. From the moral level to the ontological level, it leads us to the second evidence that we now tackle.

I.2. Evidence of integration

The second evidence that we should discuss in order to better understand the issues of our problem is far deeper than moral Manichaeism. It deals with the need, urgency and legitimacy of the struggle to integrate moral values into economic thinking and economic practice. This is not mere evidence that man would state without believing too much, in a kind of laziness and numbness of intelligence; it is a fundamental and inextinguishable hope, a faith in man and a bet on his ability to organize the economic space on the basis of human values.

This experience, this faith, this bet ignite the great contemporary ethical discourse.

We find them in the whole fabric of the Church's social doctrine from the great social encyclicals of Leo XIII to *Populorum Progressio* of Paul VI and *Laborem Exercens* of John Paul II. In this discourse of the Church, economics is a dimension of the human being that must contribute to the well-being of all man, strengthen the spiritual vocation of humanity and fertilize the openness of men towards their fulfillment according to God's plan. The economy is not situated in a Manichean antagonism towards ethics but inscribed like this in an essential framework the relationship of man to God. What constitutes ethics and what constitutes economics is therefore part of the same principle of truth that makes man capable of God. The integration of ethics into economic logic is thus validated and demanded by this global vision of destiny: it is not a question of submitting to some externally laid moral precepts, but of entering into the dynamics of revelation where man is taken for his historical and existential wholeness at the same time as based on the foundation of transcendence.

The foundations are therefore of the order of a theology of man's relationship with God, theology whose framework involves the ideas of creation, fall, covenant, incarnation, redemption and eschatology. It is in this spiritual framework that lies the truth of man's destiny. Ethics is a way of being consistent with this truth. This is why it must be able to animate the economy as it animates the whole of the intention that measures man in the words of God (to use a word from Pierre Emmanuel). Thus, the relationship between ethics and economics reveals itself as an organic relationship constituting individual and community experience, constituting culture and the very being of civilization.

The reference to God and Christ aside, the great cries of alarm found in the analyses of the Club of Rome follow the same mental pattern that

of developing a global vision of the world where ethics and economics would be articulated harmoniously. Whereas in the discourse of the Church the frame of thought is essentially theological and spiritual, we find ourselves here before a discourse whose central concern is man (his destiny, his future, his fulfillment). It is in his name that the folly of scientific progress and the logic of an economy disconnected from the human sense are challenged. What is to be noted here is that the man in the name of whom we speak is set as an unmistakable foundation that imposes itself on the ethical sensitivity and sense of responsibility of every human being. It seems that it is common sense and cannot be questioned as the basis of an existential attitude of taking charge of the destiny of all. The very fact that the Club of Rome feels invested in the task of thinking about the future of the human species is significant in this respect: it implies a concrete universality of the intention to be a man that no human being can dispute. Ethics is a matter of this intention and its accomplishment. It is to this extent that it must be at the heart of the effort and awareness of humanization of economic practice. The moral values edvating by which contemporary existence is measured reveal their scope only in this essential light that emerges from the very idea of Man today. Whether or not one is for the analysis of the Club of Rome, whether one seeks to relativise or reject its diagnosis on the present world, one does not share less the meaning of life that is the basis of its inspiration. It is even on behalf of this base that one believes itself entitled to challenge its analyses, as does the Club of Lyndon Larouche's life.

It should be noted that the same pattern of analysis ethically structures the debates concerning "North-South" relations. Whether it is the theory of dependence, the theory of unequal exchange or the theory of marginalization of the third world, whether it is the criticism of capitalism or the challenge of its dominating and imperialist essence,

whether it is even the discourse of self-justification in which one defends the benefits and benefits of the current economic system, everything seems to be supported by the hope of a life form that is inherently fulfilling. Man seems the foundation, the priority, the basic conviction, the humus of duty-to-be where ethics takes place as fertilization energy for a more human sensibility and another human sense. In the very development of the North-South project, the economy seems to be addressed only as a reality that can be standardized by ethics. It has reality only in the global dynamics of the human being. It is in fact contested only because it exorbitates itself from this dynamic to develop its own logic, its own rationality, its own vision of the world where Man no longer has room. As long as she sanctifies herself and fetishizes herself by forgetting her instrumental character in front of Man, she derails. And the North-South relations are for many a sign of this derailment, of the oblivion of mankind in favor of economic interests.

The North-South debates thus reveal a global vision of the world where ethics has a central place: that of restoring to Man the human measure of himself, of his aspirations, of his quests, of his power to be deeply habitable to himself.

Through the three types of discourses that we have just presented as an example, the same basic conviction: the need, urgency and fertility to integrate ethics into the economy in the name of a global vision of the world and of man.

Apparently, nothing is wrong with such a just claim, supported by such unmistakable facts that fall within the deadlocks of the world economic order. Apparently, everything contributes to the Church's reason to constantly remind the spiritual destination of man, the Club of Rome to

make us aware of the risks that our idea of progress poses to us today, to the North-South debates of recasting our idea of the economy on a fertile and humanizing normativity. Is this not our concern to all to promote secular values of human depth, dignity, freedom, conviviality, truth, joy and happiness? Is it not our concern to all that man is not dehumanized, instrumentalized and annihilated in its essence by a mortal logic?

We fear that all these sublime intentions will mask something fundamental in the relationship between ethics and the economy today. On a good note, the discourse we have just mentioned in presenting the evidence of the integration of ethics in the economy is part of the overall atmosphere already perceptible in moral Manichaeism. That is, the atmosphere in which ethics is credited with a favourable prejudice and the economy instrumentalized in relation to man. This discourse alone captures only one aspect of economic logic: the aspect by which it gives its side to criticism of ethical imperatives.

It does not account for the trial that the emergence of the economic organization as it has emerged since the end of the feudal structures of the world is ethical. It seems that from the outset, this dimension of the question is being removed in the name of an essentialism that poses ethical values and norms as paradigms in a global idea of man (an idea that is eventually absolutized in ethical models). To this extent, ethics are posed as part of the very essence of man, it is an ontological structure without which the very idea of man collapses and vaporizes. On the other hand, the economy as it is organized today as the centre of a specific mode of production appears to be a pure accident of history, an instrument that can flourish us if it is ethically used or be fatal if we continue to submit to its own logic.

In such a vision of things, the relationship between ethics and economics is not considered in its most radical extent or scope: those where the economy challenges ethics and arises itself as an ethical field within a new imagination, within a new relationship to the world and to being.

When you do not grasp such an issue, you are exposed to a triple risk.

The first risk is *ethical substantialism*. It is the temptation to give ethics the status of a cold complex of dogmatically immutable norms imposed on the individual in a given ideological system.

The second risk is *economic substantialism*. It is the temptation to see the economy as a closed world wrapped in itself and shielded in its relentless logic, as a monolithic reality that is organized around immutable laws of profitability, profit, interest, pragmatic management, conquering expansion of the market according to the imperatives of struggle and rational organization of work.

The third risk is the *reification of the relationship between ethics and economics*. It is the temptation to compare ethics and economic reality according to a logic that sets them once and for all in a rigid framework where one decides, ideally, what ethics should give to the economy and what the economy must become in order to be fertilized by ethics.

These three risks actually return to the temptation to return to moral Manichaeism. It cannot therefore be said that they are a fatality linked to the speeches we have considered above (Church speeches, Club of Rome speeches and North-South debates). If we have mentioned them, it is in fact for the corollaries that are related to them and which are particularly dangerous for a good understanding of the issue of the relationship between ethics and economics.

The first corollary is the *ideologization of the problem of relations between moral values and economic logic*. This is the danger of substituting ethical dynamics for a violent ideological dogmatism that is supposed to rule the entire order of the world.

The second corollary is the *absolute desire for harmony and synthesis*. It is an act of faith in the integration of ethics into the economy without prior questioning of the major issues implemented by the concrete confrontation of ethical realities and economic realities.

Through the above risks and their corollaries, it is clear that the evidence of the integration of ethics in the economy is problematic and requires further reflection. It is precisely problematic because it does not highlight the right of the economy to be an all-encompassing reality, its essence of “the wheel of destiny of modernity”, for Kolm’s expression.

However, it is on this scale that philosophical reflection comes into play to show that in the face of ethics as a vision of the world, economics is also a vision of the world, a radical vision that conditions the very destiny of modernity.

It is understandable that the issue of the relationship between ethics and economics is an antagonism between two global dynamics of being and not a fight between two monolithic substances to be defined in their reified essence. We mean that below positions for or against economic logic looms a whole area of metaphysical option and a whole ontology. On the one hand there is the vision of all those for whom the deep fabric of destiny is spiritual and engages a certain recognition of God's transcendence, the transcendence of the idea of Man, the transcendence

of others or the transcendence of morality. On the other hand, there are all the metaphysics of immanence that seek to base the fabric of fate on the concrete future of conflicts in the social relations of production. Between these two extremes, a whole diorama of synthesis and multiple harmonization flourishes. From this ontological perception of the world depends on the vision of man who is placed at the centre of the perception of ethics and economics: man as a whole animated by the breath of God, man as the fruit of his historical production conditions, man as a mixture of transcendence and immanence whose creativity secretes the ethical order and the economic order.

In order to understand what is at stake in contemporary ethical models in the face of economic ideology, it is the whole ontological and anthropological framework thus drawn that is presupposed: where two worldviews are articulated and configured, the fight of which is the very fabric of our destiny. Ethics and economics thus clash as two vital dynamics in which the very meaning of our future is committed. Let us now consider this dimension of the problem.

Chapter II

PLACES AND STAKES OF ETHICAL MODELS

AND CONTEMPORARY ECONOMIC IDEOLOGY

In order to better conduct the continuation of our analyses, we will now address the reality of contemporary economic ideology in its opposition to concrete ethical models. This will help us to better clarify our major thesis at the ontological and anthropological level.

We articulate our thinking in the following way: we will first grasp the background blades and the ontological foundations of contemporary ethical systems, and then we will kill economic ideology in the face of these systems.

II.1. Contemporary ethical models: ontological foundations, background blades and essential questions.

What structures and what basic assumptions are the fields of ethical models being configured today?

To answer this question, it is necessary to distinguish between three orders of reality that determine in our opinion the organization of any ethical model at present: spiritual reality in the religious and metaphysical sense of the term, psychic reality in the sense of psychoanalysis and material reality in the acceptance given to it by Marxist-inspired thought.

To a large extent, the great contemporary ethical models are defined in the weighting and dosage they make of the articulation between these three orders of reality.

ethics of transcendence

When spiritual reality is laid as the foundation of the world-to-world and a guide to vital practice, we are faced with an ethical model articulated on the idea of transcendence. The art of living and concrete

conduct are illuminated here either by a divine revelation condensed into a religious doctrine, or by the gradual discovery of a metaphysical world that gives being and value to man's experience. The relationship to others and the foundation of the being-together are then solidified by a higher knowledge: the light of the divine and the warmth of the metaphysical world. From this point of view, ethical life is dominated by two categories of structures.

- Religious structures. We mean all the background blades that constitute the ethical backbone formed by the great spiritual paradigms of humanity, the great religious figures who, even today, energize our imagination: Gautama, Christ, Muhammad, Krishna, etc. Many of the founding values and norms of our ethical destiny are strongly dominated by the energy released by these high-profile religious figures. Whether it is truth or love, whether it is the coherence between being and saying or inner liberation, whether it is justice or de-conditioning in the face of any form of slavery, all the tuff of what we put at the center of our idea of man connects us to the religious paradigms of our human conscience.

- Philosophical structures of transcendence. These are above all ethical dynamics related to what Mr. Richir called the Platonic establishment of philosophy. Here all forms of ethics are taken into account, organizing around great ideals to be realized, which thus share the grandeur and scintillation of an idea world as in Plato's philosophy. Many of our values related to the transcendentals of being (unity, truth, beauty and goodness) fall within this philosophy. Apart from this transcendence of the Idea, which remains essentially a vertical transcendence, other transcendences project themselves into a secularized will for eschatology, into utopias fertilized by the desire of the new heavens and a new earth.

It is around these religious and metaphysical structures that two great contemporary models in the ethical field are organized:

- The Judeo-Christian model

This is assumed by the discourse of the Church and works by taking charge of great dynamics of biblical revelation.

We have already outlined above the main thrusts of this model when we presented the Church's discourse on the evidence of the integration of ethics in the economy. It is not a question of coming back here. What should be added, however, is that this model favours the biblical patterns of human consciousness only to the extent that they allow it to illuminate the psychic reality and material reality that we will talk about later? Thus, the Church can avail itself of punctuating a message that concerns every man in the depths of him and commits the contemporary world to live in God's plan.

- The new religious currents

We can say that this Judeo-Christian model is now part of a larger constellation: that of religious currents that take the transcendent world seriously enough to lay it as the basis for a global organization of human life, individual interiority and the fabric of collective existence. We are thinking in particular of the following phenomena:

(a) The rise of Muslim fundamentalism that chants the beauty of sacrifice to win the other world, which aspires to constitute a way of life whose faith in God would be the home of meaning and universal truth.

b) Bahai's global faith and his plan to radically transform society from the sense of transcendence (which implies a spiritual solution to the great economic problems of our time).

c) Purely philosophical models inspired by the Judeo-Christian vision of the world without being subservient to the total ambition of churches and religious currents. We refer here, purely as an illustration:

- to the ethical possibilities involved in the philosophy of action as Thought by Maurice Blondel around the patterns of immanence that culminates, in its very dynamics, in the admission of transcendence and the lived experience of this fertilizing transcendence;
- to the ethics contained in Henri Bergson's *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, a philosophy that thinks of the human values of freedom and justice by radicalizing them until, by their authenticity and depth, they break the framework of immanence in which they unfold to open themselves to an order of being that is more than human;
- to the personalist ethic of Emmanuel Mounier, a thought whose fundamental ambition is to capture the person in his total fulfillment and spiritual orientation;
- to the ethical aims of the metaphysics of the I-You as for Martin Buber and to the discovery of moral values based on reflection on the faces of others in Emmanuel Levinas;
- to the critique of science, economics and contemporary ideologies in Pierre Emmanuel's poetic vision of the world (which leads to an ethic of interiority, freedom and conviviality).

In these ethical dynamics, the ambition is not really to present a total vision of the world whose transcendent is the corner stone, but to liberate a permanent questioning that structures man, others and the absolute in a model of being that is dynamic in discovering a meaning other than the idolatry of matter in a theory based on the social relations of production. The model here is hermeneutic of meaning: it implies that man is always more than man and that he has an irreducible destiny to the conditions and conditionings of his material existence. Hence the primacy of the spiritual as the seed of transcendence in the physical experience, as a power of transfiguration of material experience in view of a deeper, truer, more human existence.

In the two forms of the model of transcendence that we have just presented, the instance of the spiritual clearly appears as this in relation to what ethics defines itself. It is therefore on the foundations of an ontology and an anthropology of transcendence that the truth of ethics is based. It is not a set of abstract norms and precepts, but the dynamics of a faith in transcendence that is realized in the concrete by a vital attitude.

B. Ethics of the psychic forces of being

Let us now consider the ethical models whose centre of semantic organization is the psychic reality. We refer to this term as a set of worldviews that do not refer to the transcendent absolute or a meta-historic foundation. Instead of thinking of the human in a spiritual dynamic, they take man in the concrete of his experience where realities are revealed that are not only within the material sphere but presuppose the energy of another reality: psychic reality.

To illustrate this worldview, we will cite only two fundamental examples that have dominated many philosophical and ethical debates in contemporary thought.

Freudian psychoanalysis first. If we take all the assumptions of its topical and its economic, we realize that they give figure to a whole ethical vision centered on the dynamics of desire, on the archaeological quest for an upstream meaning discovered in a process of regression with a view to a therapeutic of the whole personality. The subject integrates into his consciousness the meaning thus discovered and thus restores the fundamental balances of his being-in-the-world. The discovery of the unconscious and the effort to clear its principles of action therefore tend only to a clearer awareness of the situation of man in his lived universe. It is in this that they implement an ethic based on

the requirement of meaning, on a will for human truth. Whatever the philosophical limits and explanatory inadequacies of Freudian patterns, we can consider that their background blades release a particularly fertile way of life: an ethic informed by the person's awareness of his being-in-the-world. The model that emerges from such a worldview does not invalidate the content of moral values defended by the previous model, it merely provides them with a psychic pattern of explanation and a non-metaphysical justification. But this change in perspective has far more radical practical consequences. Instead of being a categorical imperative guaranteed by the solidity of the transcendent world, ethics becomes the tragic fate of a personality struggling with ferocious forces in and out of itself, with carnivorous powers from which he must triumph through an energy of conscience and sublimation.

The poet Pierre Jean Jouve gives a very striking description of this ontological condition:

“Modern man has discovered the unconscious and its structure; he saw there the impulse of the eros and the impulse of death knotted together, and the face of the world of The fault, I mean the world of man, is definitely changed. The relationship between guilt - the fundamental feeling at the heart of every man - and the initial entanglement of the two capital instincts will no longer be delineated. Nothing will make us forget that we are insoluble conflict between two lines, one relating to the warmth of being, to the other the rational development of the person, and that an intimate break-up (because it took a lot to force us to escape animal determination) remains always possible as a threat to our inner life⁷.”

⁷ P.J. JOUVE, *Inconscient, spiritualité, catastrophe*, in *Noces*, suivi de *Sueur de sang*, Paris, Gallimard, 1966, p. 140,

In the face of such a tragic and threatened condition, ethics offers itself as a dynamic of love participating in a desire for the emancipation of man. Maurice Dufour insisted on this point, psychoanalysis does not enclose man in the blindness of impulse forces, in the pure energy of sex and desire. Referring to a word from Freud himself, he points out that “in the name of Eros (...), psychoanalysis does not speak of sex but of love⁸”. And what is love in such a context if not the focus of an ethic of man's relationships with himself, others and the world. Ontological necessity of the fight against disaster always possible (the explosion of personality at the individual and cultural level), it is the power of consciousness, for a more human life, freer. It is energy, that is, force tamed for an end. Thus, it constitutes the very center of the moral will it organizes by articulating the forces of depth on the sublimating intention of consciousness.

