



Why the Astronautic Humanism is necessary

A message to the Space Renaissance Initiative google group

by A. Autino – August 8th 2009

Dear SRI members,

the discussion to produce our Manifesto was rich, and it keeps stimulating my reflections.

This discussion was very fertile, since it ignited, even with some over-the-lines accents, a discussion around our humanist concepts, and why they are very needed.

We shouldn't stop this process, now that the Manifesto is maybe in its final shared version, at least for us (we will see what will be the possible comments of external people, as suggested).

It is my deep conviction that none of the Twentieth Century ideological oppositions would be useful, nowadays, to come out from the current crisis in an evolutionary way. We should be aware, however, that the many Novecento's ideological ghosts, and related dichotomous contrasts, are still ruling the world, and we have a proof of that each time we touch some "sensitive" topic.

It is also my deep conviction that we, in this group, with all our ideological differences, share a bunch of deep philosophical concepts, suitable to keep us working together for our shared goals. If we will be able to feed such core and to develop it together, then our movement will become stronger, and we will become a (new) factor, a new ideological subject, able to unify efforts and to attract people to work with us.

For sure we should try to give (normal life) rationals to the ones which will never leave the planet's surface. But also have the task to give rationals to the ones which sincerely are seeking conceptual alternative ways for the survival and continuation of the civilization.

If we will be many, we can accommodate all of the useful tasks, giving each of them its due importance.

For instance I would encourage Sandijs Aploks, who recently introduced some very stimulating concepts, to write a paper on the topics (could we adopt the IAF standard, max. 11 a4 pages?): I would be very eager to know more about that.

The value of Human Life is key

I think the main (philosophical) question we should try to answer, in order to find and keep evolving our shared barycentre, is the value of human life, that directly leads to Astronautic Humanism. If you think about, you will see that we cannot answer to the most trivial common questions, if we don't deeply reflect on that concept.

Let's face the problem of the problems: we are seven billion individuals on one only planet. The most commonsense answer to this problem is the nature's answer: we are too many, then let's kill half of us, or let's nature to do its dirty job, by illnesses, tsunamis, wars, etc... (yes, I intentionally list wars in this



ensemble, since individual and mass murder are natural very diffused processes, practiced not only by “intelligent” life, but also by other animals).

So, what is the ultimate reason, for us, to expand in a bigger ecological niche? It is because we refuse the (natural) remedy of holocaust, to solve the problem of our growth on this planet. More, we would like to consider our growth, and the challenges tied to it, as opportunities, and not tragedies.

Prof. Lovelock clearly stated that we will attend a huge holocaust during this century. Stephen Hawking is able to look over the limits of our mother planet, and said: humanity has no future if doesn't expand into space.

Therefore, we could never again live “in harmony with nature”, since the harmony of nature foresees a huge holocaust. We can have a chance to avoid it (not warranted, of course), only stepping over the pre-copernican perception of the world. This is a very revolutionary concept, the true evolutionary concept that could come out from this global crisis in larger areas of awareness in the society. Our humanism shall be: expansionist, exo-sociologic, exo-economic, exo-cultural, exo-ethical or it will not be (since it will be tossed back and submerged in the mess of the increasing conflicts).

The Twentieth Century ideological oppositions push is over

Now we can see that all of the Novecento's ideological contrasts are fully obsolete:

- bourgeoisie vs. proletariat
- capitalism vs. socialism
- militarism vs. pacifism
- right vs. left
- globalizers vs. localizers
- libertarians vs. collectivists
- liberalism vs. statism
- private vs. public
- religious vs. laicists

I can give sound reasons for each of the listed obsolescences, but it would increase the dimension of this small essay, that I want to keep as small as possible. Note that each Novecento's ideologue always tried to “sell” their creed giving emphasis only on the pleasant parts of their recipe. The activists usually refuse to talk about the bitter components of their recipes...

A new humanis ideology is dramatically needed: Simon vs. Malthus

The true fertile contrasts are nowadays the following ones:

- primacy of humanity vs. primacy of nature
- primacy of the civilization vs. primacy of the planet
- humanists vs. supporters of holocaust
- growth vs. decrease
- progress vs. decay
- expansion vs. closure and steadyness
- open world vs. closed world



- humans as true richness vs. humans as mouths to feed
- J. Simon vs. T. Malthus

Thomas Malthus conceived humans as brainless mouths to feed, and the demographic growth as a tragedy. Julian Simon introduced intelligence in the equation.

Considering the huge potential of human intelligence (the true root of the modern humanism, or new-humanism), Simon wrote the paradigm for this age:

- the more people the more possible solutions to problems, and birth of new (cultural) concepts
- the bigger population the bigger the market
- crisis create the fertile context for (technological and economical) evolution
- when poors become well-off, the rich ones become richer, because the market increases, and so the opportunities of work and commerce.

