

FIRST PRINCIPLES AND BASIC PARADIGMS

A SUGGESTION FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

By Tim K. Fitzgerald

Something came to my mind, as I sat in church a couple of evenings ago, which as I considered it and my mind turned the notion over and examined it, it seemed to me, on the eve of this holiday season, that this idea must be brought to the attention of those I know, and shared with as wide an audience as may be possible.

For two or three days now, this has been on my mind. And it has occurred to me that as a result of coming to my attention, it may lead to several related issues that some of you have considered and might even shed light on your own goals and objectives. That this may even change the way you lead your life. In any case, given that I have been exposed to a very large, almost vast amount of information and knowledge over the last 40 or 50 years (something those of you receiving this being at least in some way aware as to the career I chose for myself as an academic and student), here is what has come to mind - given that my thinking has received perhaps an abnormal exposure to scholarly discipline and understand.

And from the start, I am telling you I am not aware this has come up quite the way I going to present it, at least anywhere in the course of Western Thought as it has developed and emerge, and that play at least a kind of unconscious approach to the way we have come to lead our lives. In short, I think this is almost vitally important to our society and mankind. And based on what I know, has never occurred to anyone, or at least by anyone that seemed to try to share it with those he knew or lived while they were alive. With the possible sole exception of Jesus Christ, and the mission he took up to teach mankind over two thousand years ago. So here goes. I am not going to preface this much, as I find when I consider doing that, and when I reflect on this idea in my thoughts, that maybe because of my handicap and the tendency for my mind to digest data and thoughts a little differently than at least the medical profession seems to think is the way most people are expected to function; in my case and at the moment, I have a tendency to get distracted and interested in following tangents that I have come to learn tend more to confuse others than enlighten. So I will try to get right to the point, and keep this, like Einstein's 'Theory of Relativity,' or other major ideas that are milestones in what mankind has learned, as simple and elementary as I can.

First off, and I am going to try to put this the best way I can, because it has occurred to me, if I don't explain it just so, it may get confusing, and you may not be receptive and open to the suggestion I want to make for modifying the way we look at man and his institutions within the Social Sciences.

But put bluntly after having lived 65 years in this world and as a member of this nation, it seems that what every person born into this life has a right to expect at the least, is getting married and maintaining a household (that is still not the exact way that I wanted to put it, but it will have to do). And it seems to me this is a kind of basic fundamental expectation and law of nature, if you will, that we may find universally adopted by all life on the planet, that has ever lived. That as life has been organized back at the dawn of time, it came to expect and be expected that procreation and some kind of home base or habitat was essential and necessary for the species to survive. All species, anywhere they lived.

This remark may not seem to be the beginning of something terribly important, and certainly from a different perspective is already established in biology and the life sciences. So pointing that up may not seem to be very significant. Certainly, no one I know, except maybe Darwin, has ever made much of that as a starting point for understanding the essential ingredients necessary for societies in general to function. But here is what followed as I sat in a pew a few nights ago. That it is expected in life everywhere in nature, and almost universally applied to accomplish this goal, or mission, that it becomes necessary for all life to adopt a spirit and attitude of sharing in order to fulfill an essential purpose of the species.

Now here is where it starts to get interesting. As I began to consider this, it came to mind based on what I knew, that to succeed in this purpose of sharing, for mankind and most life it was essential to approach this function in a spirit of co-operation and caring. Particularly noticeable in mammals, but which can be found in the behavior of most life as we know it. Now let me turn that around, and ask an obvious question. Does it occur to anyone other than me, that almost throughout world society today, this is not quite what is occurring.

That in fact under the Capitalist paradigm first set out by people like Adam Smith, or David Ricardo, this is almost contrary to what is occurring or even what we have been told we have a right to expect. I am mindful of the value we prize in society today in the worth and purpose of competition. Or a notion wide spread in the late 19th century through the concept of what was termed "social Darwinism" - and the key assumption in that dogma, of the rightness and justness of 'survival of the fittest.' Does it look to you that that principle advances or contributes to what has just been established here, as an essential value and norm to guarantee mankind's survival.