It seems clear to us that through the discovery of the universe of psychic reality, psychoanalysis reveals the ontological requirement of an anti-disaster force: power, the power of love. It is in this that it is the basis of an ethic.

If this is the case, we cannot simply oppose it to the ethical dynamics of transcendence mentioned above. Between their intention and its own project, the metaphysical differences articulate the same will for human truth to which we cannot be insensitive in the reflection we undertake in this symposium.

This does not mean, however, that we seek to harmonize psychoanalysis as a global vision of the world with Christian metaphysics and philosophies of transcendence. We are too sensitive to

⁸ M. DUFOUR, Synthèses, in *Rupture...*, *op. cit.*, p. 427.

the complexity of these systems of thought to engage in such simplification, with dummy synthesis and specious compromises. What we are trying to do is to show that from the point of view of ethical questioning and the search for an art of living, a common vector of the quest for humanity is discovered that allows us to better understand the fundamental issue of contemporary ethical issues. Such an approach is fully justified in our reflection because it will help us to identify the structural patterns of ethics that economic ideology challenges in the name of its own worldview.

The second example we will present to shed light on the ethical dynamics based on psychic reality is that of the anthropology of René Girard. The ethical strength of this anthropology has not been sufficiently used today. However, it is an operation worth trying and which would allow us to see how, from a fertile attention to psychic dynamics, we can manage to rediscover the reality of the spiritual and establish a humanly fruitful ethic.

As we know, Girard's anthropology starts with the analysis of literary texts from which emerges the general theory of mimetic desire. Theory that, generalized within the framework of mythical narratives, led to the discovery of violence as the founding process of culture and being-together.

Starting from the assumption of real violence that would extend into symbolic forms in the history of culture, Girard manages to pose the victim process (the famous theory of the scapegoat) as a reality inherent in religious energy, as the center of cultural experience. Religion and its rituals are thus at the centre of the organization of culture and society. In keeping with the very history of religion and cultural violence, Girard discovers that the overall intention of the Christian religion as

manifested in the life and death of Jesus is to put an end to the process of violence that characterizes cultural experience. In doing so, the destiny of Jesus concerns the very substance of all the lived desire and the whole future of culture. It establishes a dynamic of anti-violence that completely recasts the human being on the energy of love.

What is remarkable about Girard is the dynamic balance he establishes between the psychic (the domain of mimetic desire, great mythical forces that structure the background of violence in being) and the spiritual (the emergence of The Christian energy at the heart of human life). Between the psychic starting point and the spiritual culmination point, the relationship is a constructive dialectic that gives the consciousness a great confidence in itself: in its power of humanity and in its capacity for love.

From Freudian psychoanalysis to girardian anthropology, the essential fabric of ethics is therefore that of love, so to speak. More than the foundations that support such a vision of the world, it is this framework that matters to us here, because it shows that the energy at work in the psychic background where desire (the impulse dynamic of the eros and foundational violence) is in action can lead to the discovery of the spiritual horizon, that of the experience of the All-Other.

Ethics should then be interpreted as an art of living and a style of being animated by this intention.

We have led Freud and Girard to areas that they explicitly do not haunt as thinkers. From a philosophical point of view, this is not a betrayal or an undue recovery. It is only an ambition to push their thoughts towards their most radical implications, those which concern the meaning

inherent in their approach when we question it from an ethical point of view.

From this perspective of a philosophical interpretation, two conclusions are necessary.

The first is that we must be careful not to make the distinction between the spiritual and the psychic a radical separation between two topicals. Above all, we must see energy bodies in a single movement that philosophical effort exudes and defines as a quest for meaning.

The second conclusion is that ethics must be enshrined in this movement as a concrete practice that underlies the energy ontology where the psychic can invest himself in the spiritual and the psychic.

The following word of the poet Pierre Jean Jouve then becomes the key to an ontological interpretation of ethics:

“As all things now must obey the form of man's psyche, but as we are far from knowing what separates the most universal tendencies from the unconscious with spiritual formations that we hold to be the highest-like eroticism, we will not cease to notice -permeate the sublime acts of the saints - we can almost conjecture that the series of phenomena is circular and that the lowest in these privileged natures instantly joins the highest”⁽¹¹⁾.

This means that the task of ethics is not to offer a range of definable moral values one by one, but to generate an energy that helps man to stand together in the contradictory determinations and postulations of his own being. The art of living is then aware of the ontological structuring of man, of the articulation of ourselves around the tensions within our own heart.

In the sheer immanence of ethics

Let us now turn to the third model of structuring ethical dynamics: the forces of pure immanence. We put two very different forms of reflection under this heading.

First, the philosophical variant which, under the impetus of Marx's analyses of the social relations of production, leads to an ethic of the liberation of man for a better society unchained in relation to capital and organized for the total development of the human being. As Guy Haarcher showed in his book, *The Ontology of Marx*, there is not here an outright reduction of man to the material conditions of his existence, but a global intention to give humans all his power of freedom, initiative and happiness in a humanly organized society. The ethics that are implemented here go far beyond the framework of strict materialism to embrace the whole project of Marxian ontology. This project, far from being pure materialism, is structured in complex ways at three distinct levels:

the Hegelian base on the philosophy of history;

the Unterbau or whole conflicts in social relations and material interests;

the Ueberbau or superstructure, determined forms of consciousness, whether practical (law, state and political institutions), theoretical (art, religion, philosophy) or prático-theoretical (ideology⁹).

If we take this thought in its complex tessiture, we cannot avoid asking the ethical question from a different point of view than that of forces and production relationships. We will then take as a key to reading the

⁹ G. HAARSCHER, *L'Ontologie de MARX*, Editions de l'Université Libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, 1977.

question posed by Haarscher, a question in which the underground rationality emerges, which, ontologically, animates the work of MARX:

“Can’t we, Haarscher asks, suspect Marx of having presupposed under the rationality of economic development (...) another, more fundamental rationality, a process of spiritualization in the ultimate untenable instance based on a problem of ‘productive forces’? Between emancipation as Marx thinks and ‘historical materialism’ (itself comprising two levels, that of productive forces and that of the struggles of the classed), is there not an abyss of which Ontological reflection allows us to account, while explicit methodological scientism is in this perspective, infinitely referred from one to the other of its presuppositions, from materialism to spiritualism. , from the economy to emancipation, without him being able to hope to emerge from this ‘tourniquet’ for someday, since the very place of the debate underlying the problem is recused in the very moment when it makes its effects felt?
10”

This question is important for understanding the ethical model of Marxian inspiration. It shows that between the stage of pure economic analysis in *The Capital* or the *Grundrisse* and the thought of emancipation where history is stretched towards its human fulfillment, the link cannot be established without a coherent ontological principle. This link exists, according to Haarscher: it is the ontology of the activity (an ontology already implemented in Marx’s use of A. Smith’s “*original State of things*” as the standard for judging economic relations).

¹⁰ G. HAARSCHER, *L’Ontologie de MARX...op.cit.*

What, by the way, is this ontology if not the basis for an ethic in which the action of the individual tends to accomplish the generic essence of his social being in activities consistent with the immanence of his own goals? Activities which, according to Marx, are not means to obtain something else, but to accomplish oneself in this act considered as its own purpose, as a way of coinciding with the authentic essence of the human race.

To think of the activity from such a perspective is to engage all the criticism of capitalism on the path of ethical fulfilment of man and society. In this way, a process of depth is set in motion that is not unrelated to a dynamic of spiritualization. Even if in Marx this process refuses to use metaphysical and meta-historical entities to grasp man in the concrete of his production relationships, it is linked to the needs of the being that engage a reflection on the spiritual destiny of man. It can therefore be said that, even in a materialistic thought, the use of history and the profound realities of human experience leads us to ethics as a complex dynamic that propels man towards a utopia to come, towards a qualitative elsewhere (which is the very essence of any quest for transcendence).

You will have noticed that we have not used here some fundamental elements of the Marxist vulgate:

- conscience and class struggle;
- the need for a revolutionary method of struggle that would shift the “*critico-practice* dynamic of history” (the expression is from A. Labriola) that is Marxism to real change in social relations;
- the place of the working class in the revolutionary process.

It is not that these elements do not deserve some attention, but they do not particularly concern our project to look for the background blades

of contemporary ethical models. Through the use of the ontology of activity, we wanted to avoid the agonistic ideology that pits proletarians and bourgeois in the orthodox interpretation of Marxism, in order to grasp, at the very heart of Marx's thought, the movement that poses man in the living fabric of human society. At this fundamental level, ethics asserts itself not as a system of anti-bourgeois values, but as a quest for fulfillment through action. It's this quest that interests us.

It interests us because it allows us to overcome the opposition between what we have called scientific materialism and what we refer to, with a little condescension, by the term utopian socialism.

However, at the level of ethical models, what is at stake in this utopian socialism is the fulfilment of man in an action guided and enlightened by the values of emancipation and justice, freedom and humanity.

He therefore participates in the same ontological quest project whose complexity goes beyond the scope of pure materialism. In particular, he follows the same pattern of alienation as so-called scientific materialism, with the fundamental intention that Paul Ricœur very well defined when he writes:

“The great idea of the 19th century socialists was clear; despite their considerable doctrinal opposition, Fourier, Proudhon, Marx and all the Socialists agreed to situate the essential evil of the trading and industrial society in the private ownership of the means of production; they saw in it the origin of this essential ‘alienation’: the separation between the hard-working man and the product of his work that had become ‘thing’, merchandise, capital; at the same time history received a task: ‘reappropriation,’ reconciliation between work and thing, its product; the means and structures of the just city could differ considerably; the aim was there: the ‘return’, the ‘reintegration’, as The

Young Marx said, the ‘reconciliation’ of man with the nature of ‘man with man by means of the suppression of economic alienation¹¹.”

There is, therefore, a way to say that the ethics inherent in socialist ambition feed on an ontology of the irreducible disalienation to ideological materialism. This ethic is now woven by a whole network of aspirations for justice, solidarity and sharing. Even though the economic problem has shifted today from the problems of a production capitalism to consumer capitalism that requires a thorough reflection on the ethics of needs, the fabric of moral values of which utopian socialism has been the torch still continues to act in our contemporary societies. It is part of the mental patterns that make freedom the center of our vision of man and the geometric place of our claims.

For falsifying the inherently human intention of the ontology of activity, the ideological variants of political Marxism have poured into a hollow phraseology that is philosophically sterile. Even if they advocate in pure theory the ethical values of freedom, emancipation and the fullness of humanity, they are not of much help in a philosophical approach to ethical dynamics. The narrowness of their visions of the world empties the ethics of its ontological juice and vaporizes its humanizing ambition. That is why we do not ask them here about their ethical meanings in a philosophical problem.

Much more fruitful, much more complex and much more philosophically challenging are the forms of ethics that, rejecting materialistic dogmatics and its reductive mold, base their dynamics on the notion of existence without going as far as the invocation of divine

¹¹ P. RICOEUR, « Les formes nouvelles de la justice sociale », in *Christianisme social*, numéro 7-8, p. 453.

transcendence. These existential ethics are for the most part atheist humanisms that aim at the fulfillment of man in all his virtualities of freedom.

We will only evoke these ethics through the philosophy of existence that atheist existentialism has deployed during this century, a philosophy in which all the fundamental debates of our time have been addressed without reference to an absolute religious type. It is not necessary to recall here all that this philosophy has been concerned with man and his development. What is important to note is the desire to take root in an ontology far removed from the currents we have presented so far. It is also the convergence of concerns between these currents and existential philosophy despite the difference in ontological foundations.

This means that below all the areas that explicitly base their positions, contemporary philosophies meet in another, more fundamental area. This is not the order of the answers to be given to ethical problems, but of the order of questioning about ethics itself. It is a desire to really know where ethics derives its power to impose itself as a necessary discourse in the fabric of any philosophical reflection. It is thus the result of an ontology of questioning that eventually discovers that at the bottom of all research rumbles and burns a single question: the question of man.

Because it crosses us from side to side and worries us deeply, we have made this issue the ethical charter that unites nations in a single declaration where philosophies meet and try to pacify their theoretical impulses through the quest for a common existential practice The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Whatever differences appear in the interpretation of this charter, whatever the concrete violations of

a particular article of this charter in a particular country, it is essential that it still exists as a witness to a certain common vision of the world.

It is also essential that this basis itself is problematic and always questioned, always constantly affirmed in theory and practically flouted. This means that the Man who today constitutes the geometric place of our ethical quests does not have the status of a dogma or an absolute certainty: he is truly a question for himself and for the future that we are preparing for him.

In our opinion, it is from this problematic status of man that contemporary ethical models must be perceived. They will then appear as practical answers to the question of Man today, to the question that every man is for himself and for others, to the question that all men are for themselves in the fundamental dynamics of their destiny.

At this point in our reflection, we are already detecting what constitutes the major challenge of the confrontation between contemporary ethical models and economic ideology. We believe that, in the end, economic ideology tends to invalidate the question of man as a question and, therefore, to reject the forms of ethical response given to it and the ontologies that articulate them (whether it is the ontology of immanence, the ontology of transcendence or their encounter in mixed types and multiple synthesis).

That is what we will try to show in the rest of our analyses.

II.2. Economic ideology and its challenges

When we talk about economic ideology, we are referring not only to the narrow field of dealing with issues of money and economic activity, but a whole process of being that is part of the mindset characteristic of the

last centuries of our history and today culminates in a certain worldview.

Historically, the advent of economic ideology is linked to two events that are well known to us. It is first linked to the collapse of the feudal world and the emergence of capitalism as a conception of life. At this delicate stage in history from which all the destiny of modernity had to depend, a radical rupture occurs in the conception of the economy. From a multidimensional economy oriented by “multiple purposes at stake¹²”, we move on to another type of rationality strongly well defined by Alain Chanlat:

“The birth of capitalism (...) and its accelerated development (...) cause a fundamental and serious break in the social organization. Economic rationality, with the development of the market, becomes more and more autonomous from other rationalities and ends up imposing its own logic on them. This rationality favours profit, profitability, production, and focuses on the problems of optimization of means. As a result, it will give precedence to the CALCULATION and MEASUREMENT.”

The first characterization of economic ideology is revealed here. It consists of a dynamic of deconstruction and reorganization of the social. What is unstructured is a world with multiple joints where economics is just one dimension among others in a complex game that decides on highly complex goals themselves. As for the reorganization process, it consists in laying down economic rationality as the centre of gravity of the social system. It is not a simple subordination of all dimensions of the social to the economic dimension, but a gradual evacuation of any value specific to these dimensions: their juice, their intention, their anthropological scope. Thus emptied of their meaning and their energy,

¹² A. CHANLAT, "Les Sciences de la vie et la gestion", in *La rupture...*, p. 16.

all these dimensions of the social will gradually be given their being and their essence by economic rationality. From the centre of gravity, it becomes the Absolute in the strongest sense of the term, the creative, legitimizing and giving body of meaning.

From this perspective, society's fundamental problem is that of production, profitability, profit, and, increasingly today, consumption. Economic rationality imposes on society the logic of work (a logic which, as O. Aktouf points out, condenses into management and its essential aims: "to dominate, produce, control and, we would add, 'demean' human work¹³").

If we have noted this first characterization of economic ideology, it is not simply to recall all the well-founded and justified criticisms that economic logic is currently the subject of. Rather, it is to start from them and situate economic ideology in the face of the ethical models defined above (all these models which we have seen are part of, in one central question: the question of what man is for himself).

It is precisely this question that economic ideology is evacuating. By placing economic rationality at the centre of the future and organization of society, by absolutizing its point of view to make it the sole centre of perception of reality, it disintegrates man as an idea and destroys all sense of man as a human person and community. More to the most, the only reality concerning man and men will be that conferred on them by economic rationality. Ethical and aesthetic questions, metaphysical and theological questioning, are thus removed from the field of relevance of reality. There is also any concern about the general significance of economic activity for humanity. The essential is no longer man, neither

¹³ O. ATJOUF, "Apropos du ménagement", in *La Rupture...*, p. 364.

his life, nor his future, nor his destiny, nor his development, but the logic of the market and work. This logic which, in the words of Max Weber, “has regard only for things, none for people or for the duties of brotherhood or piety, nor for the original human relations specific to personal communities. ¹⁴”

This leave of absence from man by economic ideology allows us to make a double distinction.

It first distinguishes us between what economic ideology means to itself and what the economy is like as a practical field where people, aware of a number of fundamental problems facing them, seek to give a human answer to the crucial question of their lives: hunger.

“Hunger (...) protection against Too Cold and Too Hot, from flooding and fire, from all diseases that affect oneself, your loved ones, your young children. But also hunger for comfort, calm, ‘good things’, mobility, leisure. Hunger, again, of knowledge, culture, beauty. Hunger, finally, of dignity, responsibility, freedom, friendship, love. And then also hungry for accomplishment, fullness, dedication, surpassing. And justice.” ¹⁵

Distinct from economics as a practical field, economic ideology must also be dissociated from economic science when it does not itself pour into ideological dogmatism. This means that there is still an intra-economic ground that receives the question of man and can integrate it into his own journey. That is why Manichaeism seemed to us to be fundamentally reductive.

¹⁴ Cité par M. DUFOUR, in *La Rupture...*, op. cit.

¹⁵ S.-G. KOLM, op. cit., p. 38.

It is also for this reason that the evidence of integration seemed worthy of great attention in thinking about ethics and the economy.

The double distinction we have just made is right, but it is dangerous. It is right insofar as it relativizes any temptation to radically oppose ethics and economics. Dangerous, it is because it risks making us forget the concrete force of economic ideology today its character of ubiquity and totality that places it in the depths of the current conception of the world and establishes it as a dynamic constitutive of our being-in-the-world in times of neo-liberalism.

