The Limits of Economics: Globalization - From a Cornucopia to a Goblet of Poison?

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Wolfgang Sassin. The Limits of Economics: Globalization - From a Cornucopia to a Goblet of Poison? After the coronavirus crisis, a so-called reconstruction program of the European Union was adopted, initiated by French President Macron and German Chancellor Merkel. It is intended to counteract the far-reaching consequences of the extensive economic and social isolation in the face of COVID-19. However, Corona has undoubtedly been and will continue to be a catalyst that accelerates the inevitable transformation of what we call modern global and universal civilization, whether within the borders of the Eurasian area or beyond. The article examines why, in general, investments in global climate protection or in programs for the comprehensive digitalization of the planet, which is also the aim of the reconstruction program of the EU, will not eliminate the obvious structural distortions in the Eurasian economy caused by the acting individuals of the first two decades of the 21st century.

Key words: globalization, digitization, Eurasia, economics, globalism, Cornucopia, urban space
PART 1. ANAMNESIS

HUMAN RELATIONS AND ECONOMICS

There are many stories that could be written about human relations, humanism, socialism, material and information exchange. In all of them justice plays an essential role, indeed this idea tries to summarize all interpersonal relationships on another, higher level.

Whatever is exchanged in detail connects and commits individuals equally. Institutions mediate between individuals. Individuals, however, are quite different from each other in many ways. This creates problems in any system that seeks to "mediate" between many individuals. In order to avoid the resulting complexity, economists therefore prefer to measure justice simply in terms of „heads“, usually the per capita income or per capita wealth of an average citizen, and declare it the decisive reference value. Some members of a society are then richer than the average, others poorer. A "poor" in a "rich" society can therefore be much "richer" than a "rich" in a "poor" society.

Interestingly, modern constitutions do not stipulate the striving for wealth but the striving for happiness. All the more the question arises what rich and poor really mean. This question is all the more critical when one looks back over generations and asks about justice or the gaps that open up between nomads, farmers, cattle breeders, self-employed or employed people - and not only today, but also in the times of Caesar or the Roi-Soleil Louis XIV, after whom the Jacobins wanted to establish "justice" by means of the French Revolution.

The sense of "justice" as each individual may perceive it, regardless of statistics and historical periods, remains with the individual (Chuzi 2020; Lindahl 2018; Rappaport 2020). It cannot be generalized or "averaged" (Epstein 1979; Fairgrieve and Howells 2009). It is not the great masses or in the meantime even humanity as a whole that are happy or unhappy. No matter if you are in a jet plane on your way to a wellness resort, or if you have to do the laundry for tourists or even clean the toilets as an employee, rich and poor are always related to special circumstances. They are therefore relative. The economy looks very narrowly at the "citizen". Economists group existing individuals with special characteristics, abilities and life ambitions according to their special questions. So similar to biology, a taxon is created that can be "delimited" in monetary terms, i.e. a statistically defined unit to which very different individuals are assigned on the basis of a few external criteria. As a result, the idea of an abstract normative system is formed, in comparison to which individuals can only be "defined" as rich or poor. Such abstractly defined "figures", debit or credit people are perfectly suited for political entertainment. Above all, they are ideal for the justification of paternalism, guided education, the enforcement of politically correct language and even brainwashing by media. Because emotions are supposed to orient themselves by values, by ideas of how community should be lived. Such constructs connect, indeed they create communities of anonymous people in spirit, who would seek to reduce differences between people as much as possible.
Natural emotions reach as far as our natural senses do reach. In addition, thoughts wander, condense into assumptions, are laid down in the form of dogmas in holy books and thus passed on from generation to generation - until the environment in which the individual finds himself is fundamentally changed, because the herd with which he moves has ventured into alien territories and lost its way there. Then sacred dogmas necessarily fall out of "their" time. Unfortunately, this is also true for any social and societal theory, especially for economics.

The quest for efficiency, for exponential growth, for innovation for its own sake, has led *homo sapiens* to extraordinarily strange territories. That there is a huge difference between a city that two or three centuries ago housed a few thousand citizens and made them "free" and the hot spots of global urbanization, and even that megacities are no longer cities that make people free, is confusing.

"Scientific" dogmas, even constitutions based on the foundation of individual justice, therefore provide as little orientation as the nautical charts with which conquistadors once set off for the New World and went into an unknown jungle in search of the legendary El Dorado, where they lost their way irredeemably.

**THE ECONOMY OF URBANIZED SOCIETIES**

The closer unknown people come to each other, whether in the queues in front of supermarket checkouts, in crowded sports arenas, in the traffic jams that build up on public infrastructures or in front of social services, in the emergency rooms of hospitals, or when visiting scarce housing in the hot spots of modern life - densification not only creates shorter distances, facilitates communication, saves precious time, and therefore allows that economic surplus that we collectively worship as growth. Compaction in space and time inevitably also generates frictional losses. It forces standardization and demands control. Above a certain level it leads to sudden "phase transitions" that release enormous energies because people resist the loss of their individual freedom. The phenomena of phase transitions and changes in the "state of aggregation" are not limited to physical space; they are also found in information space and in the human psyche. With them, apparent "side effects" suddenly become the "main thing", the stumbling block. They suddenly and fundamentally change a pressurized mass. Its inner structure changes. In particular, the degrees of freedom of the elements that make it up change discontinuously. The "excess energy" of a mass in phase transition must be dissipated, "fractions" must be "separated" from each other. They disturb the internal order of the "condensing subjects". At the end of every "fair", of every mass event, the consequences of such social phase transitions can be seen, the more spectacularly such an event has taken place.

Classical economics cannot grasp all these phenomena of modern urban densification, it is not even able to really explain them. Economics knows sectors of exchange, but not those "beings" who, for whatever reason, exchange with each other, materially or spiritually. The
causes of fundamental changes in the structure of civilization and thus of society are therefore outside its "field of expertise". Consequently, the economy cannot "evaluate" the gain or loss of freedom of action associated with urbanization within this system. It restricts itself to recording "services" that are exchanged as "products". The traffic congestion that has become part of everyday life in conurbations, the efficiency of "supermarkets" whose hinterland is constantly growing and forcing customers to be more "mobile", the drive of "city dwellers" to relax in the countryside or even to fly to foreign coasts during their holidays - they compensate for what is taken away from them by "the others" in the black hole of a metropolis of millions namely: peace and quiet, access to a fascinating and challenging nature and the feeling of being the master of their own lives. Therefore, the gross national product, to make a simple comparison, measures the temperature in a pot. The temperature says nothing about the reactions of its contents, whether it is already close to boiling point and will soon boil over. To do so, one would have to know which mixture of substances is in the pot. This is why it is difficult to compare places of extreme densification such as New York or London with Johannesburg, Calcutta, Paris, Lagos, Djakarta or Shanghai and the living conditions prevailing there.

As markets specialize and globalize, the link between producer and consumer is lost. This link only ensures a sustainable balance between supply and demand, but not a price that is formed with the help of "subprime" loans. No technical device would work if it were constructed according to the theories of Keynes, or the principles of central banks which, with the accumulation of debt, increasingly separate these two types of actors (Chandavarkar 1986; Fontana 2000; Kregel 1976; Palley 2017; Peterson 1977; Winslow 1986).

And even if this form of political manipulation of the market mechanism based on "justice arguments" were to be avoided, in every market there are "winners" and "losers". Some get what they want, others necessarily go away empty-handed in the market. This does not only apply to those circenses in which modern gladiators receive far more money than presidents or chancellors who are supposed to serve a whole nation. Gladiators, however, have to live with the risk that their team might lose the ranking in a top league overnight. And unlike politicians, gladiators are not entitled to lifelong pensions.

Is the market unfair because of this? Or can the desire for "more and more for everyone" only be fulfilled by correcting the necessary distribution of scarce goods via the market through social redistribution? After all, the desired effect of every market is to promote the specialization of production and better use of fundamentally scarce resources - and thus to oust from the market those actors who work less efficiently and therefore must offer their services at uncompetitive prices.

Efficiency and optimization are maxims in economic thinking, which presupposes social and cultural conditions, conditions which the economy cannot create but very well endanger. The attempt to draw conclusions about the actual needs of people from individual "bartering" actions, and even to define people as homo oeconomicus, is just as tempting as the idea of using Newton's law of gravity to explain the development of a planetary system, the emergence of suns, supernovas, galaxies or even black holes that determine entire galaxies.
and their structures. Many-body systems are not determined in their temporal evolution, as Newton’s laws are only able to predict the movement of two masses in an otherwise empty space. This also applies to the relationship between two people and their "environment", whether it be a small, manageable village or the entire planet with its billions of inhabitants. The environment determines what is economically feasible in detail or what runs counter to the needs of the individual.

