

TOWARD A PRAXIS OF WORLD INTEGRATION

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The theme of the 90th annual meeting of the American Sociological Association is "Community of Communities: Shaping Our Future." The program asks three leading questions: must the plurality of communities now identifying themselves throughout the world "along ethnic, racial, gender, religious, and other lines...be blended away to ensure civility? Or, can we have a society of vying tribes without shared bonds and values? Or can there be a shared framework in which many colorful elements find a new place...[in] a community of communities?"

The authors of the program might just as well have asked--transferring these questions to the realm of

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domestic relations--whether husband and wife should fuse into some kind of fabulous androgynous quadruped, go their separate ways, or form an interdependent partnership respecting the rights and values of each. Obviously these are not serious questions. No attempt is made to problematize the issues at stake. The authors offer only one "right" answer, the third path of partnership, of mutualist multiculturalism, a future in which radical feminism, fundamentalist Islam, populist libertarianism, militant Hinduism, Marxian socialism, born-again Christianity, megacorporate capitalism, Bosnian nationalism, Serbian nationalism, and all the other colliding forces at work in our whirling world somehow lie down together like lions and lambs in the New Jerusalem and agree to eat grass, or better yet, develop the capacity to feed themselves by photosynthesis. It is a profoundly "nice" answer. It is also profoundly wrong, at least for the 1990s.

My own answer is to ask a fourth (and also leading) question. "Should our society of vying tribes be transformed into a single planetary civilization that strives to make all people equal and free?" In

other words, should our system of predatory global capitalism flourishing in a political environment of competing sovereign states be replaced by a democratic, liberal, and socialist world commonwealth?

If you say yes, please note that you are not giving a multiculturalist response. Your response implies, and indeed requires, the acceptance by the great mass of humankind of a common secular culture derived from the intellectual revolution of the late 17th and 18th centuries in Western Europe --from the Enlightenment and its sequels in the 19th century. That common secular culture obviously has roots deep in human history, but it happened to flower first in one

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place and at one time. For many of the same reasons, having nothing to do with race or gender, Western Europe was also the cradle of the capitalist world - economy. Because of the place and the time, those who articulated the culture of the Enlightenment and its sequels, from John Locke to Karl Marx, were almost entirely Caucasian males. Is this a problem? No doubt. But it is not a problem that will go away by chanting multiculturalist mantras.

As I understand world-system theory, its adherents believe that the moral destiny of the modern world - system is to be transformed into a new kind of world - system altogether: in Immanuel Wallerstein's phrase, "neither a redistributive world-empire nor a capitalist world-economy but a socialist world-government." (Wallerstein, 1979: 35; cf. Wallerstein, 1984: 156 -158 and 172) Christopher Chase -Dunn favors a socialist world-system with a "democratically controlled world federation," a federation that may come into existence even before the arrival of socialism (Chase -Dunn, 1989: 343-345). Samir Amin speaks of supplanting the reactionary utopia of "globalization via the market" with "an alternative humanistic project of globalization consistent with a socialist perspective." One necessary ingredient in this project is an embryonic "world parliament" representing social interests on a global scale. (Amin, 1994a: 341 -342)

Such a world-system should arise, according to world-system theory, but it is not what must arise. There is no inevitability about it, no iron law of socialist succession inscribed in the book of world history. "It is more than evident," writes Amin, "that current trends are not going in the direction described above." Dominant forces are maneuvering for short-term gain while the leaders of popular resistance opt for

"illusory solutions, such as fundamentalism or chauvinism." In the absence of a responsible socialist response to the present-day crisis of the capitalist world-system, "regressive and criminal scenarios will be the most likely order of the day." (Amin, 1994a: 342-343)

I find myself in complete agreement. The next fifty years --and more--are likely to produce a reasonable facsimile of hell on earth, a time compared to which the last fifty years may survive in memory as a veritable golden age. Nevertheless, the goal of world-system theorists, and certainly my goal, is a socialist world-system, a system that is both democratic and egalitarian, that provides both freedom and equality, which, as Wallerstein cogently argues, are each inconceivable without the other (Wallerstein, 1991: 81-82).

Where did these values come from? Does a Christian pope or a Muslim mullah or an Indian nationalist or an African chieftain have to embrace them, to remain true to his or her heritage? Clearly not. Do they form the moral and philosophical underpinnings of an emergent secular planetary culture grounded in certain specific traditions in modern Western European thought? Clearly they do. Wallerstein warns us to avoid "the Charybdis of neo-Enlightenment universalism," just as we must steer clear of "the Scylla of self-defeating particularisms." (Wallerstein, 1984: 172). He is right, if by neo-Enlightenment universalism he means a technocratic trampling of local cultures by self-appointed Fabian-style "experts," as in the utopias of H.G. Wells.