Ubiquity and totality. These qualities are of paramount importance to our purpose. They mean that far from being a pure theory or a clearly conceptualized discourse that one would find in a particular author, economic ideology offers itself in a triple form that imposes it on us as an existential attitude, as a way of being and living the present day of our condition.

First, economic ideology is present among us as a mold a priori. In this form, it is the concrete space where we live. It does not necessarily need to be theorized to demonstrate its effectiveness.

Secondly, economic ideology is also among us as a principle of structuring our interiority. It is therefore the representational prism that we often hide from ourselves by the very abstract reinforcement of our need for ethics. By this status of the principle of interiority, it marginalizes and gags the other forces of our being.

Third, economic ideology is the essence of the global organization we have given to our world.

Since this is so, economic ideology can only be the very refusal of the use of a system of moral values. This means that in the form of life

imposed on us by the present world, in “inequality of all kinds that is not only of income or class, everyone tries to defend his position without the help of an absolute criterion to define what is right and what is wrong¹⁶”.

The three characteristics of the economic ideology that we have just presented already tell us the major issues that interest our thinking from the point of view of the framework in which we register (the ethical-economy relationship) and from the point of view of the confrontation between ethical models and economic ideology.

The first characteristic raises the question of the reality of man in the name of which ethical models raise their voice. What is this man, at a time when the economy is becoming the ideological center of existence and propelling, through his own logic, scientific and techno scientific research capable of questioning the ontological bases of homo sapiens? In the debates between ethics and the economy today, this question is the most radical and the most decisive from the point of view of philosophical reflection.

The second characteristic of economic ideology corresponds to another essential question: that of the relevance of the ontological foundations that ethical models give themselves at the very moment when economic ideology imposes its rationality as the ultimate foundation; as a total reason for the work throughout the social field. It is not only the being of man that is at stake in this question, but the overall structure of the relational fabric of the human being in the world.

The third characteristic of economic ideology corresponds to the question of the fertility of ethical models as they are configured today. Faced with the regime of being imposed by economic rationality in the most radical meaning that binds it to the research of science and

¹⁶ A. SAUVY, « L'évolution sociale et les formes nouvelles de la justice », in *Christianisme social*, 7-9, p. 441

political ideologies, is there still any sense in invoking the ethical parameters we have discussed above?

The questions we raise here are the substance of the lawsuit that economic ideology is bringing to ethical models today. From a philosophical point of view, it is not appropriate to evade or obscure them by applying the pattern of moral Manichaeism. In essence, whatever value judgment is made about economic ideology, it is good to take seriously the philosophical questions it raises. It is by confronting these issues with those articulated by ethical models that we can account for the real stakes of the relationship between economics and ethics in the contemporary world. We will then understand that through the complex network of relationships between them between ethical models and economic ideology, it is not possible not to address the question of the future that their confrontation commits us to build, the meaning and destiny it demands of our being-in-the-world. At this level, the challenge is to create a new order of the imagination and a new order of being based on the clear awareness that we will have of our condition.

Chapter III

SENSE AND DESTINY:

NEW STRUCTURES OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND NEW STRUCTURES OF BEING

Having identified the fundamental question to which all the other questions were leading, we will now gather a number of indications that could inform, guide and help us to think fertiley about the substance of our problem.

The first indication concerns the awareness that we must have the real structuring of our being-in-the-world from the point of view of the problem that concerns us here. When we talk about our destiny as men today, we must not limit the perception of ourselves to the ethics and models of being that it subsumes. Nor should we limit it to the worldview of economic ideology. Rather, it is necessary to be sensitive to the dialectic that chants the relationships between these two poles of our consciousness and composes the very fabric of our destiny. To try to reduce ourselves to the questions that ethics and its models pose to the economy and economic ideology is to risk missing the questioning substance that the economic order of the present imposes on us. To reduce ourselves to the only energy of economic ideology is to forget to be part of the fertility of history and in the great paradigms that gave shape to our moral conscience and our conscience at all. It is in our ability to be sensitive to the dialectic of ethics and economics that we can therefore think happily our existence today. We will then realize that this dialectic is the very drama of our consciousness, that it reveals in us tensions that we cannot overcome either by moral Manichaeism or by the principle of integration.

Tensions that we can only assume as tensions, which we can only resolve, for the moment at least, by making it the very place of our questions about the future, our reflection on ourselves, our desire to better understand and structure our being-in-the-world.

If we want to take seriously this structuring of the fabric of our existence, we will notice that this dialectic is itself very complex and that it builds a universe of complexities that are increasingly inextricable and more and more difficult to master.

The complexity of the ethical universe first. In our presentation of models where questions of moral values are integrated, we have been especially sensitive to the background blades that unite the ethical field around a fundamental intention. This does not mean that this unit of intent erases the conflicts of the foundations and the hermeneutic divergences in the reality between ethical models. Between the ethics of transcendence and the ethics of immanence, we feel that the relationship cannot be pure harmony or dummy synthesis, that it engages ideological passions where worldviews clash by wanting, each, to appropriate the monopoly and the fertility of ethical intention. In other words, at the very heart of the ethical experience is a tension between the land-use purpose of ethics and the particular visions of the world constructed in systems. It is thanks to this internal tension that we can relativize any desire to ideologize ethics as an existential field. It is enough to refer to the debates between psychoanalysis and Christian faith, between Christianity and Marxism, between Marxism and existential philosophy to be able to grasp the vanity that there would be to impose, an ethical model in a universal dogma. It is that, in the concrete, the ethical field is a field with multiple joints, a field whose complexity is linked to the diverse relationships between the spiritual world, the psychic world and the material world. Since human thought

has not yet succeeded in unraveling the tangle of relations between these three kingdoms of being, one cannot allow ourselves to reduce ethics to a single system of monolithic norms. Rather, the most fruitful possibility of understanding ethics is to ask it as a practical field of the question of man himself.

It is not just the complexity of the ethical field. There is also the economic world. If we remain sensitive to all the intellectual problems of relating economic practice, theories and ideology, we cannot resolve to make a global value judgment on the economy as such. We can certainly attack the aberrations of narrow economic rationality, but this is only one level of questioning. The most global aim should be the one that Serge Christophe Kolm calls the philosophy of economics: a goal that would try not only to present the grammar and internal semantics of economics, but to link it to the various fields of knowledge: psychology, sociology, anthropology, politics, ideology, epistemology, history, etc. It is in this complex texture of the philosophical approach that we truly grasp the poverty of meaning that suffers from any reductionism, be it moral or ideological. To avoid this trap of reductionism, we have chosen the angle of view of economic ideology ourselves in order to be able to update the ontological and anthropological issues that there are in economic practice.

When the ethics in the complexity of its being are posed in the face of the complexity of the economic field, the dialectic that opposes and unites them at the same time can only be a complex dialectic. Therefore, there are no summary value judgments, admiring or condemning passions, but rather the dynamics of questioning that push the mind to take root in their silt and to feed on it to reflect on the figure of destiny to give to the present and the future.

It is to this force of questioning that we have tried to make you sensitive throughout our reflection so far.

By undertaking to reflect from this perspective of questioning, we place our quest at the fundamental level of a research whose center is the problem of our destiny as a world, as a civilization. What exactly is it?

Above all, it is a question of understanding that the complex dialectic that opposes and unites ethical models and economic ideology has a dimension of global intelligibility of our being-in-the-world. In its essential joints, it means that we are living in a crucial time that requires a fundamental reflection on who we are, on what we want, on the meaning we want to give to our destiny.

Faced with this requirement, we cannot be satisfied with a Manichaeic logic or the evidence of integration. Rather, we must ask ourselves what dialectical antagonism between ethical models and economic ideology imposes on our understanding of ourselves, our structures of existence and our structures of consciousness.

Our understanding of ourselves. If we take seriously the essential meanings and the very status of economic ideology and link them to the status of ethical models, new structures of understanding our being-in-the-world come into play.

Instead of grasping ourselves in the tuff of mental systems imposed by philosophical systems, economic ideologies or fixed religious currents of thought, we will rather perceive ourselves following interrogative patterns that take into account both the demand for humanity posed by ethics and the refusal of man ideally ethical and falsely pure to economic ideology. Neither this refusal nor the requirement of ideal

humanity is immediately the answer to the question of our destiny. They only reveal the fact that this destiny is a problem and that we must now give an answer to the question of our being-in-the-world. This is a question that opens us deeply to ethical questions and concerns of economic ideology.

From the point of view of our understanding of ourselves, the answers we can give to the question of our destiny cannot be simple or monolithic answers. To be relevant, they must be aware of the complexity of the issues that raise them.

For our reflection, we design a horizon of responses that must be dominated by two vectors of thought. First vector: today we must rediscover the archaic background of our human consciousness; plunge back into the ethical and mythical silt that feeds the great spiritual paradigms of our life as men. The second vector is that we must have the courage to invent ourselves by our awareness of the deconstruction in which economic ideology plunges us. Far from wanting to lock ourselves in the age of nostalgia for the age-old foundations of our consciousness, we must also think about the future that is increasingly taking shape through the economy and all that it entails.

Deep down, we must be born today from the depths of our past and from the farthest of our future.

The deepest of our past, we grasp it in the first approximation in an old word of the philosopher Heraclitus, a word that Heidegger translates as “*man dwells, as long as he is a man, in The Proximity of the God.*”¹⁷

¹⁷ M. HEIDEGGER, *Lettre sur l'humanisme*, Aubier, 1983 (Edition bilingue)

It is a word rooted in the ancient sacred cosmogonies of ancient Egypt. This word can be interpreted in three different directions: either from the perspective of a theology of creation where the ontological patterns of paradise and eschatology are at work; either from an on-theological perspective where the other takes on-the-very status as supreme; either from the perspective of heideggerian questioning about the Being and the truth of being.

We will not go down the path of such interpretations. What is important to us is to know that the structure of our contemporary consciousness has a dimension of transcendence consciousness, the figure of which is the major paradigm of the god. How far this figure can take us, we will realize it when we root our vision of the problem in the tuff of the African global vision of man and the world, from time immemorial to the present day.

As much as the figure of god defines the rooting of our consciousness in the silt of a centuries-old spiritual and metaphysical tradition, as much as the figure of man structures the great ethical constellations that organize our imagination in the present. As we have already indicated, this is man as a hotbed of ethical dynamics and as he is challenged, challenged and erased by economic ideology. What characterizes the semantic configuration of our consciousness today, therefore, is the drama of a tension between the energy of the god in the sense that Heraclitus presents it and the questioning of man in a world where, increasingly, man becomes a question for man. What does this mean except that at the heart of our consciousness of being the semantic constellations characteristic of our ontological inscription in the human past require to be interpreted and rethought according to the new ontological condition that economic ideology has brought to the heart of contemporary experience. Whereas in the tradition animated by the

dynamics of the god the figure of man was relatively stable and clear insofar as it was based on the foundation of transcendence, our new condition imposes man as a question. *Our consciousness is thus aware of the question of man.* As such, it can subject to its critical sieve that conditions it as consciousness: the ethical and energy body of the economic ideology.

Since it is structured around the question that man is today for himself, our consciousness opens up to a possible horizon that can allow him to find answers to his question, clearings for his quest. It is therefore aware of one's own future as an opportunity to think of man on new bases that are neither only those of the "god" nor that of the negation of man. By this force which poses it as intentionality to a pure possibility of the future, it can be a force of new structures of existence, one where man is the future of man.

The problem of our time is indeed that of forging new structures of existence from the concrete structuring of our consciousness. It is not a question of fleeing the confrontation between ethics and economics by taking refuge behind an ethical angelism that would be nothing more than a spark of empty vows and dances beautiful illusions. Nor is it a question of denying the living forces of our consciousness by endorsing what is good-natured to call the death of man today. It is really a question of trying to invent the new form of our destiny through concrete choices clearly matured. Articulating our existence on the vital wisdoms of human traditions and on a positive and fruitful projection of ourselves in what we want as a concrete figure of our destiny, we could give the concrete experience the character of a constant and patient quest for the very meaning of our being-in-the-world. It is within such a quest that we can, through discussions and dialogues, decide the place to be given to ethics and the economy.

In other words, instead of locking ourselves into a dichotomous model that would force us to choose between ethics and economics, we must instead be a new framework of analysis whose centre is the meaning we want to give to our destiny.

The problem of meaning should therefore be the existential hollow where priorities are decided and essential dynamics are thought without which the very idea of human destiny loses its substance and the question of man its ontological relevance.

Previous considerations lead us to clarify even more the question of man and meaning. If, as we have seen, our consciousness is ontologically tense and seeks at the very depth of its tension to forge a new structure of being-in-the-world, the question becomes that of generating figures of having and figures of the value in line with what we project globally as a sense of our destiny.

Economics and ethics would then be faced with the task of defining themselves only according to the entire existential field that will be the field of our future. They could only be thought of in other dimensions of being where the major issues of our destiny are decided: science and politics. To this extent, it is the economic-ethical-science-political chain that would be invoked to properly ask the question of man and properly drawn the figure of the future.

The structure of the question of man becomes even more complex at this level: it combines the economic-ethical-science-political axis, the spiritual reality axis-psyche reality-material reality and the past-present-future axis in a global thought pattern that forbids us to resort to solutions that are too definitive and too peaceful in the face of man's question.

If we take philosophy as an angle of interpretation of the very complexity of the issue that concerns us here, we can dare a number of fermented assertions to guide reflection.

We will first say that instead of looking for piecemeal answers to this or that dimension of the question of man, we must now try to understand globally what this question means and to what it commits us to.

In such a disposition of mind, one cannot fail to discover that this question places us all in front of a new challenge: that of being able to manage the complexity of the contemporary world so that a new type of man may be born and strengthened. In the words of T. Hafsi, which we heard this morning, we are at a time in our history when a new paradigm of existence imposes on us the requirement to really see where we are and to seek to know what will happen to man in the invention of our future.

In accordance with the spiritual reality axis- psychic reality-material reality, it will then be a question of grasping what can, in the problem of man, bring to our questioning the illumination of the currents of thought that it is of particular interest.

The spiritual axis will help us to see to what extent religious dynamics are able to still act on the passionate substance of the human being and direct it towards a new dynamic of the value where man will give meaning to his destiny.

The psychic axis will help us, as Freud has seen, to better identify the forces of the depths that burn man and to oppose them the forces of consciousness so that the future of man is not too inhuman.

The material axis will help us to detect major conflicts at the level of production relationships and at the scale of all forms of inequality in the concrete structuring of the contemporary socio-economic space.

By combining these three axes in the same problem, we will then realize, as Edgar Morin has seen, that all these fronts of action converge towards a central problem: “generic modification of man”, “a reform of the human being” which must be “solved the problem of constitutive deficiencies”, “constitutional imbalance”.

Faced with this question, it will not be enough to invoke ready-made answers and models of the past, we will have to dare to do something new by putting ourselves up to the challenges that the present and the future pose to us. To this extent, the economic-ethical-science-political axis will make sense. Each of the links in this chain would be a knot of problems for the invention of our future.

Economy. It is in it and in the ideology that it secretes that we really realize the inadequacy of the idea of man on which we live today, of the structural volcano that is in the human being the confrontation of spiritual reality, psychic reality and material reality.

Science. It, perhaps, will be able to act on the ancient substance of our being-in-the-world and direct it towards a new destiny, towards other beaches of fulfillment. But this poses the major ethical problem of our time: how far and in the name of what order of worth can we go in the desire to transform the very essence of man? What is and what will be the ethics of this transformation?

Politics. “How to identify a policy of human reform (revolution)”¹⁸? How can we engage in a practice of political power that is sustained by the need for a radical change in the very being of man?

¹⁸ Edgard MORIN, *Introduction à une politique de l'homme*, Paris, Le Seuil, 1969 (Nouvelle édition augmentée d'une postface), p. 44. All the development we have just done is heavily dependent on the

Chapter IV

AFRICA and THE SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY BASE ECONOMY

Endogenous challenges and global perspectives

IV.1. The scope of the question

In reflecting on the economic situation of the current world order, two visions clash in the minds of Africans. The first is that of neoliberal globalization. Its experts, its griots and its defenders affirm that it is an unprecedented space for the production of wealth and an immense hope for planetary enrichment. She has to her credit not only to be heir to a long western economic tradition from which the prosperous nations of today have emerged, but also to have structured a living environment whose social values dominate the current world: values of work, organization, efficiency, creativity, innovation, demand for economic rights as well as political and cultural rights. Even more, it constitutes a bundle of dreams and utopias which today unite the whole of humanity by placing it under the sign of a victory over misery, poverty and impoverishment. Despite its internal weaknesses that it will learn to overcome little by little, the global system that it has helped to set up can be improved. It is the true framework for the development of peoples, with its essential dynamics based as much on interest, profit and competition as on the concern for collective enrichment, the need for the gathering of productive forces and the imperative of cooperation. inventive so as not to die in the game of global competition.

questioning that Morin deploys in his book. We take it on our own here insofar as it engages the substance of the ethical issue and the heart of the questions about economic practice today.

By linking in itself the will for effective rationality with the concern for prosperity, the tradition of which neoliberalism claims to assert itself as a true Way of Life: the road to a radiant future that the rich nations and the companies on which are base. founds this wealth trace for the whole humanity.

Since the collapse of communism and the disappearance of the Soviet Union, which contested it for world hegemony, this path no longer has an opponent to match its ambitions: it has become a veritable globalized political economy whose countries richer people and the great international institutions celebrate omnipotence through solemn masses like that of Davos or multiple international summits. A kind of religion of neoliberalism has thus developed and a cult of its tables of law¹⁹ in front of which it is believed that there is no longer any possible and serious economic alternative.