The development of village communities into urban agglomerations, the development of largely self-sufficient "national economies" and their colonial expansion to world markets on a planet on which almost 8 billion people have now fundamentally changed physical, chemical and biological processes, requires an unbiased and critical look at the highly confused structure of ideas of modern economics (Palzkill and Luhmann 2013).2 In this statistical approach, what causes the exchange between individuals and what regulates it - Nobel prizes or no Nobel Prize - is lost.

This also challenges the political ideas underlying Europe's rise and, ultimately, its dramatic decline in the 20th century. The modern, economically dominated model of society that once carried this old Europe around the world and which is now being copied everywhere as a hybrid between capitalism and socialism, as a politically negotiated compromise between market and planned economy, no longer functions properly, and above all it is no longer convincing. Where could the future of this model lie, in its narrow economic as well as in its further political implications, if we have to accept that eco-social market economy can only "negotiate" shortages in the already overcrowded spaceship Earth, the more the more passengers it accommodates, the more equal people want to be and the more "rights" they demand. It is no longer a matter of "advantages and opportunities" that markets can "auction off" to the highest bidder. No market can sell "disadvantages" and restrictions, and certainly no territorial, ideological or legal boundaries, to the highest bidder and thus get rid of them. On the other hand, no "plan" can shift physical, chemical and ecological boundaries, in particular natural instabilities cannot be prevented; a dilemma when general economic growth and natural boundaries collide, be they finite resources or supposed "crises", such as sudden climate changes or abrupt changes in ecological balances.

2 In their article 'More prosperity without growth? - A Book-Report about the necessary "cultural change" in the economic guild' the authors Alexandra Palzkill and Hans-Jochen Luhmann have dealt with the economic mainstream and its limits of possible insights. Das Gespräch aus der Ferne, issue no. 402 I/2013, pp. 28-33. They state that »after two world wars in the 1950s, a conversion of the expansionist urge of the industrialized countries of western character became apparent. All energy was put into the economy. Their societies were, so to speak, head over heels for economic growth...« Soon it became clear that this economic growth would bring more costs than net benefits. The authors' research concludes that the side effects have caught up with and overtaken the intended gain in prosperity, and further: »...that the dominant culture of academic economics... now... prevents an ideology-free, simply curious and therefore fruitful approach... to the challenge of an increasing disparity between economic growth and prosperity.«
ECONOMICS IN THE DIGITALLY MODIFIED INFORMATION SPACE

The challenge of meanwhile supercritical urban densification and the associated loss of freedom and personal responsibility of the individual is joined by another kind of disruption that cannot be grasped and controlled with the methods and instruments of classical economics. Digital data processing and communication not only change the business models of individual companies. Disruption, known in the positive sense as Economy 4.0, is changing entire societies. In order to answer the question of the future of the economy, it therefore makes little sense to unroll the history of economic ideas and concepts to date with the conviction in the back of one’s mind that all people are equal. Economic “laws” can never be formulated separately from the special and, in individual cases, highly specific relationships between people, then generalized and timelessly continued.

The oversupply of information, which, by overcoming temporal distances, enables a “real time” control of man and machine quasi globally It not only creates a complexity that can hardly be surveyed, but also has an impact on almost all areas of life. This applies to the control of intercontinental production chains, global financial markets and military security systems alike.

Digitalization, and the communication over any distance it enables, have created a situation that is fundamentally changing human perception and thinking (Brooke 2016; Colin and Palier 2015; Conway 2010; Hagen and Lysne 2016; Murrell 2014; Sassin 2020; Sobbrio 2018). This represents a challenge that can only vaguely be compared to the situation in which astronauts find themselves in a space station (Ríos et al 2019; Yu 2019). There, gravity is completely suspended, and the top and bottom disappear. The natural orientation and control of one’s own body no longer functions according to the laws with which evolution has worked.

Although the Internet and the information networks that came into being with it do not have gravity, they have practically abolished time as the phenomenon that separates cause and effect (Sassin 2018a; 2018b). Algorithms process orders of magnitude more information, and they make decisions much faster than human brains can. This creates a situation the effects of which are actually unpredictable. The risks involved are illustrated by an example that has been repeated more than 10 times in a similar manner. The stock exchanges of this world today process financial transactions worth billions of US $ in a few billionths of a second. A Flash Crash3 whose effects spread worldwide can only be limited by “manually” switching off the autonomously acting algorithms. The “shifts in value” that are triggered by such events cannot be eliminated, however. In the flash crash on Wall Street on February 5, 2018, the shift in value for the 30 industrial companies listed in the Dow Jones Index

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3 On 5 February 2018, there was a sudden collapse in Wall Street stock prices. The Dow Jones Index fell at times by 1,600 points. In the course of the day, it still dropped by 1,250 points. Sell orders placed by computer programs which were cancelled immediately afterwards, were identified as the cause.
alone added up to an order of magnitude equivalent to Switzerland’s "economic output" in a whole year (Easley et al. 2012; Kirilenko and Lo 2013; Madhavan 2012; O’Hara 2014).

The emergence of a fictitious reality has more consequences than the global networking of data streams and their storage and evaluation (Globerman et al. 2001; Stiglitz 2002; Yadav 2016). The environment which can be perceived through the natural senses of human beings, is overlaid by information superimposed by media (Bessi and Quattrociocchi 2015; Del Vicario et al. 2016). Global reporting gives the individual the impression of being basically omnipresent. However, the mediated global environment must be reduced to a few events that are comprehensible to the viewer or listener. On the one hand, this raises hopes, on the other hand, it suggests threats that are not existing and cannot be verified by the individual. A general „Welcome Culture“ spread by the media as well as a global climate crisis have a decisive influence, for example on real estate, energy and automobile markets via "expectations". At the same time, they stimulate mass migration and challenge existing social systems; indeed, they divide entire societies. The failure to attribute climate-relevant emissions from emigrants and their descendants to their countries of origin is just one example of increasingly misleading statistics and of a globalized economic mindset for which the information space remains foreign territory. The value of the factor information in a world that has changed as a result is difficult to assess. The economic advantages or disadvantages that arise from this type of information reduction and transmission in the classical areas of the economy cannot really be determined. But they are undoubtedly enormous. They modify existing structures.

**ECONOMICS OF DEMOGRAPHICALLY DISBALANCED SOCIETIES**

David Graeber, an ethnologist at the London School of Economics, has already made it clear in 2011 that money, the yardstick by which economists measure the balance of power in societies, can ever only be applied to a narrowly defined group of exchanges. Money anonymizes personal debt, makes it "tradable" and thus separates it from the values and hierarchies that individuals must serve if they are to survive, if they want to be born and raised at all (Graeber 2011). Due to the over-exponential growth of a now global and universal civilization, the prevailing economic dogma, because of its "one-dimensional metric", necessarily comes into conflict with other, multidimensional human "values", which are currently undergoing fundamental change, and this very differently in the existing very different cultures. This applies to dramatically ageing and shrinking societies, as well as to those with a high birth surplus and a growing proportion of young people who are little or not at all educated and therefore not very productive. To compare them in terms of per

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4 Graeber analysiert die Rolle von Schulden in der Geschichte, vor allem vor dem Hintergrund von Revolutionen und sozialen Umbrüchen, und kritisiert verschiedene grundlegende ökonomische Konzepte
capita income and derive transfer obligations from this manipulates reality to an almost grotesque degree.

The exchange of goods and services within certain social groups is not subject to the "principle of liability" in central areas of life. Parents feed their children, they dress them and they "play" with them, but in return they do not expect a "value-based" comparable return for their "valuable" economic potential, which they could realize in "other markets". Transforming such a personal, economically highly unequal exchange relationship within a family into a state-run "intergenerational contract" "monetarizes" basic human values and "expropriates" them in the end, in order to be able to redistribute them supposedly "just". The same happens with general health and nursing care insurance, with the entire education system, and ultimately with every collective agreement.

These conditions in most "developed" societies are contrasted by quite different non-economic debt relations in almost all developing countries. There, the state has not yet appropriated the central task of the family to care for its own members and only for them. The economic fate of the old and sick is in the hands of younger and healthy family members. And even there, there is no "price" to be determined by means of a "market" which would balance supply and demand in social interaction.

Money as an anonymous, initially always personal obligation to pay off a debt personally, not at some point in time but within certain temporal and spatial limits, cannot be separated without consequences from the ethical-moral relationships between people who actually and concretely act together.

Can a community, can a state, which no longer pays its debts, which have essentially been accumulated through social transfers, be taken to court for the theft of precisely those services which it has frivolously or deliberately obtained by means of fiat money, and this with the flimsy argument of keeping general consumption going? Which members of such an "illiquid" community would have to repent in such a case in order not to be punished for violation of several commandments of the Bible in the hereafter?

