Illusions and Self Deceptions of Modern Man

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The modern man, that is the Western man born in the twentieth century, has hundreds of different faces, types, and self-understandings. This short essay aims to examine briefly only one or two of the modern man’s characteristics typical for many (but not for all) modern men and women, namely, their illusions and self-deceptions. An examination of these traits may help in a proper understanding of a dominant type of modern man’s mentality, behavior, and the sociocultural world in which he lives and acts and which he builds and destroys.

1. We can begin with the modern man’s misunderstanding of himself as a man of peace, abhorrent of war, devotee of „ethical affirmation of life” (in terms of A. Schweitzer) and apostle of peaceful resolution of all interindividual and intergroup conflicts. „Peaceloving” declarations by the modern governments, leaders, and ordinary people have been indefatigably professed and repeated million times; they have become a sort of habitual, routine utterances like „how do you do” and „good by” of the modern man. They have been solemnly proclaimed by all modern bills of rights, incorporated into modern constitutions and treaties of practically all states, including the charters of the League of Nations and the United Nations. „The War to end all wars” was a popular belief in regard to the First World War.

If now we ask to what extent this belief of modern man is correct the answer is it is largely an illusion or self-deception of the modern man. „The ugly facts” (in T. Huxley’s terms) introvertibly show that the dominant type (that is most powerful) of modern man is a man of war and not of peace. This modern man has made this century more belligerent, more murderous and more devastating than any of the preceding twenty-five centuries of Greco-Roman and Western history. Measured by the international wars’ casualty (number of killed and wounded), by the size of the armed forces or by the magnitude of wars’ devastations, the international wars of the first half of the twentieth century exceed those of all international wars of the preceding ten centuries taken together — not only in absolute number of casualty but also in relative rate per million of the population.¹)

No less belligerent, violent, and murderous has been this dominant type of modern man in his internal revolutions and intergroup bloody conflicts. He has made this century the most turbulent, destructive, and man-killing out of all twenty-five preceding centuries of Greco-Roman and Western history. The total number of the victims of the intragroup conflicts of the twentieth century exceeds again the number of the victims of all the revolutions and internal disturbances of the preceding eight centuries of Western history taken together.²)


²) See a detailed statistical and historical evidence in a study of all recorded internal disturbances in Greco-Roman and Western history in P. Sorokin, Social and Cultural Dynamics, Vol. III, chprs. 12-14; also in my Crisis of Our Age, Durton Co., New York, 1942 (Die Krise unserer Zeit, J. Heinrich Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1950, ch. 3).
Add to the cold statistical data such significant facts as „the total wars” — introduced by the modern man — the wars in which the total population of „the enemy”, including children, women, old persons, and non-combattant civilians are indiscriminately exterminated; as a liberal use of nuclear, chemical, bactereological and other „scientific” means of killing of human beings in modern wars (the means previously prohibited by international law and norms of ethics); as the feverish preparations by the dominant modern man and his leaders for incineration of this planet and extermination of the human race and life in general in the future world wars; as destruction of about one fifth of the inhabited regions of this planet in the two World Wars; — these and similar „overkill” activities of the dominant type of the modern man expose him clearly as an indiscriminate gigantic killer of his fellow-men, as „the worst of the beasts” (in Plato’s and Aristotle’s terms) enjoying sadistic slaughters, unrestrained in these nefarious activities by divine or human laws, and devoid of elementary human compassion, sympathy, and empathy to other human beings.

Besides wars and bloody internal conflicts this murderous proclivity of the modern man is displayed also by increase of murders and grave crimes in recent times in almost all Western countries; by Hobbesian bellum omnium contra omnes raging in all parts of human population in the form of bloody encounters of racial, ethnic, political, religious, economic groups and social classes.

These facts undeniably belie the gratificatory self-deception of the modern man as a peaceful, humanistic, homo socius strongly opposed to killing his fellow-men and unconditionally obeying the greatest moral imperative: „Thou shalt not kill” of all great religions and ethical codes. The overt deeds and actual policies of the dominant type of the modern man, especially of his power-elites, expose them as the coldblooded, remorseless murderers of tens of millions of human beings, including children and women. What is still more symptomatic is that these modern murderers discharge their “search and destroy” activity with “patriotic enthusiasm”, “military pride and glory”, “revolutionary zeal”, and conviction they are doing it “for the good of mankind”, “for defence of freedom”, „religion”, “God and their country”, “wellbeing and dictatorship of proletariat”, “for Communism” of “Capitalism”, “human brotherhood” or “progress of mankind”, and other high-falutin values. This sort of idealization, beautification, and justification by the modern man of his horrible behavior displays him as a hypocrite or schizophrenic of sui generis whose practice glaringly contradicts his noble preachings.