As a sacred political economy system, neoliberal capitalism gives the impression of having only enemies on its way that it designates to itself in the form of a threat of clash of civilizations, rogue states or of international terrorism. It is no longer an economic and political battle, but the defense of a non-negotiable way of life, supposed to be the best for all mankind: the one, the only, the unmatched. This world has

¹⁹ « Les nouvelles tables de loi », Le Monde Diplomatique. 1995. Lire aussi Marguerite Mendel, *L'émergence de mouvements sociaux internationaux et l'économie sociale et solidaire*, in *Economie sociale et solidaire. Une perspective Nord-Sud*, Revue *Economie et Solidarités*. Hors série 2003, pp. 19-29. Lire également Jacques B. Gélinas, *La globalisation du monde. Laisser faire ou faire ?*, Montréal, Ecosociété, 2000. Le livre de Ki-Zerbo. *A quand l'Afrique ?* (Paris, Editions de l'Aube-Editions d'en Bas, 2003) donne des informations utiles sur le dévoiement de la mondialisation néolibérale en Afrique. Je renvoie aussi à Tomas Sedlacek, *L'économie du bien et du mal*, Paris, Eyrolles, 2013.

radicalized its view of economic realities since the 1980s, with the advent of Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain. With them, state regulations were destroyed and the market and its requirements were advocated as the only way to develop economic space. "For an economy to function effectively, it must be free from any state intervention," says this vision of the world, according to Margueritte Mendel. There has therefore fallen on contemporary societies an avalanche of measures of increasingly savage, more and more unjust and more and more unequal globalization. A kind of unique thought that cut itself off from the ethical sources of capitalism, still sensitive to the Fathers of political economy. It has also cut itself off from the principles of prosperity codified by John Maynard Keynes, on the basis of the recognition of the instability inherent in the market economy and its need for continual statist intervention, as Margueritte Mendel still says.

We know that Keynesianism as a theory accompanied a long period of economic prosperity while the neoliberalism embodied by the policies of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher led to a social and economic debacle for which we are still paying the price. On this debacle of neoliberal globalization, Joseph E. Stiglitz, former chief economist and vice-president of the World Bank, is without appeal: Today, globalization does not work²⁰. Despite this debacle and the betrayal of the spirit of original capitalism and Keynesianism by neoliberalism, it is under the leadership of the latter that the current globalization has

²⁰ Joseph E. Stiglitz, *La grande désillusion*. Paris, Fayard, 1998. p. 279. Sur ces perspectives, on lira avec intérêt les prises de position de l'ancien directeur de la Banque Mondiale, James Wolfensohn, dont le doute sur la politique de l'institution qu'il a dirigée tarauder la conscience des chercheurs (Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent, n°2283, octobre 2004).

unfolded, in a kind of planetary chaos where dominate the dictatorship of the market, the destruction of the social fabric, the massive destruction of the environment, the abandonment of the social as a priority, the aggravation of pauperization and the worsening inequalities and injustices. The economy is thus cut off from concern for man, society and their overall well-being. It has locked itself in fierce rules of inhumanization of the world and has made laissez-faire a principle of our economic and financial jungle, according to R. Petrella. Rich countries are not ashamed of dominating and crushing poor countries. The richest of these countries no longer even feels the need to put in the forms necessary to assert and solidify his savage hegemony over the world. Neoliberal globalization has become its globalization: fierce, inhuman, cannibalistic, destructive, mad, misguided and murderous in its omnipotence. She sees nothing of the misery she creates. She hears nothing of the cries of distress that she arouses. She doesn't listen to anyone and decides everything according to the short-term interests of certain factions of her rogue conservative movement. In fact, she has globalized a world where she loves neither the hearts that connect humans, nor inventive intelligences, nor essential interests. It has globalized the market without bringing people and countries together in a better society than the one it has built. Humanly speaking, she is on her way to the abyss. Or rather, she dances on the abyss and the abyss awaits her, to use a beautiful image of Jean-Claude Guillebaud²¹.

²¹ Lire à ce propos son livre magnifique. *Le Principe d'humanité*, Paris. Seuil. 1999. Si nous interprétons le néolibéralisme selon ce principe d'humanité, nous ne pouvons voir dans le système ultracapitaliste actuel que le triomphe du principe de déshumanisation et de décomposition des solidarités humaines fondamentales, je renvoie aussi à : Ignacio Ramonet. *Géopolitique du chaos*. Paris, Galilée, 1997. Pour

To fully understand the situation in which this barbaric globalization has plunged us, it is necessary to insist on the following fact: this globalization no longer has anything to do with the best of the spirit of tradition, of thought and of spirituality of the West, the very place of its emergence. It no longer has anything to do with the fundamental principles of capitalism with a human face that the Western world seeks to promote in order to curb the demons and monsters of its economic tradition. It no longer has anything to do with the highest aims of a liberalism sensitive to state market regulations. She is nothing but a monster who has warped, distorted and killed what the very idea of the market had of noble and lofty. It is an apocalypse beast and it is unleashed against all of humanity that it wants to destroy, consciously or unconsciously.

Faced with this neoliberal globalization assured of its absurd hegemony, more and more, slowly but firmly, another globalization emerges: solidarity globalization whose supporters aim to globalize solidarity. His vision of global realities is driven by an ardent awareness of the limits, weaknesses, defects and crimes of neoliberal globalization: the non-regulation of the world economy, massive and growing poverty that strikes women and children first and foremost, and the threats to the ecological balance of the planet²².

l'Afrique, ce livre est fort éclairant et décrit en toute vérité le monde que nous devons refuser résolument.

²² Louis Favreau, René Lachapelle. Gérard Larose. « L'économie sociale et solidaire : occuper un espace de changement social occupé par la crise ». in *Economie sociale et solidaire, une perspective Nord-Sud*, Revue *Economie et Solidarités*, Hors série 2003. pp. 205-211. Lire aussi Ricardo Petrella, *L'économie sociale et la mondialisation*. Montréal. Succo, 1996.

Faced with such dangers, it is not a question of continuing to think, to live and to organize the economy as one thinks it, lives it and organizes it in the neoliberal order. We need a fundamental change of course, fertilized by all the innovative experiences of social movements capable of putting humanity on a new path of economic thought and practice. A path of which Man is the measure, which relies on the equitable sharing of wealth and on a sense of responsibility for the future of the human species and its ecosystems, in the face of the immense possibilities that humanity has for build an order of shared happiness. This is the path of the social and solidarity economy.

For Africa, the two visions of economic reality represented by neoliberal globalization and the globalization of solidarity involve two major challenges: first that of taking the true measure of what both of these visions represent for our destiny; then that of building for ourselves our own idea of the economy and of our future in today's global realities.

IV.2. Take stock of our situation in the neoliberal order

In the current state of world realities, Africa's situation in the neoliberal order is worrying. No light by which the supporters of this system justify it by attaching themselves to capitalism in its general movement and to the spirit of the society from which it emerged, shines on our lands. On the contrary, Africa is today the most marginalized continent in the "global system: the continent of those left behind by globalization, the one that weighs the least in the socio-political-economic realities of the world. Why is this so? This is the question that will determine our relationship to the neoliberal system as a whole.

Two ways of looking at the problem

This question should be answered in two different ways: first by taking up the analyzes already made by African and international specialists;

then by opening another perspective that better clarifies the issues of the debate.

According to analyzes already made and which are well known to the educated general public today, there are historical causes which clearly explain the collapse of Africa and the insignificance of its position in the neoliberal order. These causes are those of the ferocity of the system by which our continent has been thrown into the western world order since the 16th century. Through its violence, its inhumanities and its project of domination, this system has not left the Africans the space of initiative, imagination and organization to master the new context thus opened and to have in their hands the reins of their own destiny. From the slave trade to globalization, including colonialism and neo-colonization, the logic is the same in substance. And Africa is the victim, especially now where the system in place is a real vice, according to the very expressive word of the Malian intellectual Aminata D. Traoré; or a net, to speak like the Cameroonian historian Fabien Kange Ewane²³. The consequences of this system were catastrophic:

eradicate human values which are the structural referents of societies founded on group dynamics; provoke the retreat of social policies and their confinement; subvert the meaning that social actors give to their life and their culture; present profit as the economic purpose in societies that are nevertheless punctuated by reciprocities and plural exchanges

²³Dans l'abondante et inépuisable littérature sur ce sujet, je signale encore le livre de Joseph Ki-Zerbo, *A quand l'Afrique ?* Editions de l'Aube-Editions d'en Bas, Paris, 2003.

which mean that the identity of each person is acquired in the groups to which they belong²⁴

With these consequences, a whole system was set up. An imaginary of extraversion that has made our continent what it has become in the current world order. To explain the same phenomenon, other specialists invoke cultural flaws and internal structural brakes in Africa itself: its limits, its lethargy, its irresponsibility and its incompetence in the political economy of the planet²⁵.

The alibis of the slave trade, colonialism and neocolonization do not hold, in their eyes. For them, the question is elsewhere: in the very being of the African man whose leaders, elites and peoples have not been able to give themselves mental tools and socio-economic-political instruments to be on a level playing field in globalization and to assert itself firmly as a creative pole in global competition. Instead of an Africa sick of the West, we are thus presented with an Africa sick of itself, according to the already common expression of Tidjane Diakité. French historian Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, in a remarkable text reacting to a reflection by Emmanuel Dongala on science and science in Africa, offers a vision of the problem that takes into account two

²⁴ Abdou Salam Fail et Cheikh Guèye. *Mouvements sociaux et économie sociale en Afrique : l'économie sociale, une notion rassembleuse ?* in *Economie et Solidarités*. Hors-série 2003. op. cit. p. 55.

²⁵ La littérature sur ce sujet est abondante. Je renvoie ici au livre important de Jean-Paul Ngoupandé. *L'Afrique sans la France*. Albin Michel. Paris. 2002. Je renvoie aussi aux ouvrages bien connus d'Axelle Kabou (*Et si l'Afrique refusait le développement ?* Paris, L'Harmattan. 1991) et Daniel Etounga Manguelle (*L'Afrique a-t-elle besoin d'un programme d'ajustement culturel ?* Paris. Nouvelles du Sud, 1990).

previous approaches and combines them in one and the same explanatory model but perceived over the long term.

His approach is based, in fact, on a historian's certainty: the need to differentiate short-term assessments (the current miserable results are undeniable) from longer-term contingencies. We cannot judge the "bankruptcy" of an experience of independence which is hardly more than a generation in depth. The current situation is the result of a long, heavy history. It is not the announcement of a fatality.

Once this conviction has been established, it is necessary to shed light on a bundle of factors whose conjunction makes it possible to shed light on the problem, she writes. These multiple factors can be roughly divided into two groups: internal factors and factors external to the continent and to African societies. None in itself is fatal. But an unfortunate historical conjunction of all of them, jointly or successively, has taken place throughout the times of history. It helps to understand why the processes thus initiated remain difficult and slow to redress.

The idea of conjunction presented by C. Coquery-Vidrovitch is important. It is not only because it dispassionates the debate between those who focus on the external causes of our bankruptcy and those who see only the internal defects of our mentalities, but above all because it helps to clarify these external causes. and these internal defects in such a way as to defatalize them, so to speak, and to give them their true measure of surmountable dramas in our current situation.

Among the internal causes, C. Coquery-Vidrovitch does not dwell on the trial against African culture by the prosecutors of triumphant modernity. It first points to the ecological conditions captured over the long term: generally poor soils (...), irregular rains with at least secular risks of very long droughts over a large part of the continent, diseases old and never or late and partially eradicated (...). It then shows the weaknesses of social structures that are not very favorable to individual initiative and capitalization, due to the late adoption of private property

and stubborn community habits. It also points out the flaws in economic structures (...) little inclined to productive investment, but rather to the maintenance of a system of subsistence, hoarding and ostentation. To these ecological tragedies and deficient socio-economic structures, the French historian adds a final element: an unfortunate demographic history, the result of which was the overall stagnation of the population at least from the 16th to the 20th century²⁶.

When all of these elements are taken into account over the long term, the situation on the continent becomes clearer than in the debates on post-independence Africa.

It becomes even more clear when one considers the external factors of Africa's bankruptcy, factors the main one of which was undoubtedly a long and renewed history of colonization which successively made part or all of the continent fall into dependence on forces dominant and constraining international economic and political policies. From the Greeks and Romans to the current masters of globalization, including the Persians, the Arabs, the Portuguese, the Spaniards, the French and the English whose practices of the slave trade broke the creative springs of African genius, the continent has suffered constantly from foreign domination and has structured itself in depth on the syndromes of extraversion, dependence, submission and self-inferiorization.

All these debates on the causes of African bankruptcy are useful and necessary. When we shift the center of gravity from the zone of

²⁶ Lire la Revue électronique *Mots Pluriels et Grands Thèmes de notre Temps*. N° 24. juin 2003. *Le texte d'Emmanuel. Dongala s'intitule : Dégager l'horizon : la science, les sciences humaines et l'Afrique. La réaction de Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch a pour titre : Echanger les savoirs, accepter la diversité et respecter l'autre: réaction d'une historienne au texte d'Emmanuel Dongala.*

ideological fire to the zone of calm and honest scientific research, they go a long way in making us as Africans aware of all the tragedies of our destiny. But are they still up to the present situation? Today, we have the deep feeling that they are futile and sterile in the face of the African challenges of neoliberal globalization.

Because the central question is no longer to rehash the all too well known causes of our collapse and our bankruptcy, whether exogenous or endogenous, but to change the very logic of our reflection on ourselves. That is to say, to leave the infertile style of causal rationality for a logic of giving meaning to what has happened to us²⁷. It is about moving from the analysis of the reasons for our current collapse to the production of a system of meanings for projects and actions that make us take back the reins of our destiny and affirm our presence as an inventive and innovative presence. in the crucial issues of the fight against neoliberalism. From this perspective, as Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch writes, the sometimes appalling upheavals of the present time should not be considered inevitable: they are rather the expression of a difficult and painful but probably inevitable phase of transition.

It is this phase which requires that we produce for our time a logic of giving meaning to our future rather than locking ourselves in the causal logic which leads nowhere. This reversal of logic would quickly make us understand one thing: we are the place of manifestation of the very essence of the neoliberal world economy.

We are the most characteristic product of the world-economy system as neoliberal dynamics conceive, develop and organize it.

What is this essence? We would like to use here the words of the French politician Michel Rocard. He sees in the neoliberal world system

²⁷ Je renvoie ici à mon livre de jeunesse. *Destinée négro-africaine*. Bruxelles, Editions de l'Archipel, 1986.

dominated by the West not only a space of aggravation of poverty and a yoke of permanent humiliation for the peoples of the South condemned to despair, but a real moral tragedy for humanity. The domination of the West is exercised for the benefit of an unethical model. Our societies are organized around a central reference exclusive to money and personal profit. The productions of culture and the spirit, the virtues of generosity and solidarity, the sense of the public good wear out, lose their influence and gradually disappear in this selfish and quantified world²⁸. The lack of ethics is aggravated by the lack of meaning. we are thinking here of Maurice Bellet's very apt word: Everyone is running behind the West and the West is not going anywhere. Not going nowhere does not only mean going around in circles in a system that delights in its own emptiness, but above all lacking a project that has an absolute, supreme, ultimate reference, around which humanity could revive, flourish. , reinvent its destiny.

We are thinking of the possibility of an ethical and spiritual sap for the human substance, with a view to building a future which does not only have Man as a stake, but the transcendent as the source of the human and the principle of humanization.

The current substance of Western neoliberalism is a world without ethics, without meaning, without perspective and without deep spirituality. This substance is manifested on a planetary scale by the situation of Africa given over to all negativity and summoned by its own destiny to come out, here and now, from its situation of drift, by resolutely opening for its populations a new game of human. Before a West that has become post-Christian in its ruling elites in Europe and

²⁸ Michel Rocard. Discours à la Deuxième Rencontre internationale sur la globalisation de la solidarité tenue du 9 au 12 octobre 2001 à Québec, in *Revue Economie et Solidarités*, op. cit., p. 221.

pseudo-Christian in its existential principles in America, despite the struggle waged by lucid and far-sighted people as well as spiritual and religious organizations that refuse to let their society lose its soul and s

'Sinking ever deeper into the void, Africa is revealed to itself as the continent of the future, in the words of Jean Guittou. It must invent a future against a neoliberalism suspended on the abyss. It must invent the future at all. This is the most radical issue in our situation in the world today.

What does that mean, really? This above all and mainly: if there is one place where the neoliberal King is naked today, it is Africa. If there is one space where the logic of inhumanity of neoliberal globalization has deployed its logic of death to madness, it is our continent. It is therefore from our country that the project of this system must be challenged with wisdom and vigor, against its ethical and spiritual deficits and against its wanderings and inhumanities: against its emptiness of meaning, in short. We mean that our task is to build a meaning for a new capitalism outside of the neoliberal drifts of the capitalist system. This is an exit from neoliberalism for the reinvention of the liberal dynamic globally understood in its founding and regulatory values, as a possibility of community life for all the peoples of our world. More exactly, it is about building an African liberal project, the essence of which would be the reintegration of ethics and spirituality into economic and political rationalities. At the heart of a model of civilization that does not throw the baby out of great successes by which neoliberal globalization seduces all peoples today, with the bath water of anti-values by which it raises these same peoples in hatred against its system.

We deeply believe in this possibility which is opening up in African thought and is gradually becoming a credible place for re-imagining Africa and its destiny, to use the expression of Dwain Epps.

Indeed, if neoliberalism is in our minds a kind of economic Nazism and financial Stalinism against which the only solution is to destroy its

system, it is not the same for the whole liberal capitalist tradition whose history shows that 'it carried within it the values which are the strength of the present West. It represents a global dynamic to be reinvented according to a new spirit of which Africa could be a useful and necessary leaven²⁹.

This issue of the African overhaul of liberalism is important.