Separated from these mutual obligations between generations of a family, there is an aggravating factor: "markets" function within a closed community where everyone contributes to the common good. A society in demographic equilibrium generally has no problem passing on the supporting infrastructure, such as house and farm or a business from generation to generation. Fundamental transformations that change the structure of a society, especially when they overlap, lead to transformation costs that would actually require huge write-offs in the economic balance sheets. They increase the level of activity, but in no way create the possibility to increase consumption in a comprehensive sense, on the contrary. This applies to the process of urbanization, to the consequences of digitalization and to compensatory measures that demographic growth or shrinkage require likewise. Since the end of the Second World War, all of them have been happening in parallel in parts of an increasingly interwoven "global economy". And they "divide" city and country, old and young, producers and consumers, who are separated by digital "brokers" and thus no longer come into direct contact with each other on "markets".
In this transformation caused by civilization there is no overarching market that balances all needs and that could mediate between the mobility market and the market for "rest and relaxation in a healthy nature". To give a trivial example: Should the mineral oil tax push back the Sports Utility Vehicle, and would the tourism industry not then have to be subsidized by the state because the stress-ridden urbanauts with their children can no longer swarm out to relax in the surrounding area at the weekend? And who or what would then compensate for the loss of "quality of life" of these city dwellers? E-scooters or more lanes for bicycles?

THE ANAMNESIS IN SUMMARY

The only supposedly socio-economic thinking that emerged after the end of the Cold War and is constantly expanding now crosses every line that can be drawn rationally. It has largely lost touch with the very different culturally developed realities of citizens. It not only globalizes and alienates direct interpersonal relationships, which form the basis for every WE. It ultimately dissolves these relationships. In his essay Der offene Kontinent (The open continent), Konrad Liessmann does not compare the idea of the fathers of the European unification with Procrustes. But he does point to the blatant contradiction between the European Union's alleged openness to the world and the new identity that is supposed to unite it, which can only be established by distinguishing it from those who do not share "our values" (Liessman 2012). Notably, the idea of the European Unification developed through the idea of the free exchange of goods, then in a second "step in the right direction" by means of a common currency, namely the Euro.

So where does the idea of free markets and their extrapolation towards economic globalization lead us? The Roman Empire did not fail and ultimately perish because of a powerful external competitor. Wilhelm Hankel writes: »Rome stands for the first and last world state in our history, the world empire that becomes a world market« (Hankel 1978). Looking more closely, Rome failed because of the combination of strictly pursued economic efficiency and social redistribution in the form of panem et circenses, the latter to give the Roman citizens a feeling of equality. At some point it was no longer psychically able to cope with the associated compulsion for constant expansion and constant growth and the resulting inner alienation of its subjects, and collapsed.

Alvin Toffler goes one step further. In his 1970 work, The Future Shock, he describes the then rapidly changing American society and characterizes it as follows: »Technology as an engine, knowledge as fuel, the behavior of a throwaway society." And concerning the psyche of this "hyper-industrial" society, which »consists of overstimulated individuals, of modern nomads whose senses are bombarded«, he says: »it suffers from decision stress«. He speaks of the emergence of an "adhocratism", of the fragmentation of the family, of an excess of subcultures, and concludes that »modern civilization, with its ever-increasing abundance of the new, renders irrelevant the traditional goals of our main institutions -
state, church, industrial enterprise, army and university» (Toffler 1970). In the face of all this, Toffler hopes for a "next political revolution" that could consist of a breathtaking affirmation of a democracy that is to be broadened, one that involves as many people as possible in the formulation of their common long-term future.

Half a century later it can now be said that the democracy of the future, which Toffler dreamed of, will most probably lead to a situation that already caused the former Roman Empire to disintegrate. Rome’s technical superiority and economic rationale were lost in the then escalating conflict of fragmented sub-societies and in the wake of “mass migration” made possible by the principle of the Pax Romana and the "openness" associated with it. Toffler’s main concern, he says himself, is his relentless diagnosis. He owes a concrete blueprint for a global future. Half a century later, the crisis symptoms described by Toffler can now be found on a global level. The therapy he had hoped for at the time, that more democracy could bring “the economy” and with it the dramatic change in the natural as well as the "human" environment of mankind under control, has simply failed.

No complex organism, no social group that has emerged in evolution, no insect state, no herd functions according to the principle of economic efficiency optimization and is controlled in parallel by democratic goal-setting or even democratic limitation of its possibilities. Life is organized exclusively hierarchically. Its existential principle is called precautionary separation from potential competitors.

PART 2. NECESSARY CORRECTIONS IN THINKING - A SECOND ENLIGHTENMENT ON THE FLY?

GLOBAL ECONOMY - AS AN EXTRAPOLATION OF CARING HOUSING, IN THE BELIEF TO THEREBY CREATE A GLOBAL FAMILY, BUT IN FACT TO STIMULATE UNRESTRICTED COMPETITION INSTEAD OF RESPECTFUL COEXISTENCE OF VERY DIFFERENT MODELS OF LIFE AND CIVILIZATION

ACHIEVING GREATER GOALS TOGETHER THROUGH COOPERATION, specialization and "investment in the future" raises the question of the "fair" distribution of the increased common output that can be achieved. Such larger goals create specific new WEs. And these WEs must necessarily exclude those who do not actively participate in achieving these goals.

Examples of this were once the construction of a fortress, a refuge, or a city fortification. Other examples can be found in the formation of knowledge communities, of universities, and earlier of monasteries. Today these are "commercial enterprises", some of which provide the basis for the functioning of a now globally spread civilization "beyond" the state. This becomes clear, among other things, when one asks the question: What can all the traditional secret services and state libraries in the world taken together do, compared to the information processing power of "search engines", such as those developed by Larry Page and
Sergey Brin 20 years ago and made available under the name Google to practically everyone, not just to citizens of the country where Alphabet Inc. is based, to give one example of "beyond" the state.

The increase in efficiency through the emergence of such and other "smart enterprises" in satisfying basic needs of life and the resulting "abundance" of time available to satisfy higher needs has made possible what is commonly referred to as development. This development ultimately rests on the investment of "freed life time" of single individuals, but not of "communities". It enables knowledge generation through basic research, it enables the further development of art and culture.

The individual is supported, but at the same time motivated and limited in the endeavor to exploit "the potential thus released"

- by the appreciation of others, i.e. through competition carried out through pomp, through striving to belong to the avant-garde, up to narcissistic behavior, caused in particular by the openly displayed envy of competitors.
- On the other hand it is limited by the accumulated surplus and the shrinking return on investment, and
- the individual is marginalized and demotivated by the emergence of ever larger WEs.

Who could still identify with a pyramid if he could only contribute a few of the millions of stones to its construction, especially if they were unshaped loose material or even those ramps over which the "low-wage sector" had to drag the material upwards and which were then removed again afterwards?

Why do we remember Neil Armstrong today, but not the names of those engineers, mathematicians, physicians and chemists who designed and built the equipment that enabled Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins to reach the moon and return safely to Earth 50 years ago (Sassin 2018a)? Is the achievement of those in the background really compensated for with the dollars they received from NASA at the time?

These and other examples of increasingly anonymous "progress" draw attention to the problem of "global growth", which is "recorded" as the world’s gross national product. Above all, this "size", i.e. the Gross World Product, raises the question of the limits of the type of employment thus being grasped and its actual meaning. Does the "progress" no longer recognizable for the individual really consist in circling around the sun in the spaceship Earth a few years longer with more and more billions, and in "producing" material and informational turnover in an increasingly restricted and hectic manner? Is it possible to buy recreation, contemplation, being in nature and being with oneself with money that central banks print almost without limits, money that serves as an "inflationary" yardstick for determining the Gross World Product?

There is a growing lack of a humane economic theory for a situation that the Limits to Growth report diagnosed half a century ago (Meadows and Meadows 1972).

Classical economics apparently remains in the world of yesterday, in that phase in which Europe was able to take possession of the world for itself, at a time when it seemed to be
almost unlimited. This economic "doctrine" does not cover the elementary parts of human exchange, which always "satisfies" emotions, i.e. values that are not material and not anchored in time. Beyond ever greater exchange processes that trigger anonymous debts, the question arises as to whether the hyperactivity forced by the eco-social systems that have now emerged does not lead to a general slave existence, first and foremost for those "high performers" whose actual contribution to the well-being of "the whole" and whose inner motivation remains hidden from the Zeitgeist of a consumer society.

What if one day the "rich" went on strike, or if rulers with directive competence got tired but did not want to resign, who dismissed existential challenges with the words: We will make it?!

What is needed is a new, inherently consistent psycho-economic theory of globalization, more precisely the definition of its limits, which must differentiate and stabilize the mental climate in spaceship Earth. This is especially true for the "financing of the future", among other things by claiming that we cannot simply protect the climate and ecology of the planet, but can control it, and this via FIAT-money, – a strategy that must not only result in black swans and revolutions.

The current strategy of economic growth and its metrics is based on the utopian idea that the climate and ecology of the planet is a "product to be created economically" by "Father State", in this case by the "United Nations", and that there is a universal and equal human right to it, similar to basic food.

The mene tekel on the wall of the temples of globalization does not point to physical but mental changes in the climate, which have already caused the failure of those who wanted to build the Tower of Babel.