In the modern populations there undoubtedly are many real men of peace, even the types whose noble moral precepts are consistently realized in their practice. But these peaceful types of the modern man seem to have been either less powerful than the murderous dominant type or they are a minority in comparison with the “killer kind”. Otherwise, we would not have had „the overkill orgy” of this century’s international and civil wars and of intergroup and interindividual deadly conflicts. So much for this illusion and self-deception of the modern man.

2. Another common belief of a large portion of the modern men and women is the conviction in their own-mental, moral, social and creative-superiority over the preceding generations. A legion of our fellow-men sincerely think they are „the highest product of biological evolution and sociocultural progress”, the supreme represent-
tatives of *homo sapiens*, scientifically-minded "supermen" in comparison with ignorant, superstitious, and irrational predecessors.

When tested, this belief turns out, to a large extent, to be another self-delusion of the modern man.

A. Born and reared in the transitional period from the disintegrated Secular or Sensate order-dominant during the last four centuries — to a new order not built as yet; living amidst the debris of the collapsed mental, moral, and sociocultural system of Sensate values. 3) thinking and acting in the catastrophic conditions of planetary and small wars and revolutions; the generations of this century have had a little chance to interiorize the values and sociocultural realities of the crumbled order, nor they have had a time to build a new order and system of values in the human universe. As a result, the modern man's values, ideologies, beliefs, and moral norms represent a motley of different odds and ends in which quite unrelated and often contradictory values, beliefs, and ideas squat side by side and the total mentality and Weltanschauung of the modern generations are often but a pile of big and small congeries unintegrated into any more or less consistent and rational system. Such an incoherent mentality can hardly be regarded as particularly superior; if anything, it resembles rather a disorderly mental state of the patients of mental hospitals. This guess is confirmed by a notable increase of mental disease in the recent decades and by mental anomie and psycho-neuroses rampant among a large part of the modern generations. An increase of suicide and of use of various mental tranquillizers and drugs to quiet down the anxieties and mental disorders of the modern man are additional corroborations of this mental anomie and unintegration of the modern man. Such a mentality is not entitled to contend to be superior in comparison with the integrated and unified mentality of a large part of the preceding generations.

B. As to the superior creativity of the modern man, it is shown indeed in the field of science and technological inventions. Measured by the number and importance of scientific discoveries (in physical sciences) and technological inventions, the creativity of the modern man has reached in our time an unrivalled and uniquely high level. In these fields the modern man is entitled to regard himself superior over all the preceding generations. 4)

The only shortcoming of his discoveries and inventions is that a large portion of these has happened to be destructive rather than constructive, used an misused mainly for "scientifically efficient overkill" of human beings, for turning the inhabited and civilized regions of this planet into an "abomination of desolation", for fragmentation of all great values into an "atomized dust", not to mention the infliction of immeasurable misery, suffering and despair upon millions of victims of these deadly discoveries and inventions.

C. In other cultural fields of religion, philosophy, ethics, law, psychosocial, humanistic disciplines, fine arts and literature, the creativity of the modern man has been massive, but mediocre and largely vulgar. In comparison with the greatest creative

3) See about this collapse of Sensate order and the transitional period of our time in the *Dynamics* and *Die Krise unserer Zeit*, quoted, passim in all volumes.

4) See the statistics of scientific discoveries and technological inventions from the earliest time up to the twentieth century in the *Dynamics*, quoted, Vol. II, ch. 3, in *Die Krise unserer Zeit*, ch. 3.
achievements of the preceding generations in these fields the achievements of the modern man has been inferior rather than superior. In the field of religion our modern man has not created any new great religion, nor refined and perfected former great religions like Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism or even former atheistic, agnostic, anti-religious and irreligious ideologies and Weltanschauungen. Nor the modern man has prevented a decline of Christianity and of other great religions as systems of beliefs, of moral precepts and as social institutions guiding and controlling ethical, legal, and socio-cultural relationships of their members.5)

Practically, all the numerous new sects and creeds (including the atheistic ones) established in this century have been shortlived and represent either a simplistic or fragmented or distorted variations of Christianity and other historical religions; or exotic, often atrocious-ideological and ritualistic — concoction of odds and ends taken from science, magics, astrology, archaic beliefs and ceremonies mixed up with the modern Freudian, Marxian, “Humanistic”, and other fragmentary notions and theatrical exhibitionisms.