It represents a whole project of civilization, a possible model of a planetary coexistence based on a vision where rationality as a mode of problem-solving, ethics as the force of the bond between peoples and spirituality as the foundation of human beings become the pillars of the globalization of the world. Such a project requires a reconsideration of the global policy of needs where inequalities in lifestyles and in energy consumption are leading us straight towards disaster. A world which would be a global world according to the rational, ethical and spiritual order, this is the world perspective to be opened. It can only take into account all of everyone's real needs.

It would propose a global policy to meet these needs, taking into account all the parameters and all the imperatives so that our planet, our common living environment, does not become a rot, a hell, a nonsense for our existence.

Western neoliberal globalization has been incapable of this. The new African liberal project could show, supported by local, national, regional and continental experiences, that it is possible, that it is desirable, necessary and indispensable. This is the stake.

For the success of this issue, Western-style globalization has already dug the furrows without which the future of humanity risks being a nightmare: the abundance of goods through economic prosperity; social

²⁹Lire à ce sujet la Revue du MAUSS, n° 21 : *L'alteréconomie, Quelle « autre mondialisation » ? (fin)*.

development through freedom, democracy and human rights; the need for institutional regulations at the scale of the whole planet. It thus gave an impetus for each people to appropriate this project and fight, in its name, against the current grabbing of world space by a few countries and a few institutions in the service of absurd hegemonic policies. Each people has the duty to fight to become a pole of creative power in the service of humanity, with spaces of prosperity, democratization and organization in the service of the common planetary good.

The real competition will have to be situated at this height of the essential values, and not at the scale of the dirty work, the inhumanities and the negativities to which the mad and “thug” neoliberalism has accustomed us.

In spaces thus clarified, large margins for the redeployment of African values are open: beaches of the spiritual meaning of existence, of the united life project and of responsibility towards ecosystems and future generations³⁰.

In other words, Africans will have to become deeply African again for a real African liberal project to be possible in mentalities, in the model of civilization, in institutional systems and in collective culture. If Africa ceases to be Africa, the horizon of the world will darken more and more and the predicted catastrophe of neoliberal globalization will inexorably occur, plunging the entire planet into the abyss.

From this point of view, the current process of globalization is an opportunity for our continent. It is an enormous laboratory of struggles,

³⁰ Je reprends ici l'idée des valeurs africaines développée par le penseur congolais (RDC) Albert Tudieshe, in *Rebâtir l'Espoir. Pour la renaissance de la République Démocratique du Congo en Afrique et dans le monde*, Yaoundé, Editions Sherpa, 2003.

revolts, resistances and innovations from which can spring a new socio-cultural imaginary, a new spirit of civilization, with new models of economic regulation and new principles of political solidarity in the world. global scale.

Current neoliberalism seems to me to be a problematic reality that must be measured both to tame its logics, to curb its inhumanities and to better show the dividing lines that separate it from the best sap of the West and of the West liberalism where Africa will have to register the true mark of its genius.

It is within the framework thus traced that the problem of the social and solidarity economy to be built in Africa in the service of the global being-together arises.

Reinventing community liberalism

This economy is proposed under two aspects: either as a complement to an official economy which would free itself from the burdens of neoliberal globalization, or as an alternative to the neoliberal system in its philosophy and in its practices.

In the first form, it is a question of building a social and solidarity economy which would be part of the official economy as proposed by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In this context where major infrastructure works, conflict regulation, liberation of a common dynamic of education, training, health and prosperity are carried by the breath of the mobilization of African genius and solidarity international, it is up to the spaces of social movements and the imagination of their organizations to embody hope in the practical sense of the term. The social and solidarity economy would be deployed there according to the broad lines of collective action in the service of man, solidarity sharing, social justice and awareness of the future as a requirement inherent in the economy as such. Civil society and the whole galaxy of its socio-political associations, its experiences of

economic solidarity in the field of health, education and the environment, as well as its vast utopias for another Africa, would become a real stimulus for public authorities and private investors. For the international community too, that it would force through social movements to take into account three issues of great political and ethical significance well defined by the Solidarity Economy Group of Quebec:

local development which aims to improve living conditions in a sustainable and integral way for the members of a locality by strengthening the specific capacities of individuals, groups, organizations and communities, in particular through exchange circuits of the social economy between the different sectors of production, services, consumption and with local authorities;

the construction of a citizenship and a democracy which allows the participation in the decision-making; finally the central role of the social economy in the globalization of solidarity through an international strategy inclusive of economic and social actors from various localities, regions and countries³¹.

By linking these issues of the social and solidarity economy to a dynamic philosophy of NEPAD, we want to insist on the fact that civil society and the popular imagination must be involved in the African overhaul of the economy, in the perspective of 'an effective fight against poverty. A fight that we cannot win if the official economy, which is very weak in its inventive powers, does not give all the opportunities and all the latitude that the operators of the social space need to benefit

³¹ Groupe d'Economie Solidaire du Québec, *L'économie sociale et solidaire : une perspective Nord-Sud*, op. cit., p. 30.

from a framework peaceful, reliable, organized, able to promote and stir creativity wherever it is needed.

Everywhere: both locally and in the international sphere where the African social and solidarity economy is learning day by day to swim effectively.

We insist on this imperative of efficiency of the social and solidarity economy within the framework of NEPAD. Only this imperative will be the guarantee of the success of this new partnership for which we blame two faults: it's somewhat naive confidence in the possibilities of financing by external donors; and its manifest lack of popular roots in real Africa³².

The social and solidarity economy would fill this double deficit, both by education and the mobilization of popular genius and by the capacity of synergy of this genius producing local wealth with the external investors that this wealth would suddenly attract. Likewise, the enrichment of the popular and social space would ensure solid credibility with the major financial institutions, which would see it as the sign of a creative popular capitalism.

In other words, African public authorities have an interest in arousing, structuring, organizing and protecting the economic genius of their peoples. They have a duty to make it a source of a credible economic presence on the world stage. Through the production of local, community and solidarity wealth, the dynamics of accumulation will be freed in which private capitalism and state capitalism will find sure allies for the success of NEPAD.

Criticizing the promoters of this New Partnership, the former Gambian President Yayah Jammeh was right to say that we cannot ensure our

³² Lire l'excellent article de Fabien Eboussi Boulaga, "NEPAD : initiative de chefs sans base ?", in *Terroirs*, 1-2/2004, pp. 267-286.

own development by counting on external funding, but we must tell him that it is not possible to develop either without the investment of its own creative genius in the world economic space that it would be wrong to leave to others, however powerful and however rich they may be. External financing is part of this space and it must be allowed to fertilize local forces so that they become able to fertilize the world economy and take advantage of it for the happiness of all of Africa. The model of the social and solidarity economy is called upon to evolve in this perspective, in order to get Africa out of the resourceful economy to develop a large-scale ambition for well-being, in synergy with the policies of the public authorities and the energy of private investors, both tied to the challenges of a social solidarity economy on a planetary scale.

What needs to be done is to develop an organizational rationality and a power of personal and public ethics to match such an ambition. Education and training places should be designed and fitted out for this purpose. Our future depends on it, both for our fight against neoliberalism in its barbarism and for our project to build a new liberalism fertilized by the African genius to promote: the community liberalism of which the Cameroonian political elite spoke in the past, without grasp all the necessary implications at the economic and political scales. Now, what is it? To liberate Africa from mad and “rogue” neoliberalism, savage and barbaric, by drawing on the community genius of the African spirit which must be linked to the genius of liberalism in the positive and human sense of the term, as a creative dynamic nourishing the values of organizational rationality, efficient production of wealth, development of fundamental freedoms and guarantee of state regulation for social justice and equity, For Africa, such community liberalism can only be based on the potential of popular inventiveness to be organized in the field of participatory

democracy at the national level as well as at the local level, in connection with credible state policies and a dynamic private sector, in the strength of social movements as laboratories of great collective utopias.

To move from neoliberal globalization to the globalization of solidarity, the road to community liberalism thus cleared is necessary. This is the road on which the community genius of the people will have to meet the public genius of African integration and the African Union, so that they constitute a fertile framework at the service of the social and solidarity economy in its major principles :

- concern for man and the humanization of economic relations;
- solidarity at the service of the well-being of all, in a society of participatory democracy and social justice;
- the struggle for an ethical policy at the local level as well as at the global level, with a view to the liberation of all creative energies.

Moving from community liberalism to the globalization of solidarity

In a text presented at the Second International Meeting on the Globalization of Solidarity held from October 9 to 12, 2002 in Quebec, Abdou Salam Fall and Cheikh Ngerem write³³:

The relative success of the social economy in Africa rests above all on the capacity of individuals and of the group to foresee developments while maintaining flexibility in strategies. The social and solidarity economy, for example, has always been one of sharing and accumulation, but also of symbolic added value (*derem ak ngere*). It has an affiliation dimension which makes the convention a place of trust and acts as a lubricant. Family, lineage and religious logics are essential

³³ Le texte s'intitulé : « Mouvements sociaux et économie sociale en Afrique : l'économie sociale, une notion rassembleuse ? »

components. The search for “derem” with the “ngarem” is both the foundation of entrepreneurship and the indicator of success; it encourages generosity, assistance and investment in relationship capital. It is an economy which often even has mystical supports and a religious foundation.

There is in this far-sighted affirmation the very definition of the fundamental structure of the social and solidarity economy in Africa. First, it is a phenomenon which is not only economic, far from it. It embraces the totality of social life that it traverses through and through, through a phenomenon of consolidation of social ties from the most primary and most emotionally significant to those, ultimate, which engage the invisible world. This means that the sphere that we tend to qualify as informal is important.

This sphere where the great initiatives of the economy are bubbling is not a marginal and peripheral sphere compared to the center that would constitute the state economy or the world of official private enterprise. In reality, it is the informal that enshrines the formal and makes the social and solidarity economy the true heart of African economic life, its matrix and its center, so to speak.

Second, wealth is not measured by money and monetary profit alone. It has intangible and symbolic dimensions which constitute an essential capital. That of the weight of being, of its social credibility and of its aura beyond the pure and simple accumulation of goods. At this level, the symbolic and the spiritual confer on the person a vital radiance of which money is only one dimension, if it is used according to the fundamental logic of life as a diffusion of happiness and existential goodness.

Thirdly, the dynamics of material and immaterial, monetary, symbolic and spiritual exchanges determine a type of community development whose central vector is the quest for meaning, that is to say the

enrichment of the whole being, of living together, of acting together and of building together in fundamental existential relations. The economy is only valid as a reality because it is common wealth. It is only valid as a quality of shared happiness including generosity, even outside of pure monetary profit and the financial market. It is the highest vibration of the value which raises the being to the highest of its plenitude: where the capacity to become an ancestor after death is built and to live in fullness in the village of the Ancestors, in communion with the principle fullness of life, God himself, origin and fulfillment of existence.

These three characteristics are at the heart of a whole system of civilization in the name of which Africa is still called today to build, organize and configure its global vision of the economy, beyond liberalism insofar as it remains deeply and radically an economic determinism, based on money, profit, the market and individual monetary enrichment.

The vocation of African society is to question this determinism and to situate in this questioning the foundations of its globalization of solidarity, of its globalization of solidarity. It is this globalizing Africa of a certain fullness of being and of life that we must imagine and build. Our weakness in our countries is that we have not yet managed to place our vision of the economy in this essential perspective.

Our experiences of economic solidarity have remained confined either to the insignificant scale of resourcefulness always recommenced; either on the scale, without global ambition, of family, lineage or tribal micro-projects; either on the scale of an incompetent public economy managed by leaders economically dependent on the outside; either to the scale of private companies devoid of vision and spirit of conquering international markets. All this, without any basic philosophy or a pragmatic global perspective, relieved of our incantations on development, of all our addictions to dependence and extraversion, of

all our chronic weaknesses and our notorious incompetence which result in the pitiful image the world has of us today.

The way now open to us to break with our economic situation is clear: Go first from the absolute rejection of rogue and "crazy" neoliberalism, and the type of fierce and savage globalization that it has established as a world-economy, to the mastery of the true principles of an economic liberalism that produces wealth in the framework of clear and effective public regulations.

Then move on from the mastery of this constructive liberalism and its regulatory mechanisms, to the construction, "endogenous" and "self-centered", of community liberalism richer than that of Paul Biya's Cameroon, fertilized by the African values of life, from the local level of participatory micro-economies to the national, regional and continental levels of strong public economies and dynamic private economy that the philosophy of NEPAD, reactivated and updated today, could nurture.

Finally move from this community liberalism to the globalization of solidarity beyond the weight of liberal economic philosophy, with a social and solidarity economy embedded in a social and solidarity culture, for a social and solidarity policy.

All of these "passages" are necessary. We can't do without any of them. But they should not be considered in a linear perspective where one would automatically move from a lower stage to a higher stage. It is rather a process inspired by the initiatory universe where all these dimensions constitute a single world whose logics it is essential to master in order to truly be a human being, a human society. These are aspects of the same reality to which we must know how to react according to the true strength of being conferred by the most fundamental dimension of life, in this case the globalization of solidarity, without the determinism of laws. inhumane neoliberalism.

This dimension is the heart of African existence. It is from it that the economic imagination of African society will have to be able to invent an economic destiny capable of crossing without collapsing the heavy and difficult realities of current globalization, where neoliberalism, capitalism with a human face and community liberalism are and will remain for a long time to come the deep impulses of economic realities. To put it another way: only a neoliberal aware of neoliberalism can become a liberal with a human face; only a liberal with a human face aware of liberalism with a human face can become a community liberal; only a community liberal aware of the realities of community liberalism can become an agent of the globalization of solidarity in Africa.

The secret is therefore consciousness. And conscience, as Joseph Ki-Zerbo writes, is responsibility. It is the guide that rules the glowing home of the human spirit³⁴. It is the engine for the choices and decisions that change the course of a destiny.

In the present situation of Africa within the world order, such awareness will not be given to us by forces outside of ourselves. We will build it or we will perish. In fact, we have a duty to build it. And we will only be able to do this around a single question, the one vigorously posed by the Beninese economist Guy Pognon: economy, space of humanity or inhumanity³⁵?

We know the neoliberal answer to this question in our minds and in our bodies in Africa: in the name of a few pockets and a few beaches of prosperity, the economy lives and feeds on inhumanities. It does not even integrate in its space of deployment the question of the humanity

³⁴J. Ki-Zerbo, *A quand l'Afrique ?* op. cit., p. 187

³⁵ Guy Pognon, « Economie : espace d'humanité ou d'inhumanité » in *Stabilité politique et développement. Apport de la doctrine sociale de l'Eglise*. Actes du Colloque International Institut des Artisans de Justice et de Paix/Fondation Konrad Adenauer, Cotonou, Les Editions Catholiques du Bénin, 2003, pp. 117-152.

of man, question too vaporous and without object in its eyes, undoubtedly.

However, beyond the harshness of the constraints and mechanisms that structure it, and whatever the truth may be disturbing, the economy is at the service of the Truth of man: the truth of his human status which gives him the right to find something to support his life and obliges him to maintain it; the truth of his double dignity with regard to his status as a man at work: and with regard to his innate aspiration to justice; the truth of man in his obligation to keep the heritage received and / or acquired for future generations³⁶.

Africa knows this truth very well. We have a responsibility to reinvent the economy on its basis for the globalization of solidarity and the radiance of shared happiness.

³⁶ Ibid.

Part Three
THE CONGOLESE ISSUES

Chapter I

NATIONAL COHESION AND NEW CONGOLESE DREAM

Putting ethics at the heart of national life

If we consider them as a favourable moment to revive the momentum of the Congolese nation towards a great future prophesied by Leopold II and a bright future exalted by Joseph Kasa-Vubu, the consultations that dominate the current events of our country should lead to put ethics at the heart of national life. They should do so in relations between political parties, in state institutions, in our mode of governance and in our ways of being and living as a people, at all levels and in all fields. One way or another, in one form or another, every Congolese, every Congolese woman, knows that our nation is dying of a lack of ethics. We have known this for a long time and it is good to highlight what we all know in order to enlighten those who, at this very moment, are called to reflect on the direction of our national destiny towards good choices: the choices of the greatness of our future and the brilliance of our future.

I.1. A retrospective look at the ethical question in Congo

When we look at the five decades of independence of the Democratic Republic of Congo, we cannot fail to be struck by the recurrence of the same diagnosis on the country's deep situation.

Just after the nation's accession to its self-determination, this situation had a name that all dictionaries seized from new concepts in the world: *congolization*. The word referred to both the chaotic dislocation of a territory, a process of chronic un-governability, a mixture of dreadfully disastrous systems of violence, and an imbroglio of devastating foreign interests, of which the country had become the crucial issue in the Cold War.

During President Mobutu's reign, *Zairean evil* was referred to as a catalogue of ten scourges that plagued each of the vital sectors of national life: the government, the army, the administration, the education system, the health system, the police, customs, diplomacy, businesses, banks and the whole spirit of the Congolese people. President Mobutu said: "The heart of evil is moral. Zaire suffers from the liquefaction of moral values and a profound reversal of values."

At the sovereign national conference, which was a great moment of national catharsis and evaluation of Mobutist governance, everything was placed under the term criticism of the rule of the *anti-values*, against the backdrop of a burning need for change.

Today, the terms for Congo come from the highest levels of the international community whose ABCs speaks volumes about the situation of the country.

In the political world, the terms of *leadership bankruptcy* and *governance vacuum* are most commonly used. Among intellectuals, the series of crises invoked is growing day to day: *crisis of the state*, *crisis of legitimacy*, *crisis of management*, *crisis of rationality*, *crisis of national conscience*, *crisis of national conscience*, *crisis of man*, *crisis of collective identity*, *crisis of culture* and many other types of crisis still carried by expressions like *Republic of the unconscious*, *society of the fool or dead country*, used by the Congolese themselves.