If one looks at the dispute in the modern temple halls from a sufficient distance, where the representatives of the various faiths meet regularly, whether at meetings organized by the United Nations or in formats such as the G7, G8 or G20 meetings, then a fundamental overheating of the mental climate can no longer be overlooked. This is made abundantly clear by the activists and representatives of globally active "non-governmental organizations" who criticize these meetings and other major business events, to which the media devote more airtime and more attention than the need to adapt to, especially the need to control the four developments mentioned above: urbanization, growth, demography and digitalization – in an overall approach and not separately.

**TO THE THERAPY OF THE PATIENT HOMO OECONOMICUS**

This leads to the question of whether and how conflicts and the aggressive behavior based on beliefs and assumptions by smaller and larger groups can be overcome, which will divide societies and may lead to a kind of Global Spring, similar to the Arab Spring that has turned into a bloody autumn?
Apparently, the one-way street of "development of societies" chosen with globalization and digitalization can only be abandoned according to the pattern of the West if there is an external danger threatening these societies in transformation. Indeed, even parts of a society that no longer trust the prevailing doctrines constitute such "external" dangers. Such societies are splitting. They disintegrate from within. These can either be well-organized groups in the underground, in modern societies also economic competitors from other "systems" which conquer the "national markets" and displace or "take over" the companies there. In ancient Rome there were many languages, but above all there were ethnic groups, even entire peoples, who were subjected and then forced to "serve". As "enemies" they disappeared from the consciousness of the masses the moment they paid tribute or even taxes.

An enemy exists only as long as we are permanently reminded of it by the media. This is especially true for "Inner Enemies". If the explicit threat disappears, because system errors lead to crises for which initially no one can be held responsible, then the collective willingness to live with existing ideological, religious and social differences within the inner world will disintegrate. The striving of individuals for alternative living conditions, the urge of adolescents to evade the influence of the family as much as possible, the search for scapegoats and the fight against authorities gain influence. New paradises and new stories of salvation shall then create new cohesion, a new WE.

Christianity is decisively shaped by a refugee Child who fled with his parents to Egypt. Raised and shaped by the rich knowledge of the oldest empire in history and as a young man returned to the small occupied province of Judea, he thought the ideas of Pharaoh Akhenaton much bigger. Akhenaton wanted to prevent the powerful and competing priesthods of Egypt from forcing the people to make more and more sacrifices. He wanted to move them to serve only one god, the sun god Ra, and thus bring them under control. Jesus went a decisive step further. He wanted all nations to serve only one God, the God of the Israelites. With "Give God what is God's and the Emperor what is the Emperor's" He hoped, among other things, to bridge the conflict between the Roman occupying power and the Jews. But this devalued the Pharisees’ idea that Jahwe had only made the Israelites His chosen people and thus made them superior to all other people. They reacted in the same way as the Egyptian priests before them after Akhenaton’s death: His idea was to be eradicated for all time.

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5 In his book *War - What It's Good For*, Ian Morris (2014) attempts an interpretation of the present geopolitical and technological weapons situation. He comes to the conclusion that the situation today is similar to the situation before the First World War. Globocop England had virtually challenged its rivals at that time, especially Germany. The attempt to maintain the dominant position plunged all competitors in Europe into catastrophe. Now a similar constellation is emerging between the Globocop USA and the growing China. In this situation, Morris believes that regional nuclear wars are possible, at the end of which a pax technologica would be possible. He considers the coming decades to be a critical bottleneck in human history.
An all-embracing WE, presupposes the belief in a supreme court that decides on hell and heaven. This court can have only one judge, an omnipotent being beside whom there are no dissenting opinions. With Christianity and its teaching to all peoples, the idea of the all-embracing WE came into the world. And it included all: barbarians, criminals, saints, even fertilized eggs. The idea of such an all-embracing WE denied all human differences and dissolved them before God.

Whoever did not take seriously this story of eternal hope and final and irrevocable damnation became an unbeliever, a sinner. He became a danger to the communion with the saints and the blessed and thus endangered the WE. Such blasphemy called for earthly damnation.

How powerful and effective the faith in the all-embracing WE was, which was founded in this way, is shown by the history of the Christian Occident. Its rulers henceforth derived their power “by the grace of God” and tried to extend it to all continents. The “Occident” swung up to the moral world domination.

With an Almighty and this: *What you have done to the least of my brothers, you have done to God*, the criticism of such an image of man, which levels all essential differences, became a danger for inner peace.6

People who thought about the consequences of such an ultimately upside down hierarchy had to be silenced. Because it was necessary to gain worldly power over independently thinking people and for this purpose they had to be "converted". Islam followed the same path with a time lag. The consequence were merciless religious wars, in Christianity as well as in Islam. They decimated the populations, because it was necessary to eliminate and subjugate the respective opponent, but to spare "the civilian population" as much as possible in order to be able to claim high tributes.

With the fading of transcendent religions in modern societies, especially those of the West, there seems to be a need for a new great threat that cannot be represented by a Last Judgement and a transcendent hell. In order to compensate for the growing deficit in the religiously mediated cohesion of societies, more and more people today are looking for a kind of substitute religion. Planet Earth with its nature, its plants, its animals and its climate is therefore being built into a new being to be sanctified, "Mother Earth". No wonder, because with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the failure of the Socialist International, capitalism has not been left with an equal external enemy. It takes the idea of a climate

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6 *Editorial remark*. With great deference to the most respected colleague, Editor admits a possibility that the explanation may be different. Not only in the West royal power was understood to be derived directly from God. The anointment of a future monarch to ruling by a high priest was borrowed by Christian Church in 754, when King of the Francs Pepin the Short from Caroling dynasty was anointed by Pope Stephan at the first time for many centuries since the last king of Judea was anointed. Thus, the tradition to connect the monarchial power with God’s power and God’s will, the tradition initially created by the Hebrew prophet Samuel in the eleventh century BC, was resurrected in the West without any direct relation to Roman empire. Besides, not only Jews had the tradition of monarchial anointment, but also Egyptians, Medes, and Persians.
catastrophe, or even worse, the destruction of the livelihoods of large parts of the world’s population, to persuade humanity, which is competing for ever scarcer space and ever scarcer natural resources, to cooperate.

This is now being propagated by parts of the political elite. But the fact that it is not "Mother Earth" that ensures that today almost 8 billion people can live on this planet at all, but only a small minority, namely those people who have laid the scientific and technical foundations for an artificial, by no means self-regenerating civilization and are preserving them, is one of the fundamental inner contradictions of this new edifice of belief that fascinates the followers of a global society.

WHAT COULD REASSURE THE MASSES INSIDE AND GIVE BACK A BIT OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SELF-RESPONSIBILITY TO THEIR MEMBERS

It needs a description of the future of the globe over more than the next 3 generations, well beyond the end of the 21st century. Instead of an open and ultimately goal- and planless drift towards globalization, a realistically achievable and inherently stable state must be defined as a development goal.

The decisive relationship for sustainable development therefore concerns the population densities in regions that can be distinguished from one another in terms of culture and civilisation. There is no "global environment". There are only climatically and ecologically very different habitats for people who have to adapt to them and at the same time "cultivate" them. "Culture" in this sense means nothing else but a profound and lasting change of natural conditions through the use of technology and thus the creation of efficient civilizing "niches". New niches are not created by single individuals. They are the result of a cultural WE, which is shared by many and requires a narrative to be carried by all participants, a "history that expresses values", and creates a common identity across generations.

In each of these artificial and, since the development of agriculture, always artificial habitats, there have been and will continue to be climate fluctuations, inevitable changes in the biosphere and, of course, changes in so-called "renewable energies". Adapting to these variabilities is a matter for the respective civilizational-cultural groups that have created such niches for themselves. It is a phantasm to want to compensate for "natural differences" between tropical rainforests, savannahs, dry and cold deserts on this planet, between lowlands with navigable rivers and direct access to "sea routes" and highlands with their "steep obstacles to mobility" via a global "social system". It is based on the phenomenon of modern "big city life", which suffers from subcultures due to the lack of distance and

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7 Editorial remark. In 1950–1960 Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev tried to do such a thing, turning Siberian rivers from the North to the South and redirecting water flows in Central Asia. The result was disappearance of Aral sea from the map of the world.
ultimately tries unsuccessfully to integrate them into a uniform "urban culture" by means of general "redistribution". The idea of a globally uniform human monoculture is a dangerous dystopia. It prevents a flexible adaptation to rapidly changing "external changes" of the respective highly different "substrate nature", as well as that existentially decisive substrate "knowledge and education" which protects the scientific and technical "assets" of the different social units by enabling them to pass them on in an orderly manner and not degrading them to a "free" common good.\(^8\)

The inherent stability and efficiency of social and political structures are subject to changes over time at least as significantly as those of the highly diverse climatic zones and the various ecosystems of this planet.