Nor the modern man has created a new and great theology. The greatest theologians of today are but midgets in comparison with the founders of the great world religions or even eminent past theologians of Christianity like St Paul, St Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius, J. S. Erigena, Albertus Magnus, St Thomas Aquinas, Nicolaus Cusanus, Duns Scotus and the like.

Quite similar is the situation in the field of the modern philosophy of this century. The leaders of the modern Phenomenologism, Existentialism, Neo-Thomism, Intuitivism, Positivism, Neo-Positivism, Materialism, Idealism, Pragmatism, Integralism Criticism, Agnosticism, Specticism, Realism, Naturalism, and other currents of philosophical thought are again creators of lower stature in comparison with the previous giants of philosophy like Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, St Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Kant, Hume, Locke, J. S. Mill, Hegel, Schelling, Fichte, Nietzsche, H. Spencer, A. Compte and other great philosophers of previous centuries.

Not much different is the state of affairs in the fields of music, literature, painting, sculpture, architecture, and theatrical plays. The modern man has not produced any peer of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven or even Berlioz, Wagner, Brahms, Mussorgski in music; nor of Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Tolstoy of Dostoievsky in literature; nor Phidias, Michelangelo, Durer, Rafael, Titian in sculpture and painting, to mention but a few names of the great creators in these fine arts. In terms of a Russian proverb “when there are no real fish craw-fish is a fish”, we have a number of craw-fish in this modern century but hardly any real big and fine fish.

We have good imitators of the great masters, even somewhat original creators of vulgar pseudo-art of jazz, crooning, rock and roll, or of meaningless and artless “abstract art” in painting and sculpture or a legion of “best-sellers” in literature that

come and go into oblivion within six months, but we hardly have truly immortal masterpieces — the peers of the great creations of the men of genius of previous generations.

Somewhat better have been the achievements of the modern man in architecture. But even there the main virtue of these achievements have been a practical or functional utility of the modern architecture buildings rather than their beauty. Aesthetically many regions of modern gas-stations, factories, appartments, stores, single houses and other ordinary buildings look often formless and grey in their uniform, standardized boredom. Their “functional convenience” is a poor substitute for their ugliness. Their other advantages hardly compensate the gigantic uglification of magnificent beauty of nature and natural environment by the modern commercialized industry and technology. They not only pollute our air, waters, and land but rob us of their unspoiled magnificence and loveliness. The medieval scenery of the natural environment of villages and towns was certainly more beautiful than that of the modernized, urbanized, and industrialized cities and villages of our time.

D. Particularly steril has been the creativity of the modern man in the field of moral values and ethical ideologies, behavior, and relationships. The modern man of this century has not created any new system of ethics, nor formulated any perennial and universal principles like the old “Golden Rule” or the main moral imperatives of great religions and ethical systems of the past. Neither he produced an original version of his favorite — relativistic, utilitarian, hedonistic or nihilistic — ethics. Even in these Sensate branches of morality the modern man has given but vulgarized and simplicistic reheashing of previous classical systems of utilitarianism, hedonism, eudemonism, cynicism, and nihilism. The main achievement of the modern in the field of morality have been negative rather than positive. They consisted in an extreme ideological degradation, relativization, and atomization of moral values, paralleled by a gigantic upsurge of demoralization of behavior and social relationships of the modern individuals and groups. The dominant type of the modern man has indefatigably declared all ethical values as mere “rationalizations”, “beautifications”, “idealized justifications” and “derivations” screening the egotistic interests, pecuniary propensities, animal needs and lusts of individuals and groups. Legal norms likewise have been proclaimed by the modern ideologies as the devices of the clever powergroups for exploitation of more stupid and weaker masses, — a form of trickery employed by the dominant class for subjugation and robbing of the subordinate classes. The difference between „right” and “wrong” and all moral imperatives have been declared quite relative, changeable according to the circumstaces and not binding anyone if he does not want to accept them. The moral conscience itself, and moral “guilt” and “remorse” have been diagnosed as a sort of mental disease of sui generis.