I.2. A favorable context, promising signals

Whatever one's vision of the situation of the country and whatever way it has been described, the dominant line of substance in analyses and discourses is that of the ethical collapse of the Congolese nation, from the morning of independence to the present day. It would be interesting to reread the statements of the bishops of Congo on the situation of the country throughout our years of independence to see how the ethical issue is at the heart of their concerns. An anthology of opposition

diatribes against the powers in place since 1960 would clearly show that it is on ethical requirements that rulers and political elites have failed, from republic to republic and from legislature to legislature. As for the rulers themselves, there is no more incisive criticism of their own systems than their own diagnosis of Congolese evil. Anyone who would bother to listen to or reread President Mobutu's speeches would be very edified on this subject. President Joseph Kabila's cry desperately seeking 15 honest Congolese, without finding them, to help him govern is still remembered. The intellectual elite, the people have ceased to believe in their morality and skills. We know the famous Congolese phrase about the intellectual class of the country: "*Intellectuals are roughly speaking; but from the point of view, it's despite.*" A very humorous way that people have to attack the masters of the *blah-blah* (futile logorrhea, sterile verbal diarrhea) and the apprentice witches of the *bilinga-bilinga* (senseless agitations and disordered subversions) that is the intellectual class among the people. As for the people themselves, there is a long history that they make fun of morals and hate ethical norms and references. Congolese music has become to a large extent the most powerful expression of this refusal, with its popular appreciation of characters touted in heavy doses of endless cries of admiration in a griotism of junk (kobuaka mabanga), while everyone knows what these characters really represent in terms of moral erosion and overt counter-model.

If the situation is so, the dream of changing Congo into a great nation must begin with where the evil is most profound and visible: to fight the ethical collapse of the Congolese man, to fight the moral erosion of Congolese society. This deepest and most visible struggle will be to make Congolese man and Congolese society capable of rising to the highest values of humanity by putting ethics at the heart of national life. We can and we must because this is the very foundation of the

emergence of our nation as a power in the concert of peoples and the competition of civilizations.

I.3. A favourable environment, promising signals

We can and we must. Despite the nightmare of the civil war in the midst of *congolization*, despite the furies and horrors of the Mobutist era and its *ten evil plagues*, despite *the triumph of the anti-values* denounced by the Sovereign National Conference and despite the social chaos, the vacuum of governance and the “vacuum”, an institutional bottomless hole, which Barack Obama spoke about our country, no Congolese has lost the power of hope, much less the sense of the future and the breath of our possible awakening. The crisis has been deep for more than fifty years but profound is also faith in the changes that must come. What most characterizes Congolese society is the way in which the dialectic of crisis and hope, pessimism and trust, misfortunes and the will to overcome fate, even in the worst calamities such as Mobutist terrors and the inexhaustible cruelties of repeated wars in the East of the Republic, are configured in the mind. Currently the balance of social dialectic leans towards the dark side of Congolese destiny. We have had in our history and we still have the assets to make it lean on the right side of history, as Obama would say.

Where are these assets and who exactly embodies them? They are in the strong ethical conscience that works the depths of Congolese society, despite the fatalistic and defeatist dominants on which attention is focused today. Probably too turned ahead to see the emerging forces that will give birth to a future of greatness and innovation in the DRC. If we start from the spiritual principle that where evil abounds good must overwhelm, if we look at how the forces of good are gradually sprouting in Congolese destiny to face the miseries, distresses, atrocities and traumas we suffer, we should increasingly be sensitive to the phenomena of hope that cannot be, honestly speaking, go unnoticed.

One: the chaos of wars, economic predations and the risks of implosion or disappearance of the country provoke in counterpoint an indomitable desire to be together among the Congolese and a keen interest in a culture of acting together now and dreaming together a bright future. It is a lever on which to build the forces of a new Congo in the consciousness of its unity as a creative and innovative unit as well as in its ambitions as a power to overcome the current chaos. Where wars, predations, exploitations and implosion powers abound, the time has come to overflow the energies of fertile peace and a prosperous community of destiny. *We can and we must.*

Two: the Congolese political chaos is bringing out the demand of constructors' revolts against the spirit of vampires and leeches who, through conflicts and wars manipulated by occult or visible powers, national or global, have been feeding on the blood of the people for many years and enriching themselves in plain sight. This is at a time when the basic services to which the people are entitled are being emptied of all substance: the road infrastructure system, the electric power system and the distribution of drinking water, the education and training system for new generations. The revolts that are already preparing or are already taking place in the youth and which are the most significant are not those of the armed disorder to which the State and international organizations devote huge budgets while the carnage continues and already exceeds the Holocaust in number of victims. These are the revolts of spirits, consciences, imaginations and intelligences. They are rumbling in the liberation of the Congolese speech, in a fed up that is widespread in the face of the blockages of Congolese genius by disastrous governance structures. They also feel in the constant evocation of the Arab Spring by the youth of Congo who want to embody a new leadership. They radiate in the dream of a reliable democracy in Congo, against the chains of external interference

in national political choices and against the political immobility that is blocking the horizons of the future.

The revolts we are talking about are those based on the belief that violence destroys Congo and that it is not the way to wake up our country. Those who embody it are very skeptical about so-called civil society: an entity that is increasingly nothing more than a mask of the arrears to the ruling power or the impotent oppositions. Their challenge is to invent new actions, to create alternatives to the moral rot and the Congolese political cul-de-sac, in a firm desire to believe that another Congo is possible, against all odds. The imperative, in their eyes, is to dig a new soil to sow the seeds of a new Congolese creative dynamism, in the energy of new hopes. The sound of such voices being heard in the thunderous and chaotic situation of a Congo whose only shipwreck is tended to be viewed through the prisms of the tragic condition of the east of its territory is a sign of great hope. The dream of changing Congo is alive and fertile. There is an urgent need to promote it and to fertilize its high hopes for the nation. *We can and we must.*

Three: it is not only the younger generations who dream of another Congo and aspire to embody it. The avalanche of literary, philosophical, theological, political and socio-media production expresses the creative power of a Congo that has not accepted the macabre fate of a country without a future. In the Diaspora as well as within the country, the Congolese dream shines, spreads, flourishes and heralds a revolution more fundamental than the current political-military unrest: the great revolution of the Congolese being. It is in all this production of intelligence that one becomes aware of all the forces of creativity that suffocate a dramatic context dominated by the powers of darkness. Against these, the Congo of lights exists and will strengthen. He has his dream for the future. This dream must be energized and imposed on the world. *We can and we must.*

Four: Congolese universities will have to carry this dream of creative vitality. Because they are, in the education system in Congo, the highest scale of knowledge and creativity and yet today represent one of the most raw expressions of the crisis of intelligence and values in the country, it is in them that the dream of the new Congo will have to be overcast by the culture of research, debate, intellectual production and the strength of success. From a glance, we are far from the point in this perspective. In terms of infrastructure, in terms of the quality of programs as well as in terms of the ability to produce great personalities, everyone is saying bad things about the system in place and countless are the young people who would like to study under more scientifically beneficial skies and in settings that are better equipped than university in Congo. However, it is in the very system of management and administration of the Congolese university that the idea of an ethical revolution in universities is currently launched. It is the Ministry in charge of this sector that the question of values has become the central issue of the education system, in order to combat mediocrity, laxity, disorganization and disorientation. Similarly, a new vigour of intellectual debate is given to higher education structures by associations and intellectual organizations that are gradually re-launching themselves in Congo, even if in a timid manner. The experiences such as those of ICREDES (Congolese Institute for Development Research and Strategic Studies) and the CRP (Centre for Political Studies) that heat the University of Kinshasa with high-level debates led by the newspaper *Le Potentiel* and *Télé 7* are signs of rebirth for Congolese intelligence. Scientific days such as those of President Joseph Kasa-Vubu State University in Boma, Lower Congo, as well as the already famous Philosophical and Theological Weeks of Kinshasa at the Catholic University, feed the Congo in its dream of knowledge and creativity. In addition, the students themselves are aware of the weaknesses and pathologies suffered by their universities and are

publicly debating them, in a desire to find solutions that would bring them in line with major universities around the world. They are gradually carrying a dream whose scope must now be increased in cultural, intellectual and sporting events based on competitiveness, efficiency and performance, with the clear aim of succeeding in Congo through the development of intelligence, knowledge and knowledge.

We can and we must.

Five: the fabulous cultural energy of Congo embodied by his music tends to be perceived today only from a negative point of view, as a debauchery of obscenities and unhealthy erotic vulgarities. It is true that this is the case, in plain sight. Our music has itself discredited itself by putting itself under the control of politicians in need of stardom and a certain class of rich men and women, without ethics or ambition to build the nation. She has discredited herself by putting the center of gravity of her power around the female rumps and the swirling of the male kidneys. Yet behind this screen where the negative abounds, our music is a field of struggle to impose a certain Congo of creativity on the world. It sometimes, as now, it excites the affects of greatness and power to launch us to the heights of strong aspirations when, with Nyoka Longo of Zaïko Langa Langa, she cries out to those who have ears to hear: “Vimba aah” (Have faith in you, bomb your torso and roll your mechanics to conquer life). She advocates a certain system of values of life when, together with Koffi Olomidé of the Latin Quarter, she asserts that love is “multiplication and not division”, that love unites in an arithmetic of elevation where “one plus one, it gives one”, that nothing is lost when a young person who was nothing happens to strut on his own motorcycle in an existential pride of parade (“Assomba toukou toukou, assomba lay lay”). When these exaltations are punctuated by dances that, beyond their erotic-manic furies, break all the springs of despair and make us believe in the future despite the storms of chaos, they create an imagination on which it is possible to

operate and act to teach the meaning of success to those who would tend to despair. There was even a time when our musicians gave the people such injunctions: “Pesa Nzoto Kilo, Pesa Nzoto dignity” (give weight to your being, respect your body and fertilize it with a sense of dignity); “Wapi bomoto na yo,” “Serious Wapi” “Bomoto na yo otii wapi?” (Where is your humanity? Why isn’t there seriousness in your life? What makes you a true human being, where did you put that?). Pepé Kallé’s cry against child sexual abuse is well known: “Tika Muana” (leave the child, she is a minor). Sometimes the turn of the inquiry opens philosophical horizons and probes the bottoms of the metaphysical firmament, with statements such as: “Truth, muinda ya makambo” (truth is the light of what happens). Or: “Kitoko ezalaka muinda ya makambo” (Beauty is the light of all that happens). Or: “Kitoko nde pawunyi oh” (It is beauty that is true gold). It was in the heyday of Franco, Rochereau, Nico and Ntumba Bederemos. How can we not recall here Jeannot Bobenga taking up the strong conviction of Sekou Touré at the dawn of our independence: “Ebongi tozala poor na freedom, toboyi tozala rich na booumbu eh” (Better for us to be poor in freedom than rich in slavery). This breath of high-quality Congolese music, which has gone through all our years of missed independence, will have to become the new impetus of our Congolese dream. We must go back to fertilize our most beautiful aspirations and our most fertile quests. *We can, we must.*

Six: The Congo of religions and spirituality needs to be looked at differently than on the side of its delusions and its charlatanism of the invisible. It has more than these pathologies and mystifying drifts. Deep in his energy and at the height of his positive meanings, he knows that spiritual strength fertilizes ethics and that ethics fuels political and economic creativity for a destiny for the development of a people. One could repeat what the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas says, “*Spiritual life is essentially moral life, and its preferred place is economic*”, that

is, development. While the long decades of misery and suffering had led to the explosion of irrational and imbecilic religiosities that demobilized the Congolese in the face of the demands of the country's rebirth and emergence in today's world, the realities are gradually changing. Congolese religious discourse is increasingly a discourse of spiritual, moral and economic responsibility. This shift is noticeable in preaching. The scathing criticism of new spiritual movements today is changing the very meaning of religious life in Congo. We are entering a new era of spirituality in the service of the new Congolese dream. This movement must be intensified, and new rationalities of development and human promotion must be fertilized. *We can and we must.*

Seven: the air of the times changes and the Congo changes with the times. Africa is emerging from the days of pessimism and many countries are increasingly confident in their stars. It is a groundswell that does not leave the Congo indifferent, according to the slogans of the revolution of modernity and the emerging Congo that serve as a marquee for the political weather in the DRC. We must not minimize this air of time: when we believe in it and fertilize the imagination of a people, we can access the strength of a faith that lifts mountains. *We can and we must.*

With these seven positive signals, it is clear that we are living in a time for change and that the consultations for national cohesion will have to be part of the new Congolese dream, through an ethical revolution to which the authorities of our country must be strongly invited³⁷.

³⁷ Read on this point The Congolese philosopher KAUMBA LUFUNDA SAMAJIKU, *Unis par le sort*, Kinshasa, Editions Noraf, 2013;

Chapter II

STATE, CURRENCY, FREEDOM AND POWER

For a new socio-political economy of the monetary imagination in DR Congo

We call the sociopolitical economy of the monetary imagination the way in which a society, consciously or unconsciously, understands and constructs its economic existence on ideological grounds of representing the value of its currency in the field of the world order of the market.

This representation of money and its economic weight in the market is, in fact, for a given society, a representation of oneself and its own place within the world.

II.1. Between voluntary servitude and inservitude without consistency

In his book perceived as classic today³⁸, *Currency, Bondage and Freedom*, Cameroonian economist Tchuindjang Pouemi described the reality we are talking about here from an analysis of the CFA franc and its relations with the French franc since independence. He showed how, by its attachment to the French economic system which assured it a certain stability in the widespread sinking of the currencies of other African countries without a neocolonial umbrella, the CFA franc had configured the imagination of the former French colonies according to the canons of a voluntary servitude, or more or less subtly imposed. It also showed how a currency whose solidity allowed some remarkable achievements such as those of the Ivorian miracle under Houphouët-Boigny, represented simply an illusion of integration into the world: the barter of the creative power of freedom and dignity, highly human

³⁸ This book was recently reissued by Maineubuc Editions in Paris.

values, against a security of a type banally food under the marquee of neocolonialism.

At that time, an Ivorian imagination was built up that exalted the miracle of the country's economic success by masking the neocolonial side of the system. The social catastrophe and the monetary chaos of Sékou Touré's Guinea, which served as a mirror to Côte d'Ivoire, prevented any questioning of the order of the French pre-square. By its stability and its exchange value, the CFA franc was the ferment of a neocolonial relationship sublimated in partnership that many Ivoirians accommodated without any other form of trial. This currency was not just a currency, so to speak. It was a vision of the world, a structuring of the social imagination and an ideological conception of oneself, at the scale of the whole society as well as at the heart of each individual, in a more or less conscious way. It was also the cement of the French pre-square throughout Africa: it fed a political field, it gave the economy of this field a certain awareness of success in the face of the failures of many other African countries. That was his strength, from the point of view of houphouetist pragmatism. It was also his weakness, from the point of view of African libertarian utopia.

When the Houphouetists lost power in the country and a new team took over the reins of the nation under Laurent Gbagbo, the currency problem regularly became a symbol of sovereignty. Men such as Mamadou Coulibali, president of the National Assembly at the time of the triumphant FPI, did not fail to propose the requirement of a new currency to escape the shackles of the CFA franc, symbol of a servitude that broke the power of Ivorian freedom. In line with Tchuindjang Pouemi's analysis, these personalities wanted either an Ivorian currency outside a neocolonial marquee or a new African currency in line with Nkrumahist or Kaddafian pan-Africanism. Their economic and financial principle was the principle of inservitude, radically. This principle could never succeed. In the context of the unequal power

relations with France, led by an incoherent governance year after year, stifled by a charismatic-evangelical spiritualism voudouesque, dragged into a mad blindness that results in war crimes and crimes against humanity, the inservitude to the Ivorian created an imaginary hatred of the West in many young people heated by, an imaginary self-locking without a clear economic and financial line. It showed such a lack of knowledge of the current world order and the logic of its market laws that it could not get out of the field of sterile agitations and infertile brouhahas. With the fall of Laurent Gbagbo, it proved to have been nothing but a ruinous illusion, for lack of a new strategic pragmatism in the face of the bottleneck of the CFA system and its underlying ideology.

With the return of the houphouetists to power in Abidjan, Under the leadership of a president known everywhere as the perfect model of the mental formatting of Africans by the IMF or the World Bank, the FPI's libertarian desires in the economic, financial and monetary order of today's world are now proving to be a parenthesis, a mere accident in the history of a Côte d'Ivoire called to once again become the showcase of new success for an Africa under the capital of the international financial institutions.

If we look at the Ivorian situation as a paradigmatic situation where voluntary servitude and indiscriminate revolt have opposed each other, it is clear that money is not only the currency in present-day Africa and its economic realities: it is the very being of a society in a way, the being made visible in its essential choices and its fundamental orientations. In this, it is part of a political economy of the imagination.

What about the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo? From the economic negotiations in Brussels in 1960 to the present day, Congolese politics and the economy have never lived under the regime of freedom, even if temporary. They developed in the neocolonial order, with from time to time pretensions and desires for liberation quickly put

in their place by the Masters of the world. There were times when voluntary servitude served as a polar star and beacon for our place in the world, when the country was an ally of the United States, France and Belgium during the Cold War. We then had the monetary stability that those who held the real reins of our economy gave us. There was also a time when radical inservitude(6) tempted us, for a policy of greatness, as when President Mobutu discovered Mao Tse-Toung's China and zairianized our economy. The consequences were not long in coming: year after year our currency collapsed until it became a monkey currency whose inflation reached world records. Add to this the inability of political leaders and economic leaders to manage a modern country, Zaire currency became an expression of our economic inadequacy, political astonishment and endemic social disorganization: the expression of an imaginal chaotic enslavement and chronic impotence. It is not certain that we have come out of this system: the change of the name of the currency has not transformed anything into the substance of reality. This is our fundamental monetary problem, within the global economic and financial field where we are perceived today as a sick and disorganized country, unable not only to promote a credible order of freedom, but to be even simply able to obey the injunctions of the International Monetary Fund correctly, to become a more or less respectable student, more or less gifted, more or less responsible.