"Limits to growth" can therefore not be set globally. The recipe for success we call evolution is to explore them and to shift them individually within the framework of the respective "resources", thus creating sustainable, largely independent civilizational units. The evolution of life, in particular its higher development, does not consist of the unification of "tribes" and "branches" into hybrids, but rather in its branching. The coexistence of different species and genera, of plants and animals, of unicellular and multicellular organisms is determined by symbiosis and parasitism. If anything at all deserves the term "creation", it is the control, the invisible hand that balances these two conflicting principles. If symbiosis and parasitism get out of balance this always leads to a "mass mortality", no matter how different the individual triggers and the then following processes may be.

There is no doubt that the cultural and civilizational development of man has reached such a critical point. The central challenge of our time is therefore to design a human ecology for man as a multi-billion phenomenon. "Man" as a figure of thought, as part of a species that could develop undreamt-of abilities when combined into a centrally organized organism, it apparently fascinated "elites" in a similar way as the idea of the one and Almighty God once did. Knowledge and technical means, worked out and developed for very special singular needs, but then used billions of times, bring "side effects" with them that not only change the outer world, but the perception of reality, and at some point trigger a break with the images of the world and of man that have grown over thousands of years.

Do the motives of people who want to defend their interests or their own lives with stones, then with axes, with bows and arrows and finally with nuclear-powered missiles change just because their weapons differ dramatically in their effect? Does this make people more peaceful or, on the contrary, does it make them more aggressive and, above all, makes them more clairvoyant about what they risk by using their tools?

Values and risks that demarcate largely autonomous and special habitats from each other and strict rules that limit symbiotic and parasitic exchanges between these habitats depend on the mental horizons that individuals have explored by trial and error. Both values and risks, however, cannot be extrapolated linearly and applied to larger and ever larger

\(^8\) vgl. Sassin, Wolfgang. Reconsidering Europe, a diplomatic initiative. Non-Proliferation of Populations or Active Proliferation of Nuclear Power. 14.7.2019.
systems, especially when they are "open" and form new, previously unknown structures with increasing size. „System Earth" is not really about limiting emissions, be they greenhouse gases or, for example, about avoiding the "breeding" and spread of resistant germs via natural transport mechanisms that are able to "migrate" independently of the limits of the civilized system. It is about the inability of herds to organize themselves rationally beyond certain sizes and to get a correct picture of the territory in which they are roaming. Through such extrapolation the supersaur *homo sapiens* becomes a God-like humanity, which is angry with itself, which threatens to fall ill and potentially become extinct.⁹

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**TO REALIZE WHAT REALLY THREATENS „HUMANITY“**

**THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS TO BECOME AWARE OF THE CAUSES OF HIS OWN INDIVIDUAL DISTRESS**

More than four billion people live in urban "conditions." They live in places of *human mass farming*, a concept that is irritating; but an image that illustrates the cognitive situation of people who grew up in large cities and "socialized" themselves there. In larger cities, and even more so in so-called mega-centers, the "poorer" people are the harder they fight for scarce space. Urbanity is the social gravitational center par excellence, which with and through which industrialization has triggered human migration on a scale that dwarfs all previous "migrations" in history. This is true in terms of the number of people who have made their way to new territories offering new opportunities. But it is especially true with regard to the speed and the dramatic difference in cultural living conditions into which people ventured, driven by necessity, or into which people curiously and courageously ventured.

Apart from Antarctica, migration has led our ancestor, the "primitive" homo from the African savannah, to all continents, to fundamentally different climatic zones and to foreign biological environments, where he has been decisively changed (Derevianko 2015-2018). The cultural and spiritual development towards the "homo sapiens", forced by adaptation to very different "environments", has slowly taken place over thousands of generations. Measured against this, the compulsion of modern man to adapt to the material, but above all to the fundamentally changed physical and mental conditions in the centers of human mass farming is similar to the impact of that meteorite about 65 million years ago. It suddenly changed the distribution of species on the planet.

Since the middle of the 19th century, i.e. since the invention and introduction of steam engines, railways, airplanes and the associated space-based communication and control systems, around 4 billion people have landed abruptly in densely populated areas that are inhospitable and culturally alien. A further almost 4 billion "in the countryside" are directly

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⁹ Not only phenomena like al Qaeda or the IS, but also Greta Thunberg and Fridays for Future, or Extinction Rebellion illustrate this.
or indirectly dependent on a now universal civilization, which is determined by this highly dense urban habitat.

Intellectually, demographically intertwined groups, i.e. family groups consisting essentially of three generations, continue to orient themselves on patterns of thought, on stories and history, and on the traditional values based on them. The latter originate from a time when the vast majority of all people were settled and self-sufficient in small groups and communities in the countryside or even travelled as nomads in a creation that seemed to them to be a gift. Our edifices of beliefs, our images of the world and of humanity, which are reflected in the constitutions of almost all of the approximately 200 states on this earth they therefore originate from another planet which has become alien to us in the meantime, and which we have radically changed in many ways.

This dilemma is the root of the almost archaic-looking conflicts that overlap in a way that can hardly be unravelled. They range from religiously motivated bloody conflicts and revolutions aimed at bringing about a change in the political system to economic and currency wars and the ideological alienation between technology enthusiasts and environmentalists. The experience of everyday life for all of them is what the journalist Dankwart Guratzsch describes in the article *The Suicide of Cities*: »The promise of acceleration that the car-friendly city once gave to the industrial society has been reversed. And it is society itself that cries out for reversal.«¹⁰ That it is not enough to find new technical solutions and to diversify "traffic" at the expense of others in order to make human interaction more efficient, in other words, to exchange goods, information and services in ever shorter periods of time and in ever smaller spaces and thus to be able to grow economically without an end, to use Guratzsch's term, all this leads to the suicide of the urban society.

**WHEN THE VANGUARD HAS LOST ITS WAY, NEW GOALS ARE NEEDED, TO SAVE LEMMINGS FROM THE CERTAIN "OUT"**

**IN A SITUATION IN WHICH MANKIND SUDDENLY AND UNEXPECTEDLY FINDS ITSELF ON A KIND OF GLOBAL SPACESHIP WHOSE CABINS ARE OVERCROWDED AND WHOSE ENGINE ROOM THREATENS**

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¹⁰ Dankwart Guratzsch: Totale Verkehrsblockade. *Der Selbstmord der Städte* (The Suicide of Towns). [https://www.welt.de/kultur/plus201239634/Totale-Verkehrsblockade-Der-Selbstmord-der-Staedte.html] 2.10.2019.

It should be noted:

The city of the present no longer liberates, on the contrary, it develops into a place of human mass farming. This is a consequence of incomplete economic models. Urbanisation, demographic imbalance as a consequence of the reduction of mortality without simultaneous reduction of birth rates, migration in space, but above all between completely different life models, agriculture as the culture of small, independent and largely self-sufficient communities, stands in contrast to urban culture as an anonymous mass of dependent subjects to be organized and controlled by institutions. It is postulated that they have rights and their freedom consists in electing representatives of the people, who load them with bureaucracy and taxes in order to create a society of equals.
to overheat, it would be the central task of science to identify risky maneuvers in order to avoid them in the first place. Current economic theories are reminiscent of the MCAS (Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System) program with which the Boeing 737 Max 8 aircraft was equipped. MCAS was installed in this model equipped with particularly powerful engines to avoid stalling on the wings during a steep upward flight. This automatic system has apparently caused the crash of two newly commissioned aircraft, first Ethiopian Airlines and then Lion Air.

Politicians and central banks are now trying to achieve economic growth at any price with means whose longer-term consequences are unclear. Similar to the pilots of the disaster machines they are not prepared to avoid social imbalances which in an increasingly competitive urban society competing for scarce resources arise precisely because they want to "pull the machine" with ever more gigantic debts ever faster "upwards".\textsuperscript{11}

The spaceship is not only overloaded, it seems to be in an unstable state due to the use of "boosters". The problem therefore does not lie first with the pilots, i.e. the politicians. It is up to socio-engineers and socio-technicians, it is evident in both the economic and social sciences. The architects who design new theories of society, who implement new housing, mobility and communication technologies, the administrators of public goods from spatial and urban planning to environmental associations, even the caretaking industry in the medical and legal fields, they are responsible for the patchwork of the spaceship Earth welded together from urban modules.

The arrangement of the cabins, their design and the growing number of passengers in them - they endanger the stability of the ship as well as the safety on board, which in case of conflicts on individual decks degrades the bridge to the spectator, especially if it is not the crew that riots, but the passengers get into arguments over trivialities and general panic breaks out.

A fundamentally new construction of the spaceship Earth is needed. It does not simply require bulkheads that cannot be closed properly in an emergency. It needs individual modules that are only loosely coupled to each other and that can separate from each other when necessary and then navigate and operate independently.