Frankly, I don't think when put this way, it is too hard to arrive at the same conclusion that I have come to, that our existing world system of economics, and its accompanying institutions, are not only not helpful, but wrongheaded and

apparently contrary to the fundamental interests of man – based on his nature and the way he was created as I outlined above. May I go further with my own thesis that none other than Christ himself seemed to have arrived at much the same conclusion I am advocating here as a universal expectation and process, when he said, “You must love thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thy self.” Given what I am suggesting that what appears that we must hold as the only effective or possible way for the human race to survive; does it seem that there is any other way to achieve this goal as I have just point out, other than to do as Christ insisted? For only by the universal act of love, can we facilitate, it seems to me, the norms that must be established as the governing precept for our culture and its survival.

How else does anyone expect us to live, and make possible a chance of the race surviving, if we insist we must continue to pursue this other path for our present course, while flying in full contradiction in the face of what should be known today as essential behavior necessary for all other life on the planet – much as I have pointed up here? No, two thousand years ago there was much that still remained to be known about the world around us, and what we may expect to find in the course of living our lives on earth. But in my opinion, to not see, as Thomas Jefferson himself pointedly stated in our founding charter, to which the founders of this Nation all agreed, and that established our fundamental and basic values as a society; that what I am proposing too, is a ‘self evident truth.’ Furthermore, I am persuaded at this writing, based on what I know of the thoughts and actions of man examined to date in the social sciences, that we must all come to a common consensus on the validity of what I claim to observe.

And end the debate about what we think we should do in life here on the planet, and get on with finding a better way to organize and govern ourselves while we yet survive. That we must now spend our time cleaning up the mess the last 500 years of Western life has made of the planet – and admit we didn’t have a clear understanding of what we were doing up till now, ask forgiveness and understanding, and as the internet WEB SITE says, “Move on” I have insisted, nor have I ever put it in any other way, that with respect to me and what I see as my obligations to society and mankind, that my attitude toward what may be my role in the social sciences and as a beginning Scholar of Western thought, I must be seen as merely a kind of ‘quality control expert’ in society, and it is not my area of expertise to be some kind of Social Engineer like maybe Marx or Freud, and presume to tell you what I think you should do about this, or go on to try to tell other people how they ought to live. That is, I insist in a democracy, YOUR BUSINESS. It is my abiding opinion that I have put faith in that a far more capable sort of “trouble shooter”; will come along sooner or later and debug western society so as to suggest how you should behave from now on, had you not before then.

In light of what I have just said about Christ, in my opinion this should not have come to you as unexpected news. There are at least a few I can think of who have approached this issue and at least suggested something like what I have said is much closer to the truth than what Western society seemed to insist was the way they thought they had a right to live. OK. Maybe some of you thought the idea of 'let the buyer beware,' created for you a sacred human right that gave the West some kind of special privilege that it could then pillage and plunder at will anywhere on the planet. And it could force everyone it met to swallow this as its right and privilege simply because it had found a way to take advantage of any helpless person that came along, and victimize the planet almost since the discovery of the new world and acceptance that it could be proven the world was round. That you could keep your ill-gotten gain to enrich yourself, at the expense of everybody else. NOTING IT IS NOW COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT THE UNITED STATES CONSUMES HALF THE WORLD RESOURCES IN ITS COMPLUSION TO ENRICH ITS SELF WITH A LIFE STYLE THAT IT INSISTS IN SOME WAY IT IS ENTITLED TO - by some strange form of reasoning and logic that you insist is the only acceptable way mankind has a right to organize itself.

Frankly, the whole American society can as much as go to hell for all I care, if they intend to persist in what I now think is self evidently flying in the face of what mankind should expect in the life they live while the species survives on the planet. I think there is much more. And that in addition to a penis and vagina that marks every individual born into this life at least certain basic expectations of what society might expect of them while they live, nature created you with a stomach and sophisticated digestive system intent to provide for you in this life, with means to feed yourself, based on what had been found necessary eons ago as essential and a basic necessity to stay alive here on earth.