But facts must be faced, choices must be made, and things must be called by their proper names. The doctrine of democratic socialism is a product of the

Enlightenment with claims to universal moral authority, which world-system theorists accept. Whenever local cultures diverge from its values, as they often do and often will, we must assert, and persuade others to assert, the priority of democratic socialism. Not that our values are unchallengeable or destined to prevail forever--of course not. But either they are our values today or they are not. Either they form the rational basis for a consensual world civilization and culture or they do not. A purely relativistic multiculturalism, the toleration of all values and all

cultures, no matter how intolerant or predatory they themselves may be, is incompatible with the goals of world-system theory, and has no legitimate place in world-system praxis. Wallerstein concedes this point, in effect, when he notes that all antisystemic movements contain "important elements that are no longer antisystemic in spirit. ... These elements have to go." They cannot be purged by party-line dogmatists, he adds, but he foresees their voluntary departure if and when the antisystemic movements "reaffirm in concrete operational ways their commitment to transforming the capitalist world-economy into a world order that will be libertarian, egalitarian, fraternal." (Wallerstein in Amin et al., 1990: 46) In other words, if and when the antisystemic movements adopt the cardinal values of the Left Enlightenment and adopt them as paramount.

Well and good, but why should they do this? The heart of the problem, and the stumbling block in the way of a praxis of socialist world integration, I suggest, is the whole concept of "antisystemic movements." Jesus of Nazareth is reported to have said "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." (Matthew

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12:30) World-system theory tends to assume a variant of this: "Those who are against the system are with us." There is, says Wallerstein, a whole "family" of such movements. Some members of the family waver, and may even fall by the wayside when their immediate goals are achieved, such as seizure of state power, but nonetheless any movement in any degree of opposition to the capitalist world-system and/or its colluding dominant national states is somehow, almost mystically, a comrade-movement of all the others.

In their book *Transforming the Revolution*, five world-system theorists--Wallerstein, Amin, Giovanni Arrighi, Andre Gunder Frank, and Marta Fuentes--debate the relative merits of the various kinds of antisystemic movements at work in the world of the late 20th century. Arrighi pins most of his hopes on workers' movements, Amin on national movements in the Third World, Frank and Fuentes on social movements such as organizations engaged in struggles for women's rights, world peace, and the environment. Wallerstein looks forward to "a self-conscious federation of all three kinds of movements." (Amin et al., 1990: 185)

The great question, however, is whether antisystemic movements are really antisystemic. Are women's movements intrinsically opposed to the capitalist world-system and its sovereign polities? No. Women's movements are intrinsically opposed to the

denial of an equal place for women in a world hitherto largely dominated by men. Are movements aimed at national liberation--for example, the movement for an independent and unified Kurdistan--intrinsically opposed to the capitalist world-system and its sovereign polities? No. Such national movements are intrinsically opposed to the exclusion of their peoples from the ranks of the sovereign polities. Is Islamic

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evangelism intrinsically antisystemic? No. It wants to convert the world to faith in Islam, which might or might not (and more likely would not) involve the dismantling of the modern world-economy and its network of sovereign national states. Even workers' movements are not necessarily antisystemic. They exist to fight for the interests and rights of workers, which might or might not involve collaboration with capitalism and the state system.

In *Building the City of Man*, some 25 years ago, I devoted a chapter to what I called "half measures and red herrings" (Wagar, 1971: 27-47), an unsparing assessment of the "antisystemic" movements abroad in the world of the 1960s. I fired volley after volley against the peace movement, the world federalist movement, scientism and technocracy, neo-nationalism, and the digressive romanticism and anarchism of the New Left. I spoke perhaps too harshly, but most of my strictures still make sense. Those who are against some facet or two of the modern world-system are not necessarily, intrinsically, or fundamentally against the world-system itself. For the most part they simply want their share of the spoils, their piece of the action.

World-system theorists are not, of course, naively unaware of the grave shortcomings of most allegedly antisystemic movements and ideologies. Andre Gunder Frank, for example, shows little or no patience with nationalism, no matter where it flourishes and no matter how radical its rhetoric. Under late 20th-century conditions, he contends, nationalism is ultimately a bourgeois ideology, prosystemic and hostile to socialism, which it always beats out whenever the two compete for support, "like iron against wood." (Frank in Amin et al., 1982: 153) Much

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the same criticism can be made of sectarian religious

movements. Both were prime vectors of capitalism in the past, and may well assist its spread in the future, or at the very least neutralize the efforts of class-based movements to oppose capitalist oppression. (Frank in Amin et al., 1982: 113) Wallerstein concedes that nationalism is more often not antisystemic, and even when antisystemic tends to decay into a prosystemic force over time. In fact, as Michels long ago observed, and Wallerstein agrees, all antisystemic movements, to the extent that they are forced by the exigencies of power-seeking to organize, become the prisoners of their own bureaucracies and lose their revolutionary momentum (Wallerstein, 1984: 130).

Nevertheless, most world-system theorists insist that a wide variety of antisystemic movements abound in the contemporary world whose thrust, at least initially, is genuinely and deeply antisystemic. They reject the simon-purity of co-optation theory, which denounces the empowerment of nominally antisystemic forces as a trick by global capitalism to buy them off. Such a theory, writes Wallerstein, would be "disastrous" as a prescription for policy. (Wallerstein, 1984: 138) Antisystemic movements must work together, forging alliances and resisting processes that lead to their ghettoization. (Wallerstein in Amin et al., 1990: 46 and 52)

Perhaps. Yet is there really any hope that this can happen? What Wallerstein or I may call "ghettoization" is probably not ghettoization from the sectarian point of view of the leaders of the various so-called antisystemic movements, for the simple reason that few of them are antisystemic by their own lights. They may rail against this or that aspect of the modern world-system, as indeed do many of its own appointed

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spokespersons, but their agendas are very different from ours. Few are committed to the building of a socialist world-government. Most do not oppose the sovereignty of armed national states. Many participate wholeheartedly in the games of the global market. So why speak of antisystemic movements at all? What is the usefulness of the concept? Does it conform to ideological and political reality or is it just a way of making us feel less lonely and less isolated in a deeply hostile world? Is it the cornerstone of an authentic praxis of world integration or a *fata morgana* that generates false hope?