II.2. Responsible disconnection or realistic structural adjustment?

The Ivorian reality that we have evoked as a paradigm of a socio-political economy of the imagination leads us to a broader perception of the question of currency and the economy in Côte d'Ivoire and the DRC, to situate them at the scale of the entire African continent. A few decades ago, Samir Amin's work advocated disconnection as a process of responsibility that would take Africa out of the structures of

dependency so that it could think of its economic, financial and monetary system from its own requirements and internal interests. For two decades now, analysts such as Axel Kabou, Daniel Etounga-Manguelle and today, Achille Mbembe, have been offering Africans a pragmatism without a state of mind: “to adjust or perish”. Adjust to the global system in its mechanisms and logics or perish in the misery not only of economic insignificance, but of the disappearance of the African being as a force that counts in the world and on which the world can count.

If we include the problem of money in these debates between these two poles of Africa’s vision, it is clear that the ideological issues of freedom and sovereignty have given way to questions of effectiveness in solving one’s own problems, either on the basis of one’s own creative force or on the basis of a logic of control of the world market, in a vigorously successful adjustment. What counts are not utopian representations of a destiny fantasized in the purity of ideas of total and absolute liberation, but the construction of an imagination that is appropriate to solve problems and conquer power in a world where only power counts. The currency that is used only makes sense in the power it can endow a society with. Its importance is not the freedom it grants, but the global economic ties it allows to weave as an expression of power. In fact, it is power that is freedom, it is power that makes freedom. Disconnection is a path of power when it confers the power to dominate the world field from oneself. Structural adjustment pragmatism is also a power course if it forges relationships with others for power. Moreover, money flows are such in today's world that only the convertibility of each currency counts as an expression of its power and the power of wealth it makes possible. The issue is not: *Currency, bondage and freedom, but Currency, freedom and power.*

The Congolese geo-strategy specialist, Philippe Biyoya, expresses all this in a raw and abrupt way: in his eyes, the world today is managed

by a double dialectic. Namely: the dialectic of power and powerlessness, and the dialectic of wealth and poverty. The value of a currency in a country is the barometer of the position one occupies in this dialectic. Strong currencies are the expression of wealth and power; weak currencies, the expression of fragility and impotence. We are not just talking about economic-financial fragility and impotence. We talk about the fragility and powerlessness of the very being of a nation in its fundamental dynamics: its creative intelligence, its organizing consciousness and its sense of values that give a people the impetus towards greatness.

What about the DRC? In the socio-political economy of the Congolese imagination, the system of the dollar as the dominant currency, the Congolese franc as a back-up currency to the dollar as well as the Ugandan Shilling, the Angolan Kuanza and the Rwandan Franc as daily realities of certain regions of the country, functions as a suffered and increasingly inescapable order. This reality is significant: it reveals the economic spirit of the nation, the real state of the state and the situation of the financial imagination of the people.

If the dollar has become the centre of the DRC's economic and financial structure, it is no accident. It is after a long process of the decay of the entire economic system and the collapse of the Congolese state that society has gradually reorganized itself around the dollar, in a context of war and generalized disorder, without a substantive reflection capable of integrating this reality into the national monetary economy. The financial policies attempted by Laurent Désiré Kabila to control and integrate the Congolese economy more rationally into the world economy on the basis of the principle of sovereignty have not yielded convincing results. The dollarization of the economy has prevailed in the context of the weaknesses of the Congolese state and the lack of control of its governance in the monetary field. The Central Bank has been subjected to the movement instead of pushing it. For national and

international economic operators, this solution was good because it allowed to be on a level playing field in the world's monetary circuits, despite the disorganization of the Congolese economy, whose Congolese franc has remained a local reality of internal management. This is a reality that economists say does not even cover a quarter of the DRC's real monetary economy. Professor Noel Tshianyi's state of affairs on this subject is appalling: neither in banking nor in the deployment of concrete monetary circuits, the Congolese are in control of their economic destiny. Hence the insignificance of the currency and the omnipotence of the dollar in the country. As the state itself is broken into several pieces of economic and financial realities, other currencies are establishing themselves as pillars of parallel economies, making Congo an uncontrolled monetary space, with parts of functioning that escape the state while accommodating citizens, those who are in the world economy as well as those in purely national circuits. From the point of view of the economic and monetary imagination, this disorder and weakness seem to suit the current state of a Congo without sovereignly sound economic structuring.

How do we get out of this situation? Not by decreeing from the top of the political pulpit the de-dollarization of the economy. Since the dollarization has responded to a certain specific situation of governance and fragile state, it is on these causes that we must first act so that the socio-economic imagination of the populations is convinced that another system of monetary functioning is in its interest in the current state of affairs. This means that before being purely economic, the problem is political, ethical and socio-cultural. It is by reforming the state, establishing credible governance, creating public confidence in its political system and giving Congolese economic operators real power over the fundamental pillars of the economic system that we will be able to lay the foundations for a new economy of which the Congolese franc could become the lever: a sign of power and wealth for a country

capable of building its future in a world whose economic competition between nations is the bottom blade. De-dollarization would then be a responsible disconnection, in the sense of centralization of Congo on itself in its interests, in its problems to be solved and in its power of creativity at the heart of an economy that would not be afraid of globalization and its logics, but which would fight on equal terms with other countries, refusing to be the underling of the current powers of the world. Without this ambition shared by all the people in a situation of trust in its leaders and economic institutions, de-de-reliance on the Congolese economy would make no sense either for the imagination of the nation or for purely financial efficiency. It would only be a thoughtless and ruinous measure, as were other measures in the country's history: Zairianization, demonetization, retrocession and the multiple devaluation operations of Zaire currency in Mobutu's time.

II.3. When new economic hopes are born: a shudder to be strengthened

However, according to Prime Minister Matata Ponyo Mapon in a speech to the Congolese Senate, the situation is changing and current developments are already allowing for new hopes, a new visible shudder. In the style of brilliant economism that suits him well to impress the public, he described the new climate of economic awakening of the country, no doubt the emergence of a new socio-economic imagination which he hopes will reach all segments of the population in waves of confidence more and more abundant. In a peaceful undisguised satisfaction, the head of government sees the situation in the country with magnifying macro-economic glasses. The economy is doing well with growth that tends to exceed 8%. Inflation is under control. "As far as public finances are concerned, the execution of the state's financial operations has become rigorous, responsible and growth-enhancing. The borders of corruption and fraud have receded

significantly.” Whether it is the trade balance, exchange rates, the level of international reserves, the central bank’s key rates of operations, the number of commercial banks, we are not far from being in the land of plenty or living in a Congo that has become an economic eldorado. In terms of the monetary situation that we are particularly interested in here, Matata Ponyo Mapon’s complacency reaches the highest of the heavens.

“The introduction of the high-value denominations of CF 1,000, FC 5,000, FC 10,000 and FC 20,000 has not destabilized, as in the past, the macro-economic framework. On the contrary, the level of domestic prices has remained stable, and the external value of the national currency, an exceptional thing, has even consolidated. Many Congolese now prefer the national currency over foreign currencies. This is a de facto de-dollarization induced by the remarkable stability of our national currency, which now inspires more confidence among users.”

In such a context of self-glorification, it becomes easy to magnify the great achievements present and future: “the revival of agriculture”, “national road reunification”, the purchase of locomotives, the acquisition of three hundred buses, “the revival of river transport”, the improvement of education, the imminent construction of a new airport, the creation of a microfinance institution, “payroll banking” , the re-launch of SOFIDE “the establishment of a fund to support small entrepreneurs”, the purchase of equipment to improve infrastructure, and the improvement of Congolese’s water and electricity services.

Whatever the doses of self-suggestion, announcement effects, Coué method and propaganda of good will in this vision of Congo by the Prime Minister; whatever the weight of mystification and have you seen me in the language of the head of government in relation to the real situation of the country, it must be said that the will to move forward is visible, so as not to discourage the Congolese people and push them into pessimism and fatalism. No doubt we must go even further in this

direction, but we must not forget to hold the language of truth to the Congolese not economically whose government Matata Ponyo Mapon has made its workhorse, but on the whole political, cultural, social and spiritual reality of the citizens.

From this point of view, the Prime Minister is not fooled by his own language. He says, “The greatness of a nation is never given, it must be won.” Won on what? On the habituation to the old habits of economic unreason and anti-value that the country has suffered since the Mobutist era and which keep us in chronic impoverishment of ourselves. On the lack of ‘commercial, technological and ecological rationalities’ without which one cannot become a great country today. On the inability to see and analyze what makes the strength of countries that have managed to emerge from underdevelopment and emerge as a nation of the future: the power to undertake “courageous, difficult, painful, but beneficial reforms”; in fact, the strength to change the economic, financial and monetary imagination to face the realities of today's world and achieve a global dynamic of emergence.

It is worth saying that, on the one hand, there is an attitude of hyper-criticism that can be adopted in the face of the Congolese economic, financial and monetary system based on the history of our nation since independence, and on the other hand the attitude of propagandist hyper-satisfaction which obscures the awareness of the gigantic obstacles that Congo faces today, there is room for a confident lucidity. The one that sees our real flaws and our real assets at the same time. And who draws theoretical and practical demands for the future.

II.4. Neither Keynes, Friedman, nor Stiglitz: the imagination of SAPE, bindo and vimba

One of our monumental flaws in Congo, it is the absence of a fertile theory, a great and fruitful theoretical framework that would have informed our choices according to the rationalities, values and utopias

that Prime Minister Matata Ponyo Mapon is now discovering: a certain idea of the greatness and destiny of the country, a certain idea of the power to create in the face of the misery and disarray of the people and a certain idea of strategies to defeat ourselves in our own imaginal defeat through new dreams of creativity.

It is striking that, since the days of Mobutism, the Congolese economy has not been driven by any serious theoretical line, neither endogenous nor exogenous. At the beginning of the Mobutu years, everyone had believed that Congolese economic structures were those of capitalism, according to the logic of the “glorious thirty” enlightened by Keynes’s theories on the framework of individual initiative through the regulatory intervention of the state. In the wake of the Mobutian megalomania and its grotesque fantasies of the politics of authenticity, the economists of the Second Republic ignored Keynes. They were not even inspired by Hayek and all the liberals who extolled absolute confidence in market intelligence, the only regulatory force for economic realities according to neoliberal pontiffs like Friedman and laissez-faire politicians like Reagan in the United States or Thatcher in Britain. To the extent that, for the Zaire of yesteryear, it was out of the question to resort to the planned economy of the socialist or communist camp, a theoretical alternative to capitalism or neo-liberalism was not possible. Congolese economic thought then unable to fit into a research that could enlighten Mobutu in times of dictatorial madness. It became engulfed in Mobutism, which had become an economic, financial and monetary wandering. In essence, throughout his reign, Mobutu had neither a true economic thought, nor a solid financial compass, nor a reliable monetary logic. In the absence of all this, Congo was created an imaginal authenticity in line with the economic incompetence of the Mobutu system. In this imagination, wealth is not created by effort or work, but by the means of ease: embezzlement of public funds, corruption and organized fraud. When Mobutu zirianized the economy

by handing over to incompetent Congolese the companies and industries belonging to competent foreigners, he established an economy of predation and fraud. When he embarked on a demonetization that impoverished many honest citizens, everyone lost confidence in his monkey money. When his entourage invented the system called “Bindo”, which consisted of baiting citizens with promises of quick gain on short-term savings supposedly repayable at 50 or even 100% before disappearing all these savings in a gigantic financial waste, the essence of Mobutu’s economic system was revealed: pure and simple public theft, organized in favor of a small class of flamboyant predators , armoured in foil, which impoverished the country and stunned in a spirit of the Congolese “SAPE”, this way of living only to give itself bright appearances while one is nothing in the depth of his being. The economy of “Bindo” and “SAPE”, that of a population that one of our Congolese thinkers called “the children of Mobutu and Papa Wemba”, is the Congo as the Marshal-Leopard killed the sense of effort and work, enclosing it in the sarcophagus of misery and in the cycle of poverty from which the Congolese have not yet. We still see it today when the imagination of our people is heated by a new slogan launched by musician Jossart Nyoka Longo: “Vimba”. That is, “Roll the mechanics” no matter what situation you are going through. The Prime Minister did so in the Senate, with some success.

This means that the post-Mobutist period, caught in the grip of ultraliberal globalization, has also not found a global theory capable of helping the country to control its economic destiny and to gain a prominent place in the world order. No Congolese theory worthy of the name has been developed. When the slogan of the social market economy was launched when Laurent Désiré Kabila came to power, everyone knew that it meant nothing consistent for the Congolese economy. The president was flying in the sidereal void of Maoism and

badly digested castrism, as if it were still 1960. His entourage swam in a junk capitalism, poorly controlled, and mingled with sterile references to obsolete African values and a completely empty lacanism *made* Yerodia Ndombasi, the grey Eminence of the erratic economic system of Laurent Désiré Kabila. The ideology of the market was invoked to attract Western sympathies, but the competence to master the true logics of the market was not there. The chief managed the state's economy as a village shopkeeper or as a crooked trader who steals his own money. Those who held the reins of governance began to enrich themselves at all costs, in a dynamic of plunder worthy of the most delusional times of economic Mobutism.

The situation has not changed to date, and that is what the current Prime Minister understood and said in the manner of politicians in his speech on *Congo's economic awakening* to the Senators: he delivers above all dithyrambic phrases about the successes of his government, to better highlight the gigantic theoretical and practical challenges facing the nation. Challenges that cannot be met without a radical conversion of the socio-political economy of the Congolese imagination on the basis of a new global vision and a new economic theory that is both ambitious and pragmatic.

The country is dying of a lack of theoretical backbone and a lack of a pragmatic and ambitious vision in economic, financial and monetary matters. These shortcomings, neither the agitation around the politics of the five yards, nor the noisy exaltation of *the revolution of modernity* can fill them. More is needed, and the Prime Minister's Speech in the Senate, beyond its white fumes of self-glorification, has indicated the way of this more to be done without fruitfully theorizing the demands. He has locked himself into economism where he feels relatively safe when the problems he poses go beyond the economic field to embrace questions of politics, culture, mentality, being and imagination. When, even the International Monetary Fund fails to tie Congo to the rules of

the world market by obtaining a rigorous governance attitude from our country's leaders; when he struggles and sweats a thousand injunctions to force our leaders to seriously tackle corruption and mafia practices; when war becomes in the country the opportunity to build fabulous wealth in an economy of crime, looting and predation of the country by its own elites, it is clear that the problem is not purely economic. It's a problem of deep pathologies. The problem of a Congo of economic ignorance, which the people know has no one at the helm of its ship to effectively steer it into the world order itself currently in turmoil; the problem of a culture of maintained inconsistency and accepted chaos, in a vacuum of guiding theory and fertile practices based on intelligence, values and creative utopias.

To pose the problem of the de-dollarization of the Congolese monetary system in such a context is really, as the popular saying goes, putting the cart before the oxen. The dominance of the dollar in the Congolese economy does not prevent anyone from sleeping. Rather, it is integrated with ease into the socio-political economy of the country's imagination: the economy of violence, chaos and predation.

We must change this imagination, we must change the country in its real functioning in order to be able to extract the dollar as a monetary foundation of our field of life, for the sake of our sovereign freedom or by the power of our creative dynamism, realities that are not the most shared thing in Congo today. In these circumstances, the Prime Minister's de-dollarizing obsession is a referral error: with a program of action dominated by the all-economic, man is cutting off his political wings and ethical springs without which, in Congo, no horizon of social happiness will open up. The geo-strategist Philippe Biyoya has said forcefully, the political scientist Arsène Mwaka added: thinking about economic change without a political compass or ethical ferment is nothing but ruin of the future.

The government itself knows all of this. We see him accommodating the coexistence of Congolese franc wages on Congolese soil while, on the same soil, whole sections of the economy running on the dollar. Civil servants are paid in Congolese francs while school and university tuition fees are charged in dollars, the most officially in the world. The financial sector which is, as they say, to the economy what blood is to the human body is manifestly disorganized, or even in ruins, while one needs its health for the health of the whole economy so that the country walks and succeeds in its development. The new high-value notes have not yet succeeded, whatever the head of government says, to restore a real weight of confidence to the national franc in a system where the dollar reigns as a happy dictator. If all this is lived in peace, it is a sign that we know one thing: the real problem is elsewhere and must be tackled with rigor.

In fact, we have a problem of ethical leadership and economic efficiency that we must solve, here and now.

If he spoke as he did in the Senate in a magnificent diplomacy of language, it is a sign that Matata Ponyo Mapon is realizing that there needs to be a policy other than that of satisfying economic demands: the policy of change of the Congolese being in his creative imagination.

II.5. Rethinking Congo's fate globally

Let's put it another way: if the problem is not just economic, financial and monetary; if it concerns the Congolese being, the foundations of the whole nation as well as the political and socio-cultural values to be shared according to a destiny of freedom and power, it is another vision of the economy, fertilized by the seeds of a good policy that Congo needs. Or more precisely: it is from another global socio-political economy of the imagination that the nation needs, a dynamic of our country's new imagination in the place it must aspire to occupy in the world, given its demographic weight, its natural and human resources,

its popular aspirations for freedom and its need to be respected in the concert of nations, thanks to a real policy of power.

From this perspective, the country needs an ethical revolution in its global governance and especially in its economic management. Since the time of Mobutu, we have been plagued in Congo by corruption, by the culture of incompetence and by the privatization of national wealth, with the long-term consequence of the collapse, political and social chaos that we are currently suffering from. The neo-mobutism that prevails in the vision of the state, governance and economy in today's Congo is not the way to invent a future of development, prosperity and happiness. It will not be stopped just with strictly monetary or economic measures. We need an ethical revolution that puts the economy at the service of the nation, at the service of man; in a Congo that unleashes its creative genius through a sense of freedom and responsibility. It is this humanism that needs to be promoted and developed. Firmly, vigorously, intensely.

