

opinion

remark of the day

I do not want to engage in politics. But if I do, there is much to be

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Progressivism

In a previous article of mine ("The Obsession with Progress," TDN, 29 March 1995), I tried to reflect upon the excesses of the ideal of progress, brought about by the Modern Secular West European civilization. Progress is, in fact, a natural part of human beings' physical as well as mental mobility. It is commonly used to signify a factual or intellectual movement toward a physically, materially or spiritually favorable end that is really or virtually situated at a distance from one's own initial position.

Accordingly, each individual belonging to any society at any given time in history progresses physically all her/his life long, but also morally and mentally, although usually to a relatively lesser extent. So does every society. Therefore it is absurd to qualify any particular society as downright primitive, as the West European missionary-anthropologists have done.

Only living beings other than humans remain phylogenetically close to their prime stage unless they succumb to a radical genetic alteration (mutation). So, progress and development belong to the domain of the human.

The Modern Secular West European civilization, which appeared on the stage of history toward the end of the 16th century, depreciates any culture that does not conform with its own, (in the form of "backward," "primitive," "barbaric," "uncultured" and, of course, "unprogressive.")

This attitude of the above-mentioned civilization is known as Eurocentrism. Besides, the core of this civilization has been, since the mid-18th century, the English culture. Furthermore, Progressivism is the unremitting pursuit of the values dear to this culture.

What are these? Particularly that "I am the measure of every thing that there is" egocentrism (that the first person singular pronoun in English, the lingua franca of the aforementioned civilization, is written with a capital letter, i.e., I < a peerless case in the realm of languages> reveals already the fact we are talking about). "All that serves my physico-physiologico-psychic well-being is acceptable to me." The highest values are "my interest." "The more I can materialize them the better for me: I am progressing!" "I get together with people who share my interests and conditions." When those interest and conditions are fulfilled, we might drift apart again. A sort of "marriage of convenience" seals our social bonds (hence the "contractual society"). In order to decide what complies with my interests and conditions "I must make use of my empirical-rational aptitudes."

When Reason does not reach the upmost, sublime confines of humaneness (i.e., piety and spirituality), it lingers on the level of rationality. Thus, rationality is the state of Reason that turns and turns around a vicious circle.

One of the most notorious products of the "homo economicus" is the eight tons of hair shorn

off those destined for the gas chambers in order to get stockings and other sorts of garb woven for the military — what a horrendous triumph of economics! This amassed amount of hair was discovered by Russian troops when they captured Auschwitz on Jan. 27, 1945. Now, this is, of course, not the only example of the epoch-making terrible results brought forth by Materialist Mechanistic Secular Progressive West European civilization: "Had the American not ruthlessly exterminated the Indians?" asks Heinrich Himmler (ref: John Toland: "The Last Hundred Days," p: 178; Mayflower Books, London, 1968). It will not be difficult to grasp the magnitude, the severity of the foregoing suggestive question by glancing at a short list of some of the many other terrifying crimes the aforesaid civilization has perpetrated throughout its lifetime:

■ **Genocide:** In 1519, there were 28 million Amerindians; by 1605, only 1 million survived;

■ **Slavery:** between 1526 and 1870 10 million Africans were shipped to the Americas as slaves;

■ **Colonialism:** At its height, Britain exacted \$300 million annual tribute from India;

■ **Neocolonialism:** In 1988, net transfer of \$35 billion was made from South to North;

■ **Cold War:** Over 20 million were killed in the Third World (ref: New Straits Times, p:30, Kuala Lumpur, Friday, June 25, 1993).

From Rwanda and Burundi to the Fiji islands, from Tierra del Fuego to Tasmania, from Turkestan to the Timor island, wherever you come across misery, massacre, holocaust, social and economic upheaval, religious and racial unrest, be sure that you are tracing the Progressive Modern European man's footsteps. One of his most out-

standing features is his disdain, his arrogance: "the white man's burden" (Rudyard Kipling). The consequence of such a narcissistic claim cannot be anything else except the following aggressive assertion: "It is the curse of greatness that it must step over dead bodies to create new life (Heinrich Himmler, *ibidem*).

Ultimately would the minimum of Justice not require that instead of a handful of Germans, the whole bunch of the "founding fathers" of the Modern West European civilization should have been called to account at the Nuremberg trials for their awful atrocities committed against non-European peoples and nature? Was, after all, National Socialism as well as Communism not the natural outcome of this "blessed Progressive civilization"?

No one on Earth should ever tell me that Johann Sebastian Bach, Friedrich von Schiller, Immanuel Kant, Albert Schweitzer or Albert Einstein were part of this civilization as well. No, not at all! They were still receiving the enlightening beams of Religion. What concerns Fundamentalism; this is the outright degeneration of Religious ideals under the impact of Modern Progressivism's mentality.

P.S. Interestingly enough the so-called open minded Dr. Norbert J. Hartkamp scolds the Turkish Daily News (in his letter to the Editor, April 14, 1995) for having allowed me to express my views (regarding my article "Obsession with Progress") in its pages.

Herewith I want to remind him of the momentous phrase of one of his trend setters, S.G. Tallentyre and attributed to Francois-Marie Voltaire: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it!"