The truth probably lies somewhere in between these two extremes. It is certainly not the case that only world-system theorists offer concerted opposition to the modern world-system. There are surely many thousands of people, even many hundreds of thousands of

people, around the world who are fundamentally opposed to it, even if the movements in which they work are not. And if world-system theorists are right about the likely eventual demise of the capitalist world-system through the joint operation of antisystemic movements and its own internal contradictions, including the fulfillment of Marx's forecast of the immiseration of the working class worldwide (upheld by recent trends in the core countries as well as by long-run trends in the periphery), there will surely be many millions of such opponents massing in years to come.

But I would caution world-system theorists against investing too much hope in the nominally or apparently antisystemic movements visible in today's world. They are a slender and wobbly reed, and at all odds little inclined to collaborate. As Wallerstein has often said, what we need is a global strategy for pooling such strength as we have, and pooling this strength

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interzonally, from periphery to core and back again. A profound radicalization of objectives, he observes, will be required to forge such a new interzonal politics (see especially Wallerstein, 1991: 80 -81).

How can we set about pooling our widely scattered forces and (if possible) reconciling the members of our squabbling so-called family of antisystemic movements? To quote Wallerstein once again, individual insight may be largely unavailing in this matter, since the building of an egalitarian democratic world order demands a "social praxis socially arrived at." (Wallerstein, 1991: 229)

But perhaps we can take small fumbling steps toward a praxis of world integration, and this I have tried to do in my book *A Short History of the Future* (Wagar, 1992), which revives the idea already broached in *Building the City of Man* (Wagar, 1971: 57 -67) of a World Party. *A Short History of the Future* takes the form of a narrative of the history of the next 200 years and imagines both the worst and the best that can happen: a massive environmental crisis, the neo-neo-imperialist division of the peripheral nations into spheres of domination by the core, a terminal crisis of capitalism after thirty-odd further years of inspired self-preservation, and a North-South world war, followed by the eventual triumph of worldwide socialism among the survivors, the bureaucratic decay of socialist world governance, and its replacement --but not until the mid-22nd century--by the very "community of communities" hailed in the program of the 90th annual meeting of the ASA.

The leading role in this transformation is played by the World Party, an international movement founded

in 2035 that takes as its principal goal the integration of the human race under the banner of

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democratic socialism. By the spring of 2044, its members have infiltrated scores of governments around the world and the boards of all the megacorporations. The obvious inability of the old order to save itself wins the World Party many new and influential converts during the critical months just before interzonal war breaks out that summer.

Afterwards, no single movement has anything like its moral authority or political momentum. Beginning with its many adherents in the nations of the Southern hemisphere, which survive the Catastrophe more or less intact, the cadres of the World Party build, piece by piece, a union of states pledged to form a world polity, known simply as the Commonwealth. Chile and Australia are the first to adhere, in 2050. They are soon followed by several dozen others. On May Day, 2062, 40 states with World Party governments formally proclaim the establishment of the Commonwealth and merge their sovereignties.

This still leaves a good part of the world unincorporated, including the ravaged lands of North America, Japan, and Europe, which had been reduced to something like anarchy in the aftermath of the war. The World Party leadership splits on the issue of whether they should be allowed to find their own way into the Commonwealth or should be brought in by force. The latter view prevails, and for the next six years the World Militia of the Commonwealth wages armed conflict with a variety of crudely improvised local regimes and competing movements to secure the allegiance of the survivors in these critical quarters of the world. The last skirmishes end in 2068. Two years later representatives of every country meet in Melbourne to accept their incorporation into the now universal Commonwealth.

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It was never my intention, in choosing this particular scenario, to argue that only in the aftermath of a ruinous world war that destroys the core nations and drastically reduces the earth's population can humankind find a way to build a democratic and socialist world order. But a vast interzonal military showdown in a time of multiplying misery is far from

inconceivable. In any event, the transforming agency is not the war as such, but the World Party.

Why a party? And what kind of party? Wallerstein, in another use of the Scylla and Charybdis metaphor, warns against over-reliance on a single kind of political instrumentality. "Scylla is to assume that only one form, a party form, is legitimate. Charybdis is that everything goes." (Wallerstein, 1984: 144) The World Party, to be sure, is a political party, which founds the global Commonwealth, becomes its governing party in the 2060s, and remains the majority party in its People's Congress until 2121. But in the years before the Catastrophe of 2044, it plays little or no part in parliamentary politics. It begins, modestly enough, as a study group of university alumni (to be droll, I chose Binghamton University as their alma mater). As it grows across North America and into Latin America, Europe, and Russia, the members of the World Party function simultaneously at two levels--above ground, holding open meetings and publishing provocative analyses of the world crisis of the 21st century, but also below ground, smuggling its agents (known familiarly as "viruses") into positions of responsibility in governments and corporations, which they make it their business to betray when the time is ripe. The very radicalism of its program ensures that the World Party is the only antisystemic global political force to survive the third world war.