As a result of this degradation and atomization of moral values they have lost their sanctity, binding power, and largely ceased to control the behavior of the modern man. The social effects of this degradation and relativization has been a general moral confusion, ethical anomie and anarchy, and the thriumph of the “Might is Right”, practiced by the leaders as well as the led among the modern humanity. "Liberated" from “guilt” and control by interiorized religious, moral, legal, and aesthetic
norms, the modern man has fallen a victim of his disarranged biological drives and of rude force assisted by high-falutin fraud.

The malfunctioning biological drive and rude force could not replace the orderly control of previous sociocultural norms of religion and morality (including the norms of customs, mores, folkways) and could not prevent the notable regression of the modern human behavior to the dysfunctional, disorderly, violent behavior of "the worst of the beasts" in man. This regress have inevitably led to the gigantic explosions of "the overkill and total wars", bloodiest revolutions and group-conflicts, to Apocalyptic devastations and horrible bestialities on a large scale committed by the modern man to his fellow-modern men in modern wars and internal struggles. Despite loudest profession of the sanctity of human life and dignity of man in modern man's high-falutin speeches and writings, this life and dignity of man have been trampled over in modern times as pitilessly as in a few periods of the whole human history. The actual behavioral morality of the modern man has sunk to one of the lowest levels of historical existence of the human race.

This utter demoralization is shown not only in public, collective wars and group-conflicts but also in private relationships of the modern "civilized" man. The crimes, especially the gravest forms of criminality, have been growing in this century. Our megalopolitan cities have become more dangerous for the safety of life of their citizens than jungles. Security of life and inviolability of the inalienable rights of a person have largely disapeared. The individual and collective life has assumed largely the ferocious from of the Hobbesian bellum omnium contra omnes. The dayly news are reduced to a long recital of a series of endless dayly crimes committed, obligations and duties broken, human beings killed, mutilated, and horribly mistreated.

This somber picture of the dominant type of the modern man is still more darkened by the feverish preparations of the modern powerful nations to unlash the nuclear, chemical, bacteriological means of warfare for mutual extermination of the human race in the next world-wars. The very fact that the governments and their citizens openly prize themselves with their efficiency in preparation of this universal incineration of this planet is an additional and most eloquent testimony of the utter, completely insane demoralization of the modern man.

To sum up: In this field the ideological creativity of the modern man has been quite insignificant and mainly negative; his individual and collective moral conduct has fallen dawn to one of the lowest levels of morality of all times and countries.7)

Here again, there has been a considerable portion of the modern humanity whose members have displayed a truly heroic morality in their ideological preaching as well as in their overt behavior and relationships to fellow-men. But so far this part of the modern mankind has been less powerful in realization of their moral ideals and values than the dominant, "demoralized" part. Perhaps, eventually this "positively polarized" part may grow to become dominant and to reverse the trend of the gigantic demoraliza-

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6) "Disarranged" because while the behavior of other species is well controlled by their reflexo-instinctive mechanism, this mechanism was largely broken and made dysfunctional in homo sapiens at the earlier stages of the evolution of the human species.

7) See a development and empirical corroboration of these brief statements of section 2, A, B, C, D, in the Dynamics quoted, Vol. III, chprs. 7, 8; Vol. II, ch. 15; Vol. IV, 5, 6, 7. Die Krise unserer Zeit, chprs. VI, VII.
tion of this century; but so far it remains still a less influential part in comparison with the “dominant, negatively polarized” portion of the Western population. 8)

3. Largely a self-delusion is also the modern man’s boastful pride of being a free person, fighter for freedom, liberator of all groups and persons from all forms of unjust limitation and suppression of their liberty and inalienable rights. Our modern man imagines himself as a modern Prometheus who broke the chains of Zeus freeing himself and all others deprived of their freedom by any kind of forces and agencies. Among other things this modern man believes he demolished all autocratic governments in favor of democratic regimes of “the people, by the people, and for the people”, and firmly established freedoms of speech, press, religion, meetings, unions, associations, even freedom of a full self-realization of every human person, and freedoms from fear, hunger, and want.