This leads to the questions:

\textsuperscript{11} Jayati Ghosh: \textit{Moderne Tasmanier} - Die geistige Isolierung von Ökonomen und Politikern des Mainstream gefährdet unsere Volkswirtschaften. Zeit, das neoliberale Dogma aufzugeben. IPG (Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft) 15.10.2019. Jayati Ghosh is Professor of Economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi and a member of the Independent Commission on International Corporate Tax Reform. She states: "The 2008 crisis should have been an eye opener, but it has failed to shake mainstream economists and politicians out of their self-imposed intellectual isolation." and she continues: "Since 2008 the central banks of the highly developed economies have printed more than 20 trillion dollars and cut interest rates sharply. In addition, a policy of easy credit has increased global debt by some $57 trillion to more than three times the global GDP" (Ghosh 2012).
• What are the optimal group sizes that are able to keep each other in check, instead of a global eco-empire in which there are only disordered inner fault lines and chaotic distributional struggles?
• How can cooperation be organized in the case of highly differentiated abilities of the individual competing groups?
• How can we prevent a new kind of nomadic harvesting of artificial livelihoods from being declared a universal human right?

The "natural" planet Earth has been covered with an artificially created platform of civilization, which in the meantime has changed nature fundamentally and not only marginally. This platform of civilization must be preserved and, over the coming decades, largely disentangled and fundamentally redesigned with a view to the longer-term goal of regional sustainability.

The danger does not lie in a significant increase the natural variability of "nature" through emissions, through selective cultivation of plants and animals and the associated "side effects", such as soil erosion or shifting and reduction of biodiversity. It rather consists in the fact that two thirds of the biologically active land areas of the earth have already been fundamentally changed by "cultures" in the past 7000 years. This change of the planet for the purpose of feeding man using extensive agricultural methods, not only the modern "emissions" of the industrial civilization of the 20th and early 21st centuries, are likely to significantly enhance the climatic and ecological variability in a hardly predictable way. Complex systems always have so-called tipping points where their behavior suddenly and significantly changes. The real problem is therefore not a partially erratic nature that tends to change. The problem are the existing "harvesting systems" of civilization which, believing in a "sustainable" nature and striving for the highest possible economic efficiency, can no longer adapt to "external changes" and threaten to become obsolete.12

12 One need only ask the question how a modern civilization, which was adapted to the climatic and associated ecological conditions at the end of the last ice age some 10,000 years ago, would have reacted to the rise in sea level by several tens of meters, to the incipient "migration" of the biotopes of that time across continental distances, to the release of greenhouse gases from the huge melting permafrost regions or to the fundamental change in circulation patterns in the atmosphere and in the oceans.

About 7000 years ago the Sahara was still a savannah where elephants lived and people kept sheep, goats and cattle. Probably some 10,000 people were able to escape their dwindling "livelihood" by migrating to the Nile valley and developing new techniques there, such as the seasonal irrigation of the less fertile soil and its fertilization with Nile mud.

But for soon 10 billion people, that is a million times more than at that time, there are neither several unused continents that could be cultivated, nor techniques that depend on chemical or biological energy conversions to which earthly life as a whole is adapted. The successful step towards civilization taken by the ancient Egyptians, who were the first to develop an efficient society based on the division of labour, would today only be matched by a radical transition to nuclear energy.
And this artificial civilizational platform, consisting of harvesting systems for regenerative biological, for finite fossil, mineral, and likewise finite regenerative fresh water resources, rests on parts with varying carrying capacities. They were thoughtlessly networked with each other in the course of the Industrial Revolution. The logic of their linkage has so far been provided by an economic theory oriented to the moment, in which long-term provision and internal social stability play no role because they cannot be evaluated in monetary terms.

For the different parts and for their exchange, however, a fundamental new mental order is needed, which cannot rely on a benevolent transcendental power, nor on the inherent stability of an ecological-climatic system, whose change, not simply its supposed "reliability", forms an inevitably fluctuating basis of human life. Their internal order, their economically unused reserves, even the provision of "inefficient insurance policies" must ensure the resilience of the artificial civilizational foundations of life, not only for the most efficient and economical use of the available natural resources. Both pillars of human livelihood are fragile, nature as well as the civilizational systems that currently support the lives of around 8 billion people.

Social forays into foreign territory and property by threatening to commit suicide have triggered a political paralysis of fear. This paralysis of fear makes it clear that the sacrosanct traditional thought and value systems have fallen out of time. Millions upon millions are not looking for new, free land to cultivate "with their hands and the sweat of their brow". Rather, they hope to be accepted and nourished in the Ark that engineers, scientists and entrepreneurs have built, the Noahs of the industrial and knowledge society. At such a time, new narratives are needed that are appropriate to this situation. What stories are lacking? What is really urgent?

- The development of a **stable and sustainable mental climate** in the individual civilizational platforms of this earth is more urgent than the protection of the natural climate, which is and will remain regionally very different. Should the right to free global migration be derived from existing climate differences? For whatever reasons the climate may change, both natural and mental, anyone who does not take adequate precautions himself and build a solid house and together a solid castle is acting irresponsibly.

- A **fundamentally new understanding of security** is therefore needed. This is not about disarmament, but about realistic measures to separate a blind herd of creatures with widely differing abilities, ideas and ambitions. Security does not arise from the growing dependence of all on all others. Rather, it requires largely independently acting and self-sufficient units to be separated from each other, which may only be especially fusion, which provides one million times more energy per "domesticated" atom than the "renewable" and only apparently sustainable alternatives to fossil energy, namely sun and wind.
loosely connected. For emergencies, ships traveling in unsafe waters need bulkheads that can be closed, especially if they are heading for unknown areas. The safety of a "Spaceship Earth" or a Noah’s Ark II, how ever you want to make it clear, is primarily due to the existence and stability of the bulkheads. This amounts to a deliberate separation of the supply systems, as well as the communication and "command structures" in the individual compartments of planet Earth. However, as the example of the Titanic shows, bulkheads are not sufficient under certain conditions. In addition, self-sufficient lifeboats are required, which must be carried along and which run counter to the simple idea of purely economic optimization.

What if, as in many science fiction novels, there was a plea for the landing of a spaceship with aliens who want to share planet Earth with the people living there because their home planet has become uninhabitable. And if the people did not comply with this request, then the aliens would make an emergency landing, with the danger of a development which H.G. Wells already described in 1897 in his futuristic novel The War of the Worlds, "as the arrival of the Martians".

What other than such extraterrestrials are the still expected, still unborn billions of children and grandchildren of those who are already on the run today, not because the climate is changing, but because instead of investing in knowledge, technology and skills, they have increased tenfold within a few generations, with the help of those who wanted to develop them?

THE BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN IRRECONCILABLE EDIFICES OF BELIEF:
THE IDEA OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONFLICT WITH THE IDEA OF THE INDIVIDUAL RIGHT TO REPRODUCE ON A FINITE PLANET

As historical experience shows that the fight against the "Other" in the form of capitalists and the rich, who are now seen as exploiters and oppressors from a certain level of their social influence onward, has always led to disastrous results for almost everyone, a new doctrine is now being conceived: Their revelation consists in the possible collapse of the Earth’s ecological and climatic system. This promises good arguments for taking action against "wealth" and "squandering".

To this end, the economic polytheism of the market is to be abolished in favor of a responsibility for the One Earth, before Mother Gaia, which encompasses all people. But what would be the consequences if the faith in Mother Earth were to split up in the same way as Judaism, Christianity and Islam once did? And how would the conflict then be fought out with those who did not want to be converted?
Wars of faith were the most brutal and consistent wars in history. It was always about the extinction of unbelief, more precisely of those worshipping other gods, never simply about their subjugation.

Today, more than ever, it is about the changed thought structures of *homo sapiens*. His brain is not only and decisively influenced by the natural environment, but much more by the behavior of a virtual herd that is technically mediated to him, as part of which he perceives himself as a regular media consumer in the majority of cases. His mental environment and its belief system determine what he believes to be reality. How else could billions be controlled with their instincts, emotions and drives, which have evolved during evolution, than by the story of a new duality: consisting of Mother Earth and her flock of children, i.e. the whole of humanity.

What a fantastic thought, if this were not opposed by the experience of two millennia. Despite God the Father and humanity as descendants of his creatures Adam and Eve, this faith has not prevented countless wars, conquests, and the ever-increasing subjugation of nature. On the contrary. It has made it a program.

How then can the only stabilizing balance of power be maintained that made possible phases of a tense but non-warlike coexistence by means of mutual deterrence and respect for different convictions - for the life and social concepts of others? How can such balances be restored after globalization and digitalization have now almost completely erased all borders without being aware of the psychological consequences of this step? Can disaster scenarios move humanity to cooperate peacefully in an effort to make sacrifices for Mother Earth and stop her panicking?

Strategies aimed at disasters require that scapegoats be sought and punished for the sacrilege of nature. But could existential conflicts be avoided in this way and could confrontation and violence for more profane reasons within the herds really be suppressed? In any case, history shows where inquisition and indulgence trade have led whole societies.