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An obvious shortcoming of this scenario is that I say nothing about sister movements that might have aided the work of the World Party, movements that the World Party in its turn might have helped to coordinate. In retrospect, I wish I had included such movements, even if I had to construct them--like the World Party itself--out of whole cloth.

But what I think makes the World Party an attractive idea is that, as its name indicates, it is both global (meaning multinational and interzonal) and political (meaning an instrument for the acquisition of public power). Although it is clear that movements to conserve the environment, struggle for the civil rights of all groups, improve the conditions of working people, abolish judicial murder and laws abridging reproductive choice, and work for social justice in all its manifestations contribute to the building of world socialism, what is lacking in today's global political culture is an overarching mobilized consciousness of the need to confront the capitalist world-system collectively. As world-system theory demonstrates, the sovereign state system that originated in Western Europe during the Middle Ages is a tool of the world -

economy. From the late 15th century to the present it has facilitated the global grasp of capitalist enterprise. There could have been no capitalist world-economy without it. Although it thrives on the claims of each state to sovereign armed power throughout its realm, it is nonetheless a global phenomenon, displaying a high degree of isomorphism, as John W. Meyer argues (Meyer, 1987; cf. Chase-Dunn, 1989: 103-105), and reasonably stable despite periodic convulsions and vain quests for empire by Habsburgs, Bourbons, and Hohenzollerns, together with their pathological heir, Adolf Hitler. Given the intimate

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collaboration of the world-economy and its state system, and the globalization achieved in all areas of life by the machinations of capital, no effective and durable alternative to the capitalist world-system is imaginable except through a coordinated process of world socialist revolution, which national movements have proved historically incapable of mounting.

Thus I agree with Andre Gunder Frank and, for that matter, with Eric Hobsbawm (see Hobsbawm, 1977: 9) that socialism and nationalism (at least in our time) are fundamentally antithetical. The chauvinism decried by Amin is not a perversion of nationalism but a ubiquitous characteristic of nationalism. In its bones it is separatist, divisive, and prosystemic. For socialism, it has been an unqualified disaster (see Wagar, 1995). Stalin's proclamation of "socialism in one country" was nearly the death-knell of socialism in our century, the most lethal single error in its whole history. Visions of "socialist" development such as Stalin's turn out to be virtually indistinguishable, writes Frank, "from orthodox everyday bourgeois capitalist theory and praxis of 'national development'." (Frank in Amin et al., 1982: 149)

The only way to prevent socialists from falling into the spider web of nationalism and having the life sucked out of them by the beast at its center is to insist on a transnational and transzonal framework for all political activity at the local or national level. There may possibly be room for a Kurdish (or Palestinian or Irish or Sikh) nationalism in the World Party, but only if the national leaders concerned swear a solemn oath to build a socialist world-government: in short, the swiftest possible mundialization of their liberated states. Their highest allegiance must always be to the Civitas Humana, not to Athens or Jerusalem.

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If national leaders cannot make that commitment, they are of no use to us, or, ultimately, to themselves.

What, in fact, will happen? In all candor I am not wildly optimistic. The World Party does not yet exist. I see no inkling of it on the political horizon. On the contrary, the initial response of the disempowered and the marginalized to our crisis everywhere has been flight. In Benjamin R. Barber's phrase, the alternative to "McWorld" --the integrative forces at work in the capitalist global economy --has been "Jihad," escape to projects of separation and sectarian passion. McWorld and Jihad are opposites, and yet much the same in the threat they pose to the quest for liberty and justice. "If the global future is to pit Jihad's centrifugal whirlwind against McWorld's centripetal black hole, the outcome is unlikely to be democratic." (Barber, 1992: 53)

What we may see is a kind of structured and surely undemocratic chaos, in which some polities and some segments of the capitalist world-system remain intact, and even vigorous, while the rest fall apart. Amin and Wallerstein, in their separate ways, look to the prospects for chaos with a mixture of apprehension and hope. Amin speculates that the gradual industrialization of the peripheries will create not an integrated world labor market but a polarized proletariat, in the core countries pursuing a social - democratic strategy and in the peripheries a Leninist - Maoist revolutionary strategy, beyond the power of capitalist regulatory mechanisms to control. No regulatory mode, he writes, will be able to "match the scale of problems that arise. Rather, I see the future more as mounting chaos." (Amin, 1994b: 213) His hope is that various regions in the peripheries will resist collectively, challenging and perhaps in time over -

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whelming the prevailing world-system. The struggle will most likely begin in Asia, but once under way, "powerful social forces will rally to it from all regions of the world." (Amin, 1994a: 347) The only question is whether such resistance will be "humanistic" and "universalist," or merely centrifugal.