Factually, instead of this self-glorificatory illusion, the modern man replaced most of the republican and monarchical limited democracies by dictatorial, totalitarian regimes of Communist, Fascist, Nazi, Military, Oligarchic Caesarisms (in O. Spengler’s terms), as “a government of a formless dictatorial arbitrariness”. These Caesarist, dictatorial regimes are regimenting and controlling the mind, the behavior, and the social relationships of their subjects more rigidly, coercively, and fully than the abolished liberal, constitutionally-democratic governments. Without any exception, all contemporary governments of the West, including the formally democratic ones, regiment and control compulsorily a much greater portion of the life, ideologies, actions, and social relationships of their subjects than the governments of the nineteenth century. And, correspondingly, the freely chosen and decided by the individuals and private groups portion of social relationships, thoughts, and actions is now much smaller and limited than it was in the preceding century. In openly dictatorial-Communist, Fascist, Military, Oligarchic and other totalitarian governments this “free portion” is reduced almost to zero. In so called “democratic nations” like the United States, it is also enormously curtailed and is decreasing from year to year. The still existing “parliaments, congresses, and elections are a mere preconcerted game, a farce, staged in the name of people’s freedom and self-determination. This is the end of democracy”, correctly concludes Spengler. 9)

These openly dictatorial or covertly totalitarian — formally “democratic” — governments enormously reduced freely chosen and decided portion of life, actions, thoughts and relationships of individuals and private groups; greatly alienated “the inalienable” rights and liberties of citizens; and largely replaced “the government of the people,

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8) The terms: “positive and negative polarization” refer to the “law of creative, moral, and religious polarization” in calamities, crises, and frustrations. According to this “law”, in the periods of catastrophies and crises the “normal majority of the population” which is neither too sinful nor too saintly nor too creative or uncreative in normal times, tends to polarize, some becoming more religious, moral, and creative while others more atheistic, demoralized, criminal, and uncreative. See about this law in P. Sorokin, Man and Society in Calamity, Dutton Co., New York, 1942, chps. 10-12; The Meaning of Our Crisis, Beacon Press, Boston, 1951, ch. 4: The Ways and Power of Love, H. Regnery, Chicago, 1967; “The Western Religion and Morality of Today”, quoted, 24-43.

9) See O. Spengler’s remarkable analysis of the modern Caesarism in O. Spengler, Decline of the West, New York, 1947, Vol. II, pp. 448-465, chps. 13, 14. His conception of Caesarism is the best characterization of the overt and covert, prevalent totalitarian regimes established in this century in the Western countries, including most of the formally democratic ones.
by the people, and for the people”, by a self-appointed “government of politicians, by politicians, and for politicians” dictatorially ruling their subjects with or without simulacra of pseudo-elections, pseudo-parliaments, pseudo-congresses, and other paraphernalia of “free democracy”. ¹⁰)

Such are the “glorious” achievements of the modern man in the field of political and economic liberty in the West. And for these doubtful “liberties” he paid an immensely high price of many millions of human lives perished in vain in the First World War (which was fought for supposedly “making the world safe for democracy”), in the Second World War an in innumerable other wars and revolutions, increased by the price of horrible devastations, bestialities, and limitless sufferings of untold millions of human beings over all the continents of this planet. This immense price paid for establishment of these regimes of Caesarism makes this achievement of the modern man one of the greatest failures in the whole human history.

Still worse are the results of “the wars of liberation” of colonial and “backward” peoples from their colonial and other servitudes. The actual “fruits” of such liberations are typically exemplified by “the liberation of the Vietnamese people” from Communist domination by “the freedom-loving American armed forces”. In The People’s Korea (November 23, 1966, p. 6) these results are summed up as follows:

“From July 1954 to June 1965, the U.S. Imperialists and Their Henchmen:
Carried out 160,000 large and small-scale mopping operations.
Killed 170,000 people.
Wounded 800,000 people through bombing, machine-gun fire and torture
Detained 400,000 people in over 1,000 prisons.
Forced millions of people into “strategic hamlets”
Kept 2,000,000 children illiterate.
Razed tens of thousands of houses and villages to the ground.
Raped 30,000 women, including old women, children and religious believers (nuns).
Disemboweled or buried alive 5,000 people
Spread noxious chemicals over 60,000 hectares of tilled land, causing great damage to livestock and victimizing tens of thousands of persons”.