There is obviously a need for completely new narratives, not a variation of those that play in a lost world, a world whose end was declared by Francis Fukuyama in 1992. The collapse of the Soviet empire and thus of the socialist world view was not a transition to a peaceful liberal, democratic world under the aegis of the remaining superpower USA, as Fukuyama believed. On the contrary, the disintegration of both authoritarian and "democratic" societies began from within.

As children on the alleged spaceship Earth we do not want to admit that the fate of the Titanic threatens us if we continue to fight for the Blue Ribbon, on the way to a New World that no longer exists, because except for the 7th continent, all other 6 have been occupied and already "cultivated", i.e. made subject to man.

The vast majority seem to believe that they are on a cruise ship that, only sufficiently technically advanced, will drop us all off at some point on a paradise beach. Moreover, the mainstream economists and with them the political elites seem convinced that the more this ship is accelerated, the more likely it is to reach its destination, the end of history.
It is high time to change course, to focus on smaller, less vulnerable boats, to limit their number of passengers and to avoid collisions between such "boats" in an increasingly rough sea by keeping sufficient distance between them. This presupposes that skippers at the helm do not simply orient themselves by polling their passengers and then acting on the maxim *It's the economy, stupid!* (Sassin et al. 2018).

The idea of a unified earth that outshines everything is in many ways similar to that of ancient Egypt with its pyramids, priesthoods and Nile regulators. In order to move out of today's "second Egypt" with its skyscrapers, constitutional judges and financial regulators, it is necessary to record and describe without emotion the plagues that will afflict the spaceship Earth in the next 30 years. Only in this way can we succeed in returning to the bottom of reality, to simple and self-determined sustainable life, i.e. to one or more new Canaans. It was not Moses, but the stories he circulated that paved the way from comfortable slavery to painstaking freedom.

**CONCLUSION**

**(THE PROBLEM OF DEALING WITH DIMENSIONS AND ORDERS OF MAGNITUDE, WHICH ARE OUTSIDE THE EXPERIMENTAL HORIZON OF AN INDIVIDUAL)**

It is a necessary considering the appearance of COVID-19 and the emergence of a pandemic, the "economic consequences" of which will most likely lead to a psychological and subsequently to a political exceptional situation, because the orientation under a global reality decreed from above must fail.

In the essay *The Limits of Human Cognition and Insight* (Sassin 2018b), the obstacles that arise when exploring and trying to explain phenomena of the micro- as well as the macro-world are discussed. Technical instruments, - first telescopes, then microscopes, finally flying machines and satellites, especially the development of sensors for electromagnetic waves and particle beams, for which living organisms do not have sensory organs or which they are principally unable to develop because of the quantum energies involved, - have made information about processes and phenomena in the cosmos and in the realm of molecules, atoms and elementary particles accessible to man, which elude the concepts and laws of nature that we humans have derived from our everyday lives and environments.

The limitation of our ability to deal with formal procedures appropriately and to "assess" their results correctly on the basis of our values and ethical-moral principles, which is not dealt with in *On the Limits of Human Cognition and Insight*, shall be briefly extended here. This concerns on the one hand the "feeling" for orders of magnitude. And it concerns the handling of "quantities", which are not only described by means of doubtful statistical procedures, but whose implicit, even hidden problem is an underlying definition of equality,
which is often made arbitrarily due to insufficient knowledge about what is actually aggregated in such quantities.

How far does our natural ability to deal with large numbers, gained through practical experience, really reach? In the age of globalization and digitalization, we encounter large numbers every day in the news, in treaties, in an attempt to judge a measure put forward for discussion by politicians as appropriate or to reject it. We hear about aid programs of the central banks, which have bought government bonds for billions of euros every month.\textsuperscript{13} We sign contracts with Internet providers where gigabytes are involved or we buy storage devices to back up our files on our computers with a capacity of terabytes. Finally, we read about the growth of the global population, which has increased from 1 billion to nearly 8 billion people since the French Revolution. Of these, 830 million people have been added in the last 10 years alone.

In this new reality, it is therefore necessary to use a simple example to make clear how the "world of numbers", which is ordered in powers of ten in a quasi hierarchical manner, influences our thinking - and above all what it hides from us: namely, the reference to a reality that is not relative but exists absolutely and independent of what we believe. This points to the dilemma of statistics, which usually record changes in percentages, i.e. in fractions of a situation, assumed to be identified. Whether this assumed existing situation is approaching a fundamental change, a "phase transition" or a collapse, and this with increasing speed, is thus ignored.

We are used to make large numbers "manageable" for our mental calculations by introducing new terms. By mental arithmetic we mean here the ability to intuitively grasp quantities and their meaning, to distinguish them and to estimate their meaning for the individual, be it for oneself or for other individuals.

To be able to "control" larger and ever larger quantities we always use new "units". Starting with the "individual unit", for example with One Euro, we go over 10 and 100 Euro to a new unit, namely to One thousand Euro. The "thousand" becomes a new, independent term. In the same sense we then move on via 10 thousand euros and 100 thousand euros to the next "power of ten", namely to One million Euro. The following "unit change" in which we can still think with a hundred and more, but not beyond that, finally takes place at One billion Euro.

However, a quantity of 1 billion eludes what our brain can actually grasp on the basis of its everyday processing of external reality. What problems would arise if a person actually wanted to count a quantity of 1 billion elements that are real and not just suspected or boldly put together as equal elements, for example 1 billion people, is demonstrated below using a simple example.

\textsuperscript{13} From 2015 onward, the ECB has been buying government and private bonds under its QE (Quantitative Easing) program, initially for 60 billion euros per month and later for 80 billion euros per month. By the end of 2018, the sum of these claims monetized to "save the Euro" and "prevent a collapse of the financial markets" amounted to some €2.6 trillion.
Suppose a billion people would stand shoulder to shoulder and we would walk past them as pedestrians and give each of them a look. How long would a person be on the road until he or she reached the end of this row of a billion fellow citizens? The complication is left aside if dogs or cats, which many take with them as family members, had to be “passed over” by the “official” on his inspection tour. Just to remind you, 1 billion people lived around 1800 at the time of the French Revolution, that moment in history when the idea of equality of all people arose and spread aggressively, at least in Europe, with the glorious French Army led by Napoleon Bonaparte.

With an average shoulder width of 70 cm, the imaginary row of 1 billion people extends over a distance of 0.7 m × 1,000,000,000 = 700,000 km. That is 17.5 times the circumference of the earth. A normal person can cover longer distances at a speed of about 4 km/h. Assuming that he would be supported by others in this endeavor, that he would be provided with all the necessary things, with food, with shelter, with medical care, with new clothes and everything that is necessary for an inspection tour along such a human chain, then he could walk for perhaps 6 hours a day and that 5 days a week. If one continues to assume that he would still get 2 weeks of vacation from this highly exhausting counting of faces he has to look at in order not to make a mistake, then he would cover the distance of 4 km × 6 × 5 × 50 = 6,000 km in one year. At the end of this first year, he should have reached the number 8,571,429. Consequently he would have to walk 700,000 km / 6,000 km = 116.7 years in order to arrive at 1 billion at the end of his counting.

Only very few people live that long. Above all, as a small child and perhaps beyond the age of 60 you cannot permanently be on the road at 4 km/h. A human body, which first develops and then wears out in the course of life, cannot withstand this. More important, the brain cannot withstand the monotony of counting up for years without suffering fatal damage.

Only such a fortunately only fictitious attempt to work out a practical idea of 9 powers of ten, of 1 billion, shows what it actually means to speak of the One Humanity, which now consists of almost 8 billion individuals. To claim that this is a quantity or a value that our mind can deal with appropriately is bold. The One Humanity therefore belongs to ideas like that of an Afterlife. Only statisticians develop concepts of something with which they themselves do not really come into contact, but about which they believe they can make “reliable” statements. Winston Churchill has clearly expressed this in connection with numbers of soldiers killed in the Second World War.\(^\text{14}\)

To define the One Humanity, a set of 8 billion very different individuals, as a unit with human characteristics, consisting of babies and old people, of illiterate people and Nobel Prize winners, is like trying to calculate the number of souls that had to populate Paradise or Hell since Adam and Eve.

\(^{14}\) The sentence is attributed to Winston Churchill: The only statistics you can trust are those you falsified yourself.
Similarly speculative and obscuring reality are the ideas and plans behind the proposal by Merkel and Macron to regain control of the »most serious crisis the European Community has ever faced« – by investing three trillion Euros.15

In order to correctly understand not only billions as an order of magnitude but even trillions, it is necessary to "break down" such a sum to a dimension that is familiar to the individual. Without such a transfer into the usual economic and financial circumstances of a "normal citizen", the trillions resemble cosmic unknowns. Only after such a "breaking down" can a voter assess what the representatives elected by him decide and expect from him, i.e. whether it is really a "reconstruction program" or rather a "scrapping program".