Pondering the middle-run prospects of the capitalist world-economy, Wallerstein for his part has envisaged three principal scenarios: a struggle for hegemony culminating in a new world war by 2050, the elaboration of a new inegalitarian world order by the current holders of privilege (somewhat like my vision of "Earth, Inc." in *A Short History of the Future*), and "a crumbling away of the world-system," leading to

massive political instability and social chaos. He concludes: "It should be clear that my own bias, with some trepidation, lies with this third scenario as the one most likely to lead us to a relatively egalitarian, relatively democratic world order." (Wallerstein, 1991: 135-136) Chaos will be messy and uncomfortable for those stuck in the middle of it, but it may be the least of three evils, and the progenitor, in the long run, of the Civitas Humana.

Of course no one knows or can know. But I persist in believing that with or without the aid of chaos in the world-system, a transnational party firmly committed to the democratic integration of all peoples is essential to steer us through the storms of the next century. Before such a party can germinate and take root, a consensus must emerge among progressive forces throughout the world that our destination as a species is neither the global shopping center and sweatshop of capitalism nor the war of all against all, but a new planetary civilization in which every human being everywhere has an equal voice. In time the citizens of

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such a world-city may find they no longer need its common roof, and may peacefully scatter into many disparate communities each under its own roof. But I do not see "a community of communities" as a realistic goal for the 21st century. The next step must be to bring us all together, and to take that step we need institutions opposed to the doomed and polarized world-system of capitalism, institutions that are unambiguously political, unambiguously global, and unambiguously devoted to the ideology of the Left Enlightenment.

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A RESPONSE

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Let me begin by thanking everyone who commented on my ASA paper, "Toward a Praxis of World Integration," both those who were generally sympathetic to its thesis and those who were not. It is inconceivable to me that any two freethinking human beings living in our time could share the same preferred model of the good society. So of course I am not surprised that no one found every aspect of my vision appealing or that some found almost nothing to applaud. I would probably react to each of your utopias in much the same ways. Nonetheless, our species needs, perhaps more than anything else, to think together about where we want to go, and how, and why. Without telos, how can we speak of praxis? And without praxis, what use is analysis? The point is to change the world and change it for the better.

When we utopianize, however, or at least when I utopianize, we engage in a form of creative play. We are not predicting, which is impossible anyway, and we are not legislating for all humanity. We are painting pictures, much like an artist; we are composing symphonies, much like a musician; we are writing stories, much like a novelist. Our visions are informed by the knowledge and theories in our heads, but this is also true, in a somewhat different sense, of the artist.

So I do not claim that "Toward a Praxis for World Integration" contains a final blueprint for the future world order, any more than I would make such a claim for my book, A Short History of the Future. Neither text marks the path we must take. They are both simply experiments in utopography -- or should I say teleography? When some of my critics apply epithets to my work such as "fantasy utopianism" (Bergesen) or "political fantasy" (Schauffler), I can only reply, of course! This is precisely what I am about. Utopography is perhaps the best way to lure our hunches about humanity's telos into plain view.

I identify at least four common threads in the critical discourse of the twelve papers commenting on my article. There is the issue of antisystemic movements versus the World Party, the issue of multiculturalism versus the Left Enlightenment, the issue of civil libertarianism versus the World State, and the issue of the World State itself versus the radical decentralization that I envision as a sequel to the World State. There are other issues, some of

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which I will touch on, but these have drawn the most attention, and I think rightly so. The formula for world integration delineated in my article and in my book is clearly at odds with most of what reactionaries in our time describe as "political correctness." With just a little strategic tinkering here and there, you might say, my formula could meet the needs of the Lords of Capital themselves. It might even be construed as a cleverly (or clumsily?) disguised variant of fascism. Both capitalism and fascism, after all, sport their own teleographies of world integration. So did the Positivism of that High Priest of Humanity, Auguste Comte.

Well, I am not a capitalist or a fascist, nor even a Positivist, but I am also not a knee-jerk radical. I think, as I hope do most of us, that the common pieties of the Left need to be re-examined every so often, to make sure we still believe them, that we know what they mean, and that they are not incompatible with one another.

On the subject, first, of the role of antisystemic movements versus the role of a World Party, [Bond and Mayekiso](#) challenge my skepticism about such movements by citing the heartening example of South Africa's liberation movement; [Boswell](#) finds support for world integration in movements for national self-determination and the cultural autonomy of nations; [Goldfrank](#) and [Schauffler](#) argue that the day of revolutionary parties has long passed; [Moghadan](#) sees the international women's movement and various other vital contemporary social movements as fundamentally antisystemic; and [Teivainen](#) pleads the case for a postmodernist acceptance of many perspectives and contributions. Paraphrasing [The Communist Manifesto](#), [Schwartzman](#) endorses the World Party, but only as a kind of umbrella sheltering all other progressive parties and movements.

For the most part, I agree with my critics, not with their reading of my article so much as with their insistence on the inestimable value of genuinely antisystemic movements. I did not say that every so-called antisystemic movement fails to deserve the adjective, nor that the World Party should refuse to acknowledge or work with any that do. Late in the article I even speak approvingly of unnamed "sister movements." But I did contend, and still contend, that a movement or party opposed to one aspect of the world-system is not ipso facto opposed to all or most of the rest, or will always be opposed to all or most of the rest. Such movements and parties must be judged by their performance on a regular and continuing basis. Obviously any genuinely antisystemic movement or party merits the strongest support of the World Party. If I downplayed their significance in my article, it was only because I wished to highlight the need for something else that we do not presently have and need most

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desperately: the World Party itself.