These figures eloquently tell the true nature of “the liberations” of backward countries by the “civilized”, “democratic”, „freedom-loving”, “generous” and “benevolent” modern man of the American West. Instead of freedom the liberations have given death, suffering, mutilations, and “abomination of desolation” to hundreds of thousands of innocent people, including children, women, and old folk. Instead of prosperity they destroyed all means of livelihood of the “liberated” populations. In place of blessings of civilization and culture they brought to the “freed peoples” unspeakable bestialities, crimes, corruption, depravities and diseases of modern advanced civilizations. Shall we wonder at appearance of a new prayer among the “liberated” groups: “Good Lord, save us from the liberation by Western armed Forces”.

With a slight variation these results can be applied to almost all “wars of liberation” by the Western man of either subjugated colonial peoples or social classes or other groups. In comparison with these “liberations” the subjugations and treatment of the

¹⁰) See a development and substantiation of these conclusions in my Dynamics, Vol. III, chprs.5, 6, 7; and in Die Krise unserer Zeit, ch. V.
conquered peoples by the armies of Caesar, Genghis Khan, Tamerlane or Napoleon were more humane and charitable than the modern genocidal wars of liberation by the modern “freedom loving” “liberators and benefactors”. So much about the dominant type of the modern man as liberator.

Finally, if we take the total amount of freedom enjoyed by the modern man as a really free person, this total amount is certainly not vaster than that enjoyed by the free peoples and classes of the past. Liberty can be defined as a possibility for an individual to do or not to do as he pleases. If his desires are satisfied, he is free; if not he is unfree. If the sum total of his wishes exceeds his means of satisfying them, he is unfree; *per contra*, if the sum of his wishes does not exceed or is smaller than the total sum of his means of satisfying them he is free. Hence we derive this formula of

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\text{Sum of Means} \quad \text{Sum of Wishes}
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This dominant type incessantly strives to expand his wishes and the means of their satisfaction. The more he has the more he wants. Since there is no limit to maximalization of sensual desires and since, according to a modified Weber-Fechner law, the satisfaction increases only as a logarithm of the increase of the means of satisfaction, the discrepancy between what the modern man has and what he wants increases progressively in a vicious circle. In the given formula of liberty the denominator of wishes of the modern man tends always to exceed the numerator of means of satisfaction of these wishes. In his unsatisfiable pursuit of Sensate, Epicurean liberty the modern man tends to be continuously unfree because he does not want and often cannot reduce his sensate desires for wealth, material comforts, sexual and bodily pleasures, for higher social position and status, for popularity, fame and lust for power. He is eternally dissatisfied and tortured by this discrepancy between what he wants and what he has.

Even more: his sensate liberty leads him to incessant ferocious struggle with other individuals and groups for as large a share of sensate values — wealth, love, pleasure, comfort, safety, security, power, fame — as he can get. Since one can get them mainly at the cost of somebody else, this quest intensifies the struggle for existence and share of values of the modern individuals and groups. Furthermore, the total liberty of the modern man is also greatly reduced by the unavoidable pressures of many persons and groups with which he is connected. Since early morning to late evening his daily budget of time is filled by discharge of his

11) See a development and fluctuation of these two forms of liberty in the *Dynamics*, Vol. III, ch. VI; *Die Krise unserer Zeit*, ch. V.
works and functions which he has to perform regardless of whether he wants or not to fulfill. Almost all modern men and women have to do many activities which they dislike to do, cannot enjoy many other activities which they would like to enjoy, have to tolerate many conditions and actions of other persons and groups which, if they were free, they would not tolerate at all.

*Modern man has become a slave of watch-time* which mercilessly and most rigidly prescribes all his activities during every 24 hours, often depriving him even a few hours of rest, leisure, and sleep, regardless of his wishes and preferences. A multitude of his — partly chosen but largely imposed — duties and works make the modern man always hurrying, rushing, and running not to be late to his appointed works and to trains, airoplanes, and busses transporting him to the places of his obligatory activities. A study of the time-budgets of the modern men and women of various countries and classes shows that they have, at best, only a few hours for sleep, rest, and leisure-activities.\(^\text{12}\)

The preceding considerations suggest strongly that the discussed belief of the modern man as a free person *par excellence*, as a fighter, defender, and establisher of freedom for all, as a liberator of suppressed individuals and groups, is largely a self-gratificatory delusion of the dominant type of the modern man. This delusion is typical for the dominant and prevalent type of the modern man. Side by side with this type there is another type which is free from this delusion. This minority type represents the noblest kind of the free man not only preaching freedom but practicing it in his actions and relationships with all fellow-men. Unfortunately this type still remains the less powerful minority among the majority of the dominant type of the modern man.

