Why Are We Still Barbarians?

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June 1—The world has changed so dramatically in the last fifty years that one can actually speak of a turning point in history. The world's population has doubled since 1974, and never before have production and supply chains been so closely inter-linked worldwide that any interruption immediately results in a shortage of goods. The most important change, however, is the shift of industrial development dynamics to Eurasia. In 1990, 80% of purchasing power parity was still in the West, compared to 20% in the rest of the world. Today it is 36% in the West compared to 64% elsewhere, particularly in Eurasia and particularly in China.

GUEST EDITORIAL

The conflict does not lie in these changes *per se*, but in the fact that *in Eurasia everything strives to advance industrialization, while in the western part of this world, industrial development has become the enemy image.* This drifting apart raises the most fundamental questions, the different answers to which represent the actual core of the conflict and call for a solution to it.

What is progress? Why is industrial development so contested? And what role does man play?

Sanctions and Hatred of Development

After the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the program of *a post-industrial society* emerged in the West. What was initially coined as a buzzword has recently become a fanatical belief, especially in Europe and especially in Germany. It is true that "Western values" such as "democracy," "freedom" and "human rights" are constantly mentioned, but that which constitutes the basis of real freedom—namely the progress of industrial development that has been fought for, for over 250 years—we are ready to simply abandon, even reverse and to declare that progress a mistake, because the planet is said to have suffered so much from it.

The fact that this transformative program includes a radical overthrow of the previous paradigm can already be gathered from the demand in a report by the German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU) from 2011:

> The economic model of the past 250 years with its regulations, research landscapes, training systems, social models as well as foreign, security, development, transport, economic and innovation policies, was tailored to the use of fossil fuels with almost no alternative. This complex system must now be fundamentally rebuilt and geared towards the decarbonization of energy systems and radical increases in energy efficiency.[1]

Sometimes it's even more brazenly phrased: "No more concrete, plastic and fertilizers." And? Have you thought about what that means?

It should be clear that if you want this barbarism at home, you will not welcome industrial development elsewhere either. The most recent official proclamations about the necessity of a fight against industrial development in Russia or China, and the hectic demand for more and more economic sanctions, are an expression of this hostility to development, which has been cultivated for decades. This is, it cannot be stressed

1. *Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen* (*WBGU*), Articles of Association for a Great Transformation, 2011.

enough, the complete opposite of our own scientific and cultural tradition. You have to ask yourself: Where does the hatred of industry come from? Or, whose mental state are we actually emulating?

Vladimir Vernadsky's Point of View

In order to be able to answer this question in the end, it will be helpful to first recall the paramount importance of industrial development, including Germany's own. For this purpose, it makes sense to take the point of view and perspective of the great geobiochemist Vladimir Vernadsky.[2] It is noteworthy that Vernadsky expressed these thoughts up through the middle of World War II. He died in 1945, before the war ended. The most important thoughts listed here in abridged paraphrase are taken from his 1937/38 work, *Man in the Biosphere, on the Natural History of Reason*:

Humans are the result of an evolutionary natural process that has been going on for at least two million years. This process has created the ability to think scientifically. Through this evolutionary process, a new geological force of enormous importance has emerged, which is accelerating and increasing in intensity over time. The "explosion" of scientific thought in the 20th Century was prepared by the entire past of the biosphere and has since manifested itself as a planetary force in all areas of industrial activity. Man differs from the main mass of living matter by his own creativity, which applies to all people to the same extent regardless of all other characteristics (e.g., skin color). The unity of humanity came about spontaneously along this path.

Vernadsky described the discoveries of the years 1895-1897, in which the phenomena of the atom and its decay were discovered, as particularly outstanding for the further course of industrial activity. The exploration of both the infinitely small and the infinitely large pose a future challenge for all people. Vernadsky called this a new power of the biosphere, one which has arisen through human scientific activity, and named it the *noösphere*[3]—the geologically effective power of human reason.

Vernadsky was firmly convinced that once the horrors and losses of World War II were overcome, there would no longer be any limits to global cooperation in all areas of science:

> Science in its essence is invariant for all times, all social systems and all forms of government.

Roosevelt vs. Churchill and Bertrand Russell

It is noteworthy that in founding the United Nations, U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had in mind a goal similar to Vernadsky's. From his experiences of the First World War and the events leading up to the Second World War, FDR knew very well that a better future would only be possible if all forms of colonial subjugation were eliminated from the relations in the international community. Moreover, during his long-lasting polio illness he had studied very extensively the principles of American politics, which differed so essentially from the British system precisely because of their development perspective.

Literally to his last breath, Roosevelt campaigned for a peace order that would enable the rest of the world to do what had made America's economy great: full-scale industrial development across the country. Accordingly, in an address he delivered at Chautauqua, New York on Aug. 14, 1936, he saw the United States as committed to

> the policy of the good neighbor—the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others—the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors....

Despite the consequences of his illness, Roosevelt made the arduous journey to the conference of Yalta in February 1945 to assert his concept against Winston Churchill's completely different one. With the institution of the United Nations, Roosevelt wanted to create a forum that would, in the future, serve for discussion and decision-making for the fundamentally common interests of mankind.