To be sure, I also denied that any movement speaking for any segment of humankind can be intrinsically antisystemic, which is to say, antisystemic by its very nature, as opposed to whatever its actual performance might be. For example, the international women's movement is intrinsically a movement to benefit women. Women, as women, have no more right to represent or speak for the whole human race than have men. The women's movement might become antisystemic in practice, because its leaders and members agree that women need global socialist democracy as much as men. But it could also turn in many other directions, such as cozying up to capitalism or to this or that sectarian religion or national cause, without ceasing to think of itself, quite legitimately, as feminist. Again, what matters is the praxis of the antisystemic group. Antisystemic is as antisystemic does.

As for the argument that a World Party has been tried and failed miserably--the Second and more especially the Third Internationals (see Goldfrank and Schaffler)--I do not need "lessons" in history. A modern European historian for the past 40 years, I am well aware of the grotesque record of the Internationals, the complicity of the Second with bourgeois capitalism and of the Third with totalitarian state capitalism. In point of fact almost all revolutions and global political (and religious) movements have failed to achieve their goals or strayed from their original path or both. This is history, my friends. Many crimes, many follies. But just indulge in a bit of counterfactual history, and imagine what might have happened without the revolutions, without the global movements, without the utopias and the philosophical deconstruction of slavery and serfdom, of patriarchy, of aristocracy, and ultimately of capitalism by the Enlightenment. Should we give up on political parties or revolutionary programs or utopian visions just because they don't deliver all they promise, and sometimes even turn into nightmares? Certainly not. The real utopians (in the pejorative sense of the word) are the people who cannot bear anything but perfection.

Another crucial and intimately related issue is my defense of the Left Enlightenment against multiculturalism. One of my critics ([Sanderson](#)) denounces the "folly" of multiculturalism, and I must confess to feeling a surge of adrenalin when I read this passage in his response. Yes, damn it, multiculturalism is a folly. Not the existence of many cultures in our pluralistic global society. That is a fact. Not the belief that all of these cultures have a right to exist, as long as they respect the rights of the others. That is the essence of Enlightenment liberalism. The folly lies in assuming that we can build a coherent democratic and socialist

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world civilization without certain shared core values that transcend multiculturalism.

I will admit to one serious oversight. I failed to define what I meant by the Enlightenment and, more to the point, what I meant by the Left Enlightenment. [Schaffler](#) seems to think that I equate the two. I do not. The Enlightenment is the movement of ideas that swept

through Western civilization and beyond in the 17th and 18th centuries upholding reason and science and free inquiry against traditional belief systems. As Kant said, it was the emancipation of the mind from the tutelage of authority. The political corollary of the Enlightenment was the primacy of liberty: liberty of thought and expression, of assembly, of religion, of enterprise.

In the second half of the 18th century, the thinkers of the Enlightenment began to veer off in two directions. Some, starting with Rousseau, Morelly, and Babeuf, turned leftward. The rest, such as Adam Smith and the Physiocrats, turned rightward. Chiefly from the thinkers on the Left came two new cardinal principles, of the same rank as the principle of liberty: democracy and equality. For the thinkers on the right, the highest value remained liberty, and especially liberty of enterprise. In the first half of the 19th century, the Left Enlightenment culminated in the work of the utopian and scientific socialists. The Right Enlightenment culminated in classical political economy, Utilitarianism, and Positivism. During the second half of the 19th century, the Enlightenment disaggregated as a coherent movement of thought, but its political core values lived on, in various forms, in Europe, in the Americas, and throughout much of the world.

The core values of the Left Enlightenment, I believe, retain their cogency in our postmodern era. There are just three. One is liberty, one is democracy, and one is equality. I do not wish to live in any society where this Trinity is not the supreme faith of the land. The trick, of course, is to make sure that none of the three (or no two of the three) overpowers the rest. No small trick! If, for example, liberty of enterprise is carried to its logical extreme, it sabotages democracy, eliminates equality, and in the end undermines liberty as well. By the same token, if equality is won at the expense of liberty and democracy, equality itself swiftly disappears.

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Now it is simply an accident of history, inconvenient as it may be, that this trinity of core political values was generated by thinkers and activists and lawyers and politicians and voting citizens of the Left Enlightenment in modern Western civilization. Clearly, none of these values was entirely original with the modern West. Each has its antecedents reaching far back into the past, just as modern Western civilization itself can be understood only by reviewing the 10,000 years of pre-modern world history that made it possible. But in the forms they have come down to us in the late 20th century, the core values of liberty, democracy, and equality are the heritage of the Left Enlightenment of the 18th and 19th centuries. If we wish to ignore history for the sake of political correctness or for practical reasons and forget about the origins of this modern trinity, well and good. We can just say that our core values are liberty, democracy, and equality, and let it go at that.

All the same, I seriously doubt that any progressive freethinker in the world today would deny that these are his or her core political values. If multiculturalism means the demotion of these values to the same level as the values of, say, Arab nationalism or Christian theology or certain varieties of radical feminism, then I would have to view multiculturalism as a dangerous antagonist to the cause of democratic socialist world integration. Identity politics and the Left Enlightenment do not mix. You have to choose. And if the World Party ever comes along, I am sure of one thing. It will not subscribe to an ultimately nihilistic relativism or to a "church of your choice" eclecticism. It will have a powerful, undiluted faith in liberty, democracy, and equality. Under that banner, it will build Cosmopolis.