4. Similar delusions and self-deceptions exist in several other — ideological, behavioral, and sociocultural — dimensions of the modern man. Not trying to sketch these in this essay, I simply sum up the portrait of the modern man by mentioning one or two of his general characteristics. In his *total personality*, the modern man is a complex, multidimensional creature, a veritable *coïncidentia oppositorum* or, in psychiatric terms, a multilinearly split personality. He embodies, sometimes in striking contrast, quite opposite vital, mental, moral, aesthetic, and sociocultural virtues and vices. In this sense, he has in himself the noblest creative forces of Ahura Mazda and the evil, destructive powers of Ahriman. He serves the God of Creation and the Satan of Perdition.

This self-contradictory dualism of his nature is largely due to his destiny of being born and living, thinking, and acting in a most catastrophic period of human history. The catastrophes of this century have polarized the modern generations into moral heroic saints and cynical, criminal sinners, sublimely religious and militantly atheistic, supremely creative and stupidly uncreative persons and groups. In addition to this sociocultural polarization of individuals and collectivities, the catastrophic conditions

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of this century have also split the total personality of many individuals into disharmonious and “schizophrenic” coincidental oppositorum. It is regretful that so far the Ahriman’s proclivities in the modern man has been prevailing over the constructively-creative forces of Ahura Mazda in today’s humankind. If the evil powers of Ahriman in the modern man would not lead mankind to new suicidal World War and to ensuing termination of creative mission of homo sapiens on this planet, then there is a hope that the noblest forces of the God of Creation would eventually grow and prevail over the evil powers of death and destruction. With an expression of hope that a fullest renaissance of all genuinely true, good, and beautiful creative forces of mankind will again blossom in the human universe, I can conclude this humble sketch of the illusions and self-deceptions of the dominant type of the modern man of today.

Doelen en middelen

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Er zijn allerlei antwoorden uitgedacht op de vraag waardoor de mens zich van het dier onderscheidt. Een daarvan luidt, dat de mens doeleinden voorzweven en dat hij middelen bedenkt om die te realiseren. Wij kunnen nog beter de termen doeleinden en hulpmiddelen tegenover elkaar stellen, om de verhouding tussen die twee scherper te laten uitkomen. De laatste, dus de hulpmiddelen, zijn aan de eerste ondergeschikt en uiteindelijk alleen iets waard voorzover de doeleinden of oogmerken voor de bereiking waarvan zij worden uitgedacht, vervaardigd en ingeschaakeld van betekenis worden geacht. Een hamer dient om er een spijker mee in te slaan, een wapen om er een vijand mee te treffen, een bitter smakend drankje om er een kwaal of aandoening mee te genezen, een machine om een bepaald produkt te vervaardigen of energie te leveren, enz.

Alle middelen vallen dus onder wat wij de „om”-categorie zouden kunnen noemen. Bij dat „om” hebben wij natuurlijk aan het precieze tegendeel te denken van de repetierende heilige Sanskritsyllabe uit de Hindoefilosofie. Want daarmee wordt juist het eigenlijk onuitsprekelijke absolute uitgedrukt en tegelijk niet uitgedrukt. Wel is een populaire maar gevaarlijke zegswijze geneigd om aan de middelen onder het gezichtspunt der doeleinden eigenschappen van heiligheid toe te schrijven. Maar ook wie op dit z.g. beginsel een beroep doet wil daarmee nog te verstaan geven, dat de middelen hun heiligheid, dus absolutuethed, niet aan zichzelf ontlenen, maar dat zij er van de doelen uit op afstraalt. De mens heeft er van oudsher gebruik van gemaakt om er zijn perversiteiten en monstruositeiten ten opzichte van de medemens mee goed te praten. Wanneer ik het daar in de eerste plaats over wilde hebben zou mijn thema misschien nog het beste als demonologisch kunnen worden gekwalificeerd. In plaats daarvan denk ik meer aan de anthropologische, dialectische en sociologische aspecten van de doelmiddelenproblematiek.