The voices which are well aware of the catastrophic situation in the DRC have explicitly stated this in the framework peace agreement signed in Addis Ababa under the aegis of the United Nations, when they propose to the country the real priorities of today:

Continuing and deepening the reform of the security sector, particularly with regard to the military and police,

Consolidating the authority of the state, particularly in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, including by preventing armed groups from destabilizing neighbouring countries.

Making progress on decentralization.

Promoting economic development, including on infrastructure expansion and the provision of basic social services.

Promoting structural reform of state institutions, including financial reform, and

Promoting the goals of national reconciliation, tolerance and democratization.

The success of all these measures is conditioned by the emergence of a strong ethic, which elevates us as a nation above purely economic-financial measures such as de-dollarization in an emergency program. Today, it is not de-dollarization that is at the center of our priorities in Congo, it is Congo itself as a nation and state to reinvent, to re-create, to build in a global creative dynamism, on the basis of a fundamental ethic for a new community being, in all sections of the population. The real revolution to be made is this one. It is the condition of all the other revolutions to build the Congo of economic greatness, the Congo of the *commercial power*, the *technological power* and the *ecological power* that the head of government dreamed of before the Senators and before the whole nation.

Chapter III

CAN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT AID ORGANIZATIONS DRIVE AFRICA'S EMERGENCE?

The real problem and the real issues

III.0. Introduction

The issue to which we devote this reflection is of concern to many African researchers. It concerns the exact role of international financial institutions and development aid organizations in Africa. Are they a ferment within African countries that they can lead to become emerging countries, in the style of language, or are they obstacles and obstacles to the liberation of minds, the independence of action and the construction of political, economic, social and cultural institutions for another possible Africa? Can they really help build an Africa that would emerge once and for all from the innumerable crises it has suffered since the beginning of the modern era? Are they able to propel into the world an African society that would resolutely turn to a destiny of greatness and power, as a continent capable of counting in the world and being a human entity on which all humanity can count?

III.1. Background to the question

This is not a new question. It has been at the heart of African debates throughout our decades of independence. During the euphoria of Africa's early years of political self-determination, it took the form of a struggle against what was sometimes referred to as neocolonialism. But this struggle did not give the new independent countries a strong internal capacity to define what kind of new relations they could and should forge with the former colonizers. It was the period of the Cold

War and the bipolarity of the world in this context emptied the independence of any possibility of endogenous decision in development and insertion into the order of the world from the continent's own interests. Independent Africa was more in a de facto situation than it was impeding a new destiny. It was caught in the whirlwind of a story that had been configured after the Second World War. It was this story of turbulence that gave rise to international institutions and organizations responsible for structuring the world's politics and economy: the United Nations, the IMF and the World Bank. It is in it and through it that the world economy will be regulated according to interests whose cold war has clearly shown that they are power interests between two antagonistic poles: two ideologies, two worldviews, two prospects for the future.

The capitalist and communist order thus held Africa in a shad and all the problems of independent African nations could not be dealt with by Africans freely. The independence of the 1960s was generally a decoy and an illusion, with emblems that had no political or economic consistency. The best Africans were aware of this tragic situation, but they were silenced either by assassination, by forced neutralization or by co-optation in the ruling system.

What was the purpose of international institutions and organizations during this period? To promote three logics, essentially⁽¹²⁾:

- The logic of humanitarianism in situations of disastrous armed conflicts such as Biafra and Congo-Kinshasa, as well as in disasters of social collapse such as famine in Ethiopia and the Sahel.
- The logic of direct military interventions to close the gaps in the tragedies created by the bipolar international order, as in the Congolese chaos where United Nations peacekeepers rushed to save the country from implosion.
- The logic of development aid granted to political regimes that did not understand its meaning and which often used it in total irrationality and

according to the imperatives of consolidating authoritarian regimes at the pay of the powers of the Cold War.

None of these logics has been a logic of the development of peoples. No independent African nation in the context of the Cold War was able, thanks to these logics, to develop a real policy or a real economy of human promotion. Even less of a culture and an imaginal development. International financial institutions and development aid organizations were very agitated during this period and put enormous resources at stake in Africa. They have developed multiple support and structural adjustment plans. But all this was not really at the service of a powerful project to build a new Africa. Mobutu's Zaire was a typical example of the inanity of what these organizations and institutions undertook in Africa with bloodthirsty dictatorial powers: the land of *the Big Works for Zero*, as a well-inspired comedian put it, which translated the acronym of the German organization GTZ. In its cartoonish nature, the emblematic case of Zaire has prompted analysts to offer extreme hypotheses of explanation to understand what really happened: either international financial institutions and development aid organizations are formatted to never serve as an engine, impulse, lever or ferment of development; or the Africans they come to help are culturally unfit to develop. The two theses share the scope of the discussions of the African intelligentsia in its pathetic and sterile jousts. But are they really the real problem?

With the end of the Cold War and the triumph of neoliberal capitalism and its market ideology, it was once believed that the world had become unipolar and that the West would restructure the planet according to its interests, certainly, but with a touch of ethics in a liberalism with a human face. Unfortunately, this time of illusion did not last long in the imagination of Africans. Neither the IMF, nor the World Bank, nor the WTO, nor development support organizations, nor even the fuzzy set

referred to as the international community understood that it was necessary to fundamentally change course and move away from the logics of the global system in its vision of Africa. Far from this, the only novelty of this period was the exponential growth of NGOs that were supposed to replace the failed states to get closer to the local lands in the name of credible local development. A development that was not realized was impossible in the context of a global policy without a compass, unable to move towards a true and profound human promotion. This lack of compass was verified in blind political decisions. The United States launched an astonishing African renaissance in the name of which it let go of its former allies like Mobutu to saddle up new figures like Aferworki (Eritrea), Zenawi (Ethiopia), Museveni (Uganda), Kagame (Rwanda), without wondering if it was really in Africa's interest to cultivate a renaissance conceived elsewhere. The international community did not know how to deal with the crisis in Rwanda and a full-scale genocide was perpetrated in that country in front of UN soldiers. With the boomerang effect the destabilization of the entire Great Lakes Region which entered the midst of turbulence.

Congo-Zaire, a typical example of the failure of international development and security policies, then began its decent to hell. Today, it is home to the largest UN peacekeeping mission, the largest number of NGOs per square kilometer in each city, and at the same time it is the biggest humanitarian disaster since World War II: more than six million people have died, according to the most serious and reliable estimates. Is it a coincidence? At this level, the hypotheses put forward also oscillate between two extremes in the African intelligentsia: financial institutions, development aid organizations and international NGOs are formatted to drown the Congo in the hellish depths of underdevelopment; or the Congolese are victims of an incurable collective imbecility syndrome (13). Both equally fruitless hypotheses,

which do not pose the real problem at all. It must be added that today, we cannot consider these hypotheses without realizing that the context of the world that we thought was bipolar is not at all. We are actually living in a situation of globalization, or rather, of multi-lateralist confrontation between globalization and alter-globalization.

At the heart of globalization, which was initially seen as the triumph of the West and the westernization of the world, one realizes that new powers are emerging: China, India, Brazil and other dragons over which the West no longer rules at all.

In the camp of alter-globalization, civil society has structured itself into a spider's web to demand another possible world. Requirements of another economy and an ecological dynamic of development are taking shape. New forces of imagination and intelligence have ceased to believe in the West's ability to give the world values for the future. And there is a feeling that there is no pilot in the jumbo jet that is our current world. Many pilots each have their own logic and seek to take advantage of a situation where underground confrontations give rise to and develop completely selfish identity irrationalities and mafia illogicalities while destroying the global regulatory efforts that organizations like the WTO seek to make flourish for a solidarity globalization. Even the emergence of human rights NGOs and the solidification of nation observation structures from an ethical perspective with dynamics such as Green Peace, Amnesty International, Human Right Watch or Transparency International has not guaranteed global stability for the overall development of humanity. The world is fighting for the birth of the new path that would guarantee it a future, as Edgar Morin would say.

This is a new context in which, in the words of Amin Malouf, all games are open, in a global arena where nations and continents sharpen their strategies of presence in the world market and deploy their development policies by taking advantage of their own strengths. This is in order to

influence the actions of international institutions and global organizations.

Africa is living in this new situation of the world. The real problem is no longer whether international institutions and development aid organizations are good or bad for our countries, but what to do and what response needs to be imagined to become so. How can we bend them to our will and make them an asset and not an obstacle? How can we solidify our action powers and organizational energies so that the game and the world's issues are in our favour? By what mechanisms do we have to stop suffering a fate in order to build a destiny ourselves? It is a problem of change of course and orientation in our vision of the planet.

We must no longer be afraid of the supposed formatting of the world's major organizations for our failure. Rather, we should draw on our strategic sense to make this weakness our strength. This means breaking with the tensions, fatalisms, chills and despairs that characterize us in Africa to get out of our syndrome of immobility and build an imaginal intelligence and will to conquer. This is from the perspective of an alter nativeization that is resolutely forward-looking. Basically, it is a matter of changing ourselves in order to change the order of the world, according to the old philosophical wisdom. It is a question of organizing our structures of being and life in order to be able to organize the structures of the world and the construction dynamics of the future. With an uninhibited and combative Africa.

III.2. Actors

To do this, an analysis of the actors of the current situation of globalization and globalization is useful and instructive. It integrates the work of international financial institutions and development aid organizations into the strategies that are being implemented in the world's current battles.

The first actor to focus on all the fantasies of Africans is the West. It is falsely seen as a monolithic entity that hatches conspiracies, refine conspiracies and devises strategies to keep African countries in eternal underdevelopment, in order to better establish endless domination over all humanity. This mythologized West would have in its hands visible or occult institutions and organizations, at the service of vampire and cannibal powers whose secret services are ready to promptly eliminate any African leader in love with independence and freedom. In an irresistible mesh of the whole planet, he places everywhere his minions, his pawns, his *illuminati* without faith or law, without tenderness or pity. It thus weakens any desire for resistance or revolt in the countries it dominates, through structures such as Françafrique or Francophonie. Between the clutches of such an evil system, everything would be lost for Africa.

Everything and for a very long time. It is said that one only has to look at the international conspiracy against the poor and pitiful Democratic Republic of Congo, which one wants to exploit and skin, to get an idea of the ferocity of Western logics towards Africa. All the ogres, all the vultures gather around a nation they murder with military interventions, humanitarian aid or development support.

To think of the West, international institutions and development aid organizations in this way is to forget that everything has a history and that history is made up of changes and metamorphoses that are imposed according to immutable logics or according to the choices and decisions of men. The West of the Cold War is not the West of today's globalization. Within this story, the United States is not a single reality, under Clinton, under Bush Jr. or under Obama. Crises such as Greece, Spain or Portugal have nothing to do with the German situation or the state of the Scandinavian countries. Whenever new challenges arise, the West in its diversity and tensions thinks again about its multiple interests, country by country, or all together, to imagine strategies that

are not defined in advance and cannot be summed up in a Luciferian will to kill Africa and feed on its corpse. The financial institutions it dominates and development aid organizations are also reviewing their strategies in response to basic changes, necessary metamorphoses and desirable reforms. However, these changes, metamorphoses and fundamental reforms are now visible in a vast global phenomenon: the emergence of new powers and the new impulses of change through this very emergence. Let's call it proof by the BRICS.

Nothing predisposed these countries to impose themselves on the world stage. A few decades ago, they too, like Africa, were inclined to suffer the omnipotence and morgue of those who thought they were absolute masters of the world. But when they understand that the world is an open arena where one must sharpen one's own weapons and strategies in front of others; an arena where, as in martial arts, it is necessary to know how to use the forces of the adversary to defeat him, they have discovered that the secret is in the gray matter and in the will to conquer. The face of the world is transformed. This is evident in Africa, where China has become a major player in global geo-strategy. This is thanks to a clear political will, a rigorous concern for organization, the imagination of new strategies of action and one of the fiercest will to win in the global economic field today. China's current Minister of Foreign Relations characterizes this dynamic as a theoretical and practical innovation whose substantive ideas are those of peaceful development, win-win economic and political relations, mutually beneficial multilateralism and openness to the world with a view to a future of prosperity, even at the cost of great and heavy sacrifices.

China is China, and Africa is Africa, they will say. And we would probably add, with malice: we must not compare the incomparable. There is neither the same mentality, nor the same culture, nor the same level of social intelligence, nor even collective will. Africa, determined by the mentality and culture of slaves, will find it difficult to recover

from its atavisms to become a political tiger and an economic dragon. Too weak, too extroverted, too caught in the clutches of the neocolonial Ogre, she is unable to unleash springs of creativity and invention of new destiny.

Reasoning may appeal to some, but it is specious. He forgets that Africa too is not a monolithic bloc. She has got a story. She's sensitive to mutations. She knows how to seize opportunities to jump and bounce back. In spite of all that can be said, the independences were for her a splendid moment of leaping and bouncing. Despite the weaknesses it has shown in its democratization, it has lived with its national conferences of the 1990s as a time of leaps and bounds. Fierce and bloodthirsty dictatorships are no longer his dominant mode of politics. And today, it is no longer Africa that is sinking at its peak and is doomed to economic and financial starvation as was said just two decades ago. There is increasing talk now of the emergence of African political lions and economic tigers, for countries that understand the urgency and meaning of the useful reforms to be undertaken now in order to get out of the victimization complex in which a certain African discourse is intertwined and bored.

Moreover, Africa now knows that it can open itself, through its intelligence and will, to other spheres of relations, outside the routines of our relations with the Western world whose dominance over financial institutions and development aid organizations is no longer absolute or long-lasting. The multi-laterality of the possibilities of political and economic ties has become a major asset. Even the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is believed to be a social chaos par excellence, a state vacuum and a chasm for international aid, even it, in its disarray, seeks to China for flashes of rescue. Even she, in her wanderings and her problems of security and unity, gradually understands that it is necessary to take advantage of international financial organizations and development aid organizations to

reorganize in what the philosopher Kaumba Lufunda Samajiku calls the awakening of the giant. Even if this dynamic is not yet very visible and would still suffer from a clear lack of organization and action, it is highly sensitive in intellectual debates and in the popular imagination whose concern and desire for change are permanent. At the *Congo Awakening Club*, we no longer hesitate to talk about the new Congolese dream and invest all our faith in it. This is a new groundswell that will no doubt reorient the vision of the presence and role of international organizations and international financial institutions in the DRC.

These organizations and institutions are themselves undergoing changes. They question their vocation and move towards a radical questioning of the work they have done in Africa. When one is sensitive to their reports of activities, their reports on the situation of a country like the DRC and their strategy documents, it would be difficult to consider them simply as small invisible hands of murderous neocolonialism or patented ogres to precipitate the African continent into the black hole of misery and underdevelopment. They are concerned about the lack of results in their development policies, which, however, invest monumental financial resources. They wonder which local actors are working with for more fertility in development. They sometimes despair of having to cooperate with political authorities with corrupt attitudes and attitudes, just as they exult when the digital economy propels countries like Nigeria or Ghana to the forefront of the world. It is enough to analyse without a soul the policies of the institutions that represent the European Union in Africa and to work closely with the personalities who lead them to understand that their real anguish is not to participate in a planned shipwreck of the African continent, but not to be able to lead the continent to take its place of choice in the world economy. Even if there are mafia trusts and conglomerates of exploitation, plunder and predation, they are not the ones who design and guide development policies in the current world

order, in the West or elsewhere. The essentials today lie on another level: in the quest for rules that can, in one way or another and gradually lead the African continent to take its destiny into its own hands and become strong enough to withstand the powers of the economy of plunder, exploitation and predation. In this situation of questioning and reassessment of themselves, aid organizations to Africa feel that the world has changed and that peaceful global development in the win-win dynamic will increasingly become a central concept in global ethics that will gradually be built. It is from this perspective that it is good to look at them today in Africa so that Africa can make them not a Trojan horse for the destruction of our countries, but the silt, lever and possible ferment of a new opening to the world.

III.3. New development challenges

The question today is therefore not whether international institutions and development aid organisations can be at the service of the development of the African continent. It is how to make them so in the new context of the world, in a great fruitfulness of initiatives and a burning effervescence of actions, with Africans able to take the destiny of Africa into their own hands. They will only become so if the impetus is given from within Africa itself, thanks to the resources of intelligence, will and organization of the ruling elites and the African populations themselves. It is the change of direction and direction within African countries, or more precisely, in the momentum of a United Africa for its freedom, prosperity and development, that the new role of the so-called international community will become visible within global financial institutions and organizations. Contrary to what is believed: it is not these institutions and organizations that make men and societies what they want them to be; it is men and societies that make these structures and institutions what they must be deeply. In an Africa organized as an intelligent entity based on pan-African action

driven by the African Union, no international organization will be able to dominate our continent. But in an Africa crumbled into countries without political ethics or economic coherence, the world's smallest development NGO and largest financial trusts will make the law, aided by lawless local political and financial elites. Hence the urgency to see the emergence of new African leaders who are not propelled to power and manipulated by foreign powers hostile to the real interests of the party. Hence also the urgent need to provide Africa with new training places for these new leaders.

The stakes are in fact these: to build a united Africa around strong African institutions, to develop the social intelligence of elites and populations in our countries, to create an imaginal of the will to defeat and make our peoples dream of an African dynamic of greatness, power and community happiness. It is at the heart of these issues that international organizations can make sense for Africa: to contribute to its development, as they said yesterday, to its emergence, as they say today. Thanks to the genius of Africa itself.

III.3. Conclusion

So the problem is entirely in our hands of Africans today. It is in our ability to assume the strength of our freedom and the power of our creativity in today's world, without any complexity of any kind or feeling of not being up to the task of our development.

When we take root in the creative power that is in itself and we organize ourselves to make it the lever of relationships to be forged with others, we enrich these others and let ourselves be enriched by them.

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