A third issue taken up by my critics is the fear that

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Cosmopolis will turn out to be an all-devouring Leviathan, a cure worse than the disease for which I prescribe it. [Babones](#) asks, "Might not the potential for repression of a world-state pose an ever greater risk to humanity than our current 'doomed and polarized world-system of capitalism'?" [Bergesen](#) hears in my language about leaders who would be of "no use to us" the ominous clang of the guillotine. [Sanderson](#) finds my World Commonwealth too "coercive" and "overwhelming." [Teivainen](#) complains that political struggles in my Commonwealth "are suffocated by the enforced consensus supported by a rather totalitarian security apparatus of a world state."

Such fears are not groundless. In the end, my Commonwealth does collapse because of its unwieldy bureaucracy and its sheer redundancy in a world of self-sufficient communities living in a whole and healthy biosphere. It could have collapsed for more serious reasons, if it had massively betrayed its own commitment to liberty, democracy, and equality. But the narrative in *A Short History of the Future* does not envisage such a betrayal. There are several other mass parties besides the World Party, there are plenty of political struggles, civil liberties are guaranteed (including freedom of enterprise in producers' co-operatives, although without the opportunity to profiteer), dissident faiths and ideologies are tolerated, a whole new branch of government (the "tribunate") is formed to protect citizens against wrongful use of state power, and a rough equality of incomes is maintained throughout the planet. When [Sanderson](#) says the Commonwealth "did not allow many of the liberties that prevail today in the capitalist democracies," he is simply wrong. When he says that free enterprise was prohibited, he is wrong. When he says that religious and other minorities "had no right of self-determination," he is right if he means that the Commonwealth proscribed theocracies, but wrong if he means there was no freedom of religious belief and practice. The conclusion of my alter ego, the narrator Peter Jensen, is that the Commonwealth did a better job of safeguarding civil liberties "than the bourgeois democracies [of

the 20th century] at their best." ([A Short History of the Future](#), p. 209)

Now because I am a historian, and I know there are no perfect polities in history, I decided not to make my Commonwealth a perfect polity. Jensen freely admits over and over again that the Commonwealth sometimes did go too far in protecting democracy and equality at the expense of liberty. It made many serious mistakes. The liberties it guaranteed on paper were not always available in practice. I even invent the irascible figure of Khader Barrakat, a Palestinian sociologist of the early 22nd century, who--during the era of the Commonwealth, please notice--published a book denouncing its authoritarian tendencies. Jensen opines that Barrakat exaggerated, but [Sanderson](#) seems to take everything Barrakat wrote at face value. The point is that in criticizing my own utopia, in noting that the Commonwealth did not always live up to its lofty ideals, I am reaffirming those ideals. Peopling my book with fallible human beings does not mean that I endorse their failings. Just the opposite!

Finally, some of my critics are dubious about my scenario for the transformation of the Commonwealth into a highly decentralized pluralistic global community of communities, which I call the House of Earth. [Babones](#) observes that these independent communities still have governments, and therefore do not fulfill the vision of Friedrich Engels in his [Anti-Dühring](#) of a transition from governance to public administration. [Sanderson](#) cannot understand how the Commonwealth could have given up the ghost so easily or how human beings could be so altruistic and peace-loving. He is also puzzled that an avowed foe of multiculturalism would resurrect multiculturalism at the end of his utopia. [Teivainen](#) laments the insularity of the communities in the House of Earth and their lack of interaction with one another.

[Babones](#) is right about Engels. The end of the world state is not the same thing as the withering away of all state power. However, some of the communities in the House of Earth would probably satisfy Engels, since they elected to carry on without governments of any kind. Most of the rest opted for direct, town-meeting democracy. I suppose my reluctance to give up on "governance" and "polities" altogether is my skepticism about Engels's categorical distinction, and that of [Babones](#), between state power and public administration. As for [Sanderson's](#) objections, I do not agree that the Commonwealth gave up without a fight. Troops were dispatched to rebellious districts, passive resistance paralyzed cities, the Commonwealth outlawed the Small Party and proclaimed martial law, and the constitution was suspended, leading eventually to the assassination of the

Commonwealth's strong man. I also disagree with Teivainen on the subject of the insularity of the communities in the House of Earth. They were self-supporting, but they did collaborate on various projects, as documented in chapter 12. Ten communities scattered across three continents worked together on the Samsara Project, three communities provided most of the personnel of the Darwin Project, and the consortium engaged in the terraforming of Mars enlisted people from 43 communities. None of this would have been possible if the communities of the House of Earth paid no attention to one another. Nor could Peter Jensen have written a history of their various doings.