ONE HALF OF THE WORLDS POPULATION GOES TO BED HUNGRY EVERY NIGHT. Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham, Milton Friedman, you failed. Get out. In full face of what your writings admit, you chose to promote what you should have known was an unacceptable way of life, and endorsed to achieve your admittedly private motives to advance your personal agenda about how you thought everybody else on the planet should be expected to live. And the power elite that composed the governing oligarchy of your time, saw fit to promote your wild schemes as self serving goals for re-structuring of society as you suggested with the understanding the position of power and authority we are now faced with should be the logical outcome. That that is the way they wanted it and it should surprise no one that is the way it is turning out. As was pointed out a few decades ago, by a social psychologist: "Man makes himself"
I can trace this trend in Western thinking as far back as Machiavelli in 16th century, Renaissance Italy and possibly much further back - here and there - by those who were in a position of responsibility and influence, and who repeatedly

turned away from the well intentioned teachings of Christ and his very early missionaries who agreed with him. Someone comes along like Rousseau or Marx or maybe Nietzsche who sees you obviously need help, and you ignore his efforts, treat him like shit, slander his reputation and do everything in your power to disgrace and diminishes what he tried to offer - done largely and solely out of their love of humanity and concern for other human beings. That they took time to devote their lives for the betterment of mankind, only to be branded as some kind of social misfit and deviant it was claimed were going to spoil your vision of wealth and power you cut out for yourself and your buddies.

Maybe not you reading this, but almost across the board with respect to the entire West. Some one tell me this is not in fact what has occurred. I have listened and studied for over 40 years on what I decided to label my series of memoirs a few years ago...a Quest. To try and discover why the world I emerged into as a young college student could have such a huge problem, or that given the widespread application of advanced education and knowledge across the country and around the planet, what I encountered as I was about to leave college, and discovered much to my shock had been permitted to exist, much less dominate the way America seemed to think was an appropriate and proper way to live.

FRANKLY AFTER ALL THE EDUCATION THAT I HAVE RECEIVED I think for me to spend a day of my life, sharing this with people I love with the full knowledge after two hundred or three hundred years of Western history, this still is unsettled, and misunderstood or even considered a matter of debate any more, in my mind just stinks.

Many of you have heard from me and I am sure from many other places that what I find as the existing fundamental paradigm in today's society is unacceptable. Most people from what I have heard are now thought to be dissatisfied with the places that one aspect or another of World Capitalism cannot possibly be sustained even another 50 or one hundred years. WHAT DO YOU PEOPLE DO WITH YOUR TIME and lives that I am the one, (admittedly handicapped and not expected to be capable for full membership in society or forced to accept the prevalent attitude) that it is expected must forfeit my right to a full and equal role in the community and society, and yet feel that I have come to the conclusion that I am the one left to do all the heavy lifting.

Just what do most of you think this society assumed when it started out, that caused it to conclude education and learning were the only way to preserve the democracy, and that the American population was expected to exercise its God given right to learn. Not just a third grade education like some of those on the frontier, but was determine to provide you with the most advanced education and learning they could possibly provide for you and all of us. Is sitting back and collecting a paycheck, merely routinely punching a clock in and out for forty years, all you think you owe the nation and the world in return for sharing this great gift. What happened to the primitive ideas at the base of the nation's

decision to create a Peace Corp, or wide spread programs like an Alliance for Progress?

How soon we forget. In my opinion, the world went through the worst, most terrifying experience known in human history since perhaps the Black Plague, in the last century. And most of you I am under the impression seem to think, as I have heard. They are entitled to take the attitude of "Let George do it" OR it's OK to do' whatever turns you on.' That you seem to have acquired as members of the society no sense of the responsibility that comes with being the thinking species on the planet, and what may have been what you should have done as a result of the way God and nature created you. It is written in the scripture in the Bible, 'To those whom much is given, much is expected.'" It amazes me what people have come to accept as the way they should use their minds, or lead their lives, given the incredible advantage they were given in life simply because they can think, and what an amazing opportunity exist for someone, almost anyone who wants to take advantage of this special gift. There is an incredible need in the world community for those who can apply their minds to the urgent crisis that have emerged in the last few hundred years, and now plagues all mankind. In

My opinion the issues raised in this little treatise or essay are in need of immediate and important attention.

Enough said. Write me your comments at timothyfitzgerald97@yahoo.com.