To calculate what 3 trillion would mean if related to an average citizen, such a calculation would also include children just born or people who are ill, frail or in care and who are unable to generate the equivalent of the fictitious "purchasing power" thus created with 3 trillion. What 3 trillion Euro would mean for a labour force that actually produces benefits over the course of its life leads to a similar surprise as the attempt to "hike" 1 billion in order to correctly assess the importance of orders of magnitude that politicians and the media deal with as given.

Table 1. Breakdown of the workforce of Germany in 2019.

|                        | in million | in percent of total population | gross median income of employees subject to compulsory social insurance |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Employees in Germany in 2019 | 45,2       | 54,5                          |                                                                                     |
| thereof fraction in the public sector | 14,3      | 17,2                          |                                                                                     |
| remaining             | 30,9       | 37,2                          | 3000 to 4500 Euro per month                                                          |

If we look at the "reconstruction program" for the EU accordingly, which President Macron and the German Chancellor Mrs Merkel are proposing in order to counter the consequences of the COVID-19 shutdown, then it becomes clear what this means for those who will have to provide the actual services in the future. Ultimately, the debts and transfers that the Federal Republic of Germany imposes on its citizens in accordance with its participation key in the ECB can only be shouldered by its actual performers. The Federal Republic holds a 21.4% stake in the ECB. The situation is similar to the EU budget of 160 billion Euro per year. Germany contributed 25 billion Euro to this in 2018 and is the largest net contributor. That was around 16%. Assuming an average "liability and participation share" of about 18%

15 Robin Alexander: Acting as Europeans with 3 Trillionen Euro. Die WELT 19.5.2020.
this means a burden of just under 17,500 Euro per person to be shifted onto the shoulders of the people actually producing in Germany. Taking into account a tax and contribution rate of about 50% for skilled workers and higher salaried employees, this corresponds to more than five monthly net wages or salaries.

In view of all the other debts which have already accumulated in the course of the last decades, which have already led to a largely veiled expropriation of the middle classes in this country, largely via inflation and a zero interest rate policy, it is clear that the social market economy and national economics in its present form have degenerated into religious edifices whose "truths" are worryingly approaching those of sects.

In addition the fact that even politically serious groups are openly demanding property levies, a kind of burden-sharing in order to at least partially remedy the "injustices" in German society, shows the schizophrenic way in which a challenge is dealt with that is hidden behind the almost sacrosanct concepts of **globalization** and **digitalization**, being praised as great progress.

![Figure. The analogy between hydraulics and development of modern societies in the situation of globalization of Eurasia and beyond.](image)

© W. Sassin
In history, there have rarely been moments, similar to the sudden appearance of COVID-19 at the beginning of this year, in which the serious shortcomings of theories of state and society have become so abruptly apparent. The attached graphic tries to illustrate the deep conflict that has arisen not only through global labour sharing and intercontinental supply chains beyond an reasonable level. Classical economic interests and the idea of mutual competition inseparably linked to them necessarily lead to a deep conflict with values that arise from the idea that all people were equal and therefore had the same rights. Between the cultures of the nomads and the farmers who settled down some 7000 years ago, there was an irreconcilable antagonism in the view regarding freedom, property and responsibility for the future. This is still true today. It is pointless at this point to think in detail about what distinguishes today between developing countries, emerging economies and "industrial nations”. As a result of material globalization and above all the emergence of a universal information space which knows practically no boundaries in the sense of privacy and thus fundamentally changes the concept of property, the "exchange" between established social units, both physical and informational, no longer functions as we know it from previous history. A return to "normality”, i.e. to the surveying and control methods with which societies have been kept alive from "above” is therefore highly unlikely. The analogy of communicating tubes, a technique known as hydraulics that can move gigantic weights, makes it clear that "pressure differences" in one part of the world, whether due to economic or other factors, force other parts of the world to build up a "counter-pressure" on their populations if they are not to be "flooded” and their structure radically changed.

The highly developed administration and organization of the Roman Empire, its civilization which was technically far superior to the "barbarians” at that time, was not able to stop the collapse of the Imperium Romanum. At some point it became too large for its "citizens” to be able to identify with it in practice. In this sense Bill Clinton was probably right with his slogan: It’s the economy stupid! But the longer-term consequence of this sentence, which made Clinton once President of the United States, was probably not clear to him or his voters. It apparently took a tiny virus to make it unmistakably clear that investment in global climate protection or programs for the comprehensive digitization of the planet along the ideas of the recently adopted Reconstruction Program of the European Union will not eliminate the now obvious structural distortions of this 21st century.

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EXTENDED SUMMARY

**SASSIN, WOLFGANG. THE LIMITS OF ECONOMICS: GLOBALIZATION - FROM A CORNUCOPIA TO A GOBLET OF POISON?**

If we look at the *Reconstruction Program for the European Union*, which President Emmanuel Macron and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel had initiated in order to counteract the consequences of the COVID-19 total European shutdown of 2020, then it becomes clear what this means for those who will have to provide the actual services in the future. Ultimately, the debts and transfers that the Federal Republic of Germany imposes on its citizens in accordance with its participation key in the European Central Bank (ECB) can only be shouldered by its actual performers. The Federal Republic holds a 21.4% stake in the ECB. The situation is similar to the EU budget of 160 billion Euro per year. Germany contributed 25 billion Euro to this in 2018 and is the largest net contributor. That was around 16%. Assuming an average “liability and participation share” of about 18% this means a burden of just under 17,500 Euro per person to be shifted onto the shoulders of the people actually producing in Germany. Taking into account a tax and contribution rate of about 50% for skilled workers and higher salaried employees, this corresponds to more than five monthly net wages or salaries.

In view of all the other debts which have already accumulated in the course of the last decades, which have already led to a largely veiled expropriation of the middle classes in this country, largely via inflation and a zero interest rate policy, it is clear that the social market economy and national economics in its present form have degenerated into religious edifices whose “truths” are worryingly approaching those of sects.

In addition the fact that even politically serious groups are openly demanding property levies, a kind of burden-sharing in order to at least partially remedy the “injustices” in German society, shows the schizophrenic way in which a challenge is dealt with that is hidden behind the almost sacrosanct concepts of globalization and digitalization, being praised as great progress. In the paper, we carefully examine the atrocious consequences of such self-delusion of ruling European polit-
ical elites. The One World project, i.e. the distilled ideal of globalization and idea of a unified Earth that outshines everything, is in many ways similar to that of ancient Egypt with its pyramids, priesthods and Nile regulators. In order to move out of today's "second Egypt" with all inevitable negative consequences of globalization, from epidemiological and demographic to political and economic, it is necessary to record and describe without emotion the plagues and perils that, according to our prognosis, will afflict the "Spaceship Earth" in the next 30 years, and especially its Eurasian part whose urban mega-districts and conglomerates outvie any other in size, human population density and, therefore, migration of the poor rate as well as number and intensity of incessant refugee crises. Only in this way can we succeed in returning to the bottom of reality, to simple and self-determined sustainable life in Eurasia, i.e. to one or more new "Canaans," or Promised Lands given to those who escaped Egyptian temptations of globalism.

In the article, we analyze the limits of economics in modern Eurasian space. Initially economics as a description of the exchange between people has developed from the households of a small group of people whose different abilities originally enabled the survival and continued existence of families and village communities for the benefit of the individuals involved. However, with the expansion of this cooperative model to larger communities, via the national economy to the beginnings of a regional and further global economy, the competition between acting individuals and "economic" units is becoming more prominent. In today's Eurasia we see that economic "actors" become alienated from one another, and cumulative collective benefits can no longer be determined. The "gross national product" records the level of activity on the basis of prices determined in markets that are separate from one another. But with regional globalization and inclusion of Eurasia in the One World project, more and more of these become to be created by government regulations, whereas supply and demand stop to play any role there. The market's "invisible hand" that could compensate for the drive for efficiency in the individual Eurasian "markets" fails and the need for "fair redistribution" of a supposed collective benefit grows as the regional and global economic systems grow. Social welfare plans, which are nothing but a certain form of planned economy, are no longer able to produce "justice" due to the impossibility to measure the productive performance of single individuals with the one-dimensional scale of money, nor the true needs of "members" seized by this system.

Against this background, the actual challenges of a blind global and universal civilization to which too many Eurasian political leaders are eager to include Eurasia as soon as possible, are discussed in the paper and the necessary disentanglement of a dystopian development is described: the emergence of human mass settlements following principles of livestock farming on the Eurasian and global scale, the phenomenon of information whose value cannot be measured with money, and the distortions caused by demographic imbalances between services and needs in the human relationship structure.
Dr-Ing Wolfgang Sassin’s teaching, research, advisory activities and affiliations included the Technical University of Vienna (Austria), the Research Centre Jülich (Germany), IIASA (Austria), the International Panel on Climate Change IPCC, the UN Program Habitat, the Directorate General on Research and Innovation of the European Commission (Belgium), and OEMs in the German automobile industry on man-machine interfaces.

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