[Sanderson](#), of course, objects that none of this is realistic. The House of Earth is unbelievable, because sociologists who appreciate Max Weber know that politics does not work "this way." All I can say in response is to look again at my section on "The Logic of Decentralization" in chapter 10. I anticipated the kind of criticism voiced by Sanderson. Peter Jensen comes up with four reasons why politics could indeed work "this way." Changes in the structure of society and in cultural

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norms are among them. But two other reasons are adduced, about which none of my critics has anything much to say. As social scientists, we naturally spend most of our days thinking about society and culture, but there is more to human life than society and culture. The other two explanations for the success of the House of Earth lie in the realm of technology and biotechnology, respectively. Technological change --change in information, energy, and cybernetics technology--has made it literally possible for communities to sustain themselves without the aid of a complex web of global services and facilities. Beyond this, biotechnological change has created a higher subspecies of humankind, far more intelligent and far more disposed to cooperative, altruistic, and empathetic behavior than the old *Homo sapiens*.

I expected that most of my critics would pounce on these advances in automation and eugenics as examples either of my puerile weakness for science fiction or my barely covert racism or both. Instead, you pretty much ignore them. But social scientists ignore the society-wrenching capacities of science and technology at their peril. Science and technology are out there, and they are not going to stop throwing us for various loops in the centuries ahead. As Marx and Engels knew quite well, science and technology (and industrial reorganization) have made it possible for humankind to stand on the threshold of universal abundance. They can also, as Yevgeny Zamyatin and Aldous Huxley knew quite well, enslave us all. But never underestimate their capacity to make a big difference.

There are many other points I could address. For example, I agree wholeheartedly with [Bergesen](#) on the need for significant attention to the concerns of deep ecology. The World Party must be a thoroughly Green party. Chapters 3 and 7 of [A Short History of](#)

the Future are all about the environment and its restoration under the Commonwealth. I have an article forthcoming in Review entitled "Socialism, Nationalism, and

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Ecocide," which will focus on the ecological tasks of the World Party.

Of course I do not agree with [Boswell](#) on the question of the alleged benignity of nationalism, as opposed to imperialism and racism. As a historian, I cannot think of too many nationalisms that have not been imperialistic from time to time, both in seeking to extend their domains and to crush or homogenize the many variant micro-nationalities in the homeland. I conclude that nationalism is intrinsically imperialistic.

I do enthusiastically agree, however, with [Pozas](#) on the urgent need to imagine how socialism can convert the global economy of capitalism into a socialist economy, and with [Ross](#) on global labor as the antithesis and mortal enemy of global capital--so long as we include under the heading of "labor" anyone who works for a living. Working people in a postindustrial society include the majority of managers, technicians, teachers, lawyers, doctors, artists, bureaucrats, legislators, computer programmers, and many other brain-workers, a veritable host of people who derive all or most of their income from their own toil.

Thank you again, everyone, for hearing me out and for your comments. I have learned a lot from you, and I think I have also come to understand my own ideas better as a result of this interchange. Permit me one last unrepentant cheer. Long live the World Party!

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Addendum: RESPONSE TO DAVID WILKINSON

The comment by [David Wilkinson](#) on my article "Toward a Praxis of World Integration" is one of the most imaginative the article received, and I regret that I was unable to include it in my original response. What I liked best about his comment is his willingness to play my sort of game--in short, to futurize, and futurize copiously. He agrees that some kind of world party calling itself socialist is a likely outcome of the globalization process, and then proceeds to explore the challenges that a world socialist party might face from rival political formations in the next century. I do not doubt that the World Party would find itself so challenged. I would not be surprised to see the rise of alternative self-styled socialisms, perhaps along the lines sketched by Wilkinson. One may also expect attempts

to form coalitions of stateless national groups, as well as brief marriages of convenience between otherwise hostile religious movements.

But I am dubious about Wilkinson's third category, the "religious democrats." Decades ago, in a book ineptly titled "The City of Man," I looked hopefully at the idea of a fusion of the great positive religions, which would help inspire a movement for world government. In the perspective of the 1990s, this looks more and more like a pipedream. Liberal and syncretistic forces have faded in the various religious communities or merged with secular humanism (itself an endangered species), leaving the field to the zealots and fundamentalists in every creed who cling fiercely to their traditions and recognize no gods but their own. The only kind of globalization they understand, if any, is an evangelical passion to conquer the world, something I cannot believe they will ever do.

Nevertheless, the World Party will not go unchallenged; if I fail to make this explicit in my article, please consult "A Short History of the Future," which sports a rich array of opposition parties. Eventually one of these--the Small Party--prevails.

On capitalism as the dominant system of relations of production in the modern world-economy, I will concede to Wilkinson that pre-capitalist modes of land ownership and rent persist in the world-economy, but much of the large-scale dealing in land that goes on today simply reflects the commodification of land and its use as a form of capital in the global marketplace. One day a given chunk of capital is invested in land, the next day the land is swapped for industrial plant, and the day after that, presto, the industrial plant becomes a chain of banks. I fail to see the difference.

One final note. Wilkinson describes my idea of culture as chiefly political and economic. He might well receive that impression from my article, but, again, my book makes abundantly clear that I view culture, including the possible global "monoculture," as a tissue of science, philosophy, religion, and art, as well as political and economic values and institutions. I do maintain that the ways we satisfy our material needs and our needs for a social order determine the kinds of intangible culture that will be possible in a given human community, but once the intangibles evolve from their material base, they achieve a life of their own and interact ceaselessly with the forces at play in the base.

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