You might note (as Robert Pirsig so magistrally conceptualized), that the above can work only in a context of economic freedom and parallel processing: the attempt to serialize the intelligence processes was maybe the biggest mistake of the socialist experiment. ("intelligence"). It should not be read as secret services, in this context, of course.

Considering each life precious is not only moral, but also a factor of economic convenience

You might also note, that a concept is laboriously seeing the light from the above reasoning: considering each single life precious is not only a moral concept, but also (and maybe first of all), a factor of economic convenience. We perfectly know that the big sharks will never be convinced by moral arguments, but only showing them the bigger convenience.

Therefore a primary task of our philosophical research will be to show clearly that:

- Space is more convenient and easier than Earth
- Humanist behaviours (e.g. bootstrapping new markets by helping poors to become wealthy) and open world are very much more convenient than greedyness and closure.

The natural behaviour of killing is not only immoral, but it is also not convenient. My point of view is not religious and neither pacifist: it is on the side of humanity and their full interest. I maintain that none people is to be killed, be they innocents, terrorists or soldiers:

- 1) a corpse is never a good customer (Paul Anderson's "Polesotechnic League"); and their children, sisters, brothers and parents neither: war doesn't create new markets, it creates a burned territory where only the merchants of weapons get rich;
- 2) when a person is killed (whatever their social condition) some generations of hate are bootstrapped, generating other terrorism, attacks, murders;
- 3) war campaigns in any region always kill some innocents, and people of that region will hate the army that made it, and this hate will generate other terrorism and conflicts;
- 4) as Robert Pirsig wrote, each life is precious, even the life of a psychotic; each person having a brain can always change his/her mind and begin to be a value for society, maybe finding a solution for a damn



complicated problem; Pirsig says "it is better than a nation (as a political entity) dies, when its quality is no more renewable, than a single life dies before its time". Killing is the true social poison, that disable the possibility of evolution growth, both of the killer and of the communities linked to the killed ones, for some generations.

I do want to fight against injustice and tyrants, but I never want to become a murderer, since that would toss me back on the evolutionary scale, to a more animal status. The technology advanced countries have a chance, to be really moral superior, since they can develop non lethal weapons. Imagine what would be the effect on the young of Afghanistan and Irak, if they saw that we are able to win without killing and without destroying: that would definitely demonstrate the superiority of our culture, since we would be able to put the psychotics in condition not to make damages, without killing anyone. If we had non lethal weapon systems, I would feel myself more free and lighter, since I would have the right and possibility to fight injustice without being a murderer. Finally, Jesus Christ didn't say "do not fight", he said "do not kill. I can share such a recommendation even if I consider Jesus just an enlightened man, and have no proof of being he a God.

You might note that the claiming themselves "professional" humanists (i.e. churches) don't identify murder as a behaviour to be superseded. Many Christian churches prefer to address abortion, and fully don't care about the murder of already born persons...

Information is very much stronger than bombs

A side discussion could also be started, about the best way to help democratic revolutions against tyrants. It could be worth to recall, at this purpose, the great role held by Radio London to help overthrowing the fascist regime in Italy during WWII. Information and investments are the key factors, while bombings have the awful effect to recompact revolutionaries with tyrants, in a backwarded "patriotic" spirit.

If we are not humanist, we don't need to go to space

But, if we are humanist, we have to accept the challenge.

Coming to a (temporary) conclusion, we see that, if we really want to answer the question, why exo-terrestrial expansion is necessary, we have to recall our astronautic humanist main concepts:

- because growth is necessary
- because each human life is precious
- because each one of the seven billion humans has the right to work for a better life and to have children
- because we refuse any holocaust or armageddon "solution"
- because we want to step over the natural law of killing and be killed
- because we think that, only in an exo-cultural context, humans will have the possibility to achieve a full human status (though changing their bodies shapes)

Of course, our philosophy doesn't escape the real life rules. Our recipe has bitter components too. The main one maybe is that, in two or three generations, the Lunars or the Lagrange's colonies inhabitants will be very strange, for the taste of Terrestrians remained on Earth's surface. They will have a quite different aspect, they will be strange and strangers, of course. They will think in another way, who knows what it will be? But this is a challenge we have to accept. Old people maybe will be frightened by it, but youngs will



not... Just think about the huge cultural diversity that will arise... and the number of exciting surprises that will come up...

For the ones who want to deepen the above concepts, some articles of mine on these subjects:

- The value of human life - A. **Autino** - http://www.tdf.it/2005/vita_eng.htm
- A space age or a (new) stone age - A. **Autino** - http://www.tdf.it/2004/nws204_eng.htm
- A corpse is not a good customer! - A. **Autino** - http://www.tdf.it/2004/cad_eng.htm
- Liberty is a powerful arm or a modern one? - A. **Autino** - http://www.tdf.it/n1_2002/armi/armi_eng.htm
- But the culture of infanticide belongs to the monotheist world - A. **Autino** - http://www.tdf.it/n1_2002/infanticidio/infant_eng.htm