Winston Churchill's worldview, on the other hand, remained British-imperialist, like that of his famous aristocratic compatriot Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), who was counted among the world's most politically

2.Vladimir Vernadsky (1863-1945), born in St. Petersburg, was a Russian, Ukrainian and Soviet geologist, geochemist and mineralogist, founder of geochemistry, radiogeology and biochemistry.

3. In discussion with the French Jesuits, the mathematician Pierre Leroy and Teilhard de Chardin.

influential people, especially in the second half of his life. In 1926, at the age of 53, Bertrand Russell published the book, *Icarus, or the Future of Science*.[4] The topic that bothered him most, was always the same, continuing in his later publications: The world was undergoing an industrial revolution which he conceived as the antithesis to his vision of a British Empire made for eternity. Under the banner of pacifism, he claimed that scientific progress and industrialization always lead to war because overpopulation and scarcity of resources forever divide the world.

In particular, the idea that scientific research and industrialization unify the world, because they inevitably require cooperation, was an almost unthinkable idea for his privileged background. "Before very long the technical conditions will exist for organizing the whole world as one producing and consuming unit," he wrote, and the only way to prevent this was the establishment of a world government. Under the heading "III. The Increase of Organization," Russell wrote:

> I believe that, owing to men's folly, a world-government will only be established by force, and therefore be at first cruel and despotic. But I believe that it is necessary for the preservation of a scientific civilization, and that, if once realized, it will gradually give rise to the other conditions of a tolerable existence.

There were quite a number of like-minded people who were, for the same reasons, obsessed with the necessity for world government. H.G. Wells, who was also a close confidant of Churchill, wrote a treatise two years later on the *Open Conspiracy*[5] with a detailed program on how this world government was to be achieved. Russell went even further. On October 1, 1946, he published a lengthy commentary, "The Atomic Bomb and the Prevention of War," in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, in which he suggested that if the United States were now ready to use the atomic bomb against the Soviet Union, there would be a quick victory and the establishment of a world government, which he would personally welcome with enthusiasm. Sadly for him, he had to conclude that the United States was not ready for this.

Luckily, it wasn't. With the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-61), a president took charge of these affairs who, in the spirit of Franklin Roosevelt, understood the newly created institution of the United Nations as a platform for a community of sovereign states. On Dec. 8, 1953 Eisenhower gave his famous "Atoms for Peace" speech before the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. He called on the world community to use the technology of nuclear fission peacefully to generate energy in order to enable all people to develop.

Stupidity and Propaganda, the Principle of Submission

When John F. Kennedy was assassinated, the U.S.A., the Soviet Union, France, and England had nuclear weapons. Although the establishment of a world government was not exactly within London's reach, it was not yet a lost cause. If it was to happen, it would have to be via a kind of "open conspiracy" such as H.G. Wells described in 1928.

The official plan of action in the early 1970s was based entirely on the ideas of Bertrand Russell. As far as the American government is concerned, the Bucharest World Population Conference in 1974, and the (then secret) strategic memorandum, National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM 200), "Implications of Worldwide Population Growth for U.S. Security and Overseas Interests" (The Kissinger Report), written in the same year, must be mentioned in this context. In addition, the founding of the Club of Rome should be noted, and masses of publications about population growth and alleged resource scarcity. The decision had long been made to take advantage of the benefits of outsourcing cheap industrial production overseas, but at the same time to use other means to ensure that the necessary threshold for industrial development in the "threshold countries" (hence the name) of Africa, Asia and Latin America could never be crossed.

From the point of view of these Western strategists, China's rise to become a real industrial nation is the worst possible accident and is therefore the core of the current conflict. In contrast to other countries, China has made the leap from low-wage production to systematic industrial development and has also understood how to do it. Cheap production does not deserve the term "industry." It is only when you ensure that scienti-

4. *Icarus and the Future of Science*, 1926.
5. Herbert George Wells, *The Open Conspiracy,* 1928.

fic thinking constantly enriches the production process that you are able to increase value creation in the long term, and permanently. It requires the training of large parts of the population and the development of infrastructure of high energy-flux density. Once unleashed, it creates a level of freedom and independence so threatening to imperial interests.

Following the British recipe of the "Open Conspiracy" and using the most elaborate means of propaganda, the political class in the West has tried for 50 years not only to contain such a breakthrough with a kind of climate religion, but to prevent it at all costs. At the moment we are hearing quite open talk in the highest echelons, of first damaging the Russian economy, then the Chinese.

Human nature, striving for science and progress, is to this day the subject of unbridled anger among those who would rather subdue entire continents than see to it that poverty is abolished. The World Economic Forum (the Davos Forum), which hosts everything from Fridays for Future to the Bank of England, once again bluntly summed up this vicious view in its founder and chairman Klaus Schwab's book, *Stakeholder Capitalism*:

> ... This shows us the central insoluble problem. The ability to help people lift themselves out of poverty and lead better lives is at the same time responsible for destroying the planet for future generations. The causes of climate change are not just the result of a selfish generation of industrialists and baby boomers in the West. They are the consequence of human striving for a better future.[6]

A final quote from Vernadsky:

> The political entities which do not recognize the ideas of the equality and unity of all men try, shamelessly in their choice of means, to restrain their spontaneous expression; but one can hardly doubt that these utopian dreams are unrealizable.

6. Klaus Schwab, *Stakeholder Capitalism*. 2021 World Economic Forum; published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Hoboken, New Jersey, p. 15.