

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF VICTIMS

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Abstract: *The paper highlights a neglected status of the ruled, that of victim. It questions what a victim is, and points out the historical conditions of the generalised social status of victims, the ideological representations of the status of victims in the formation of the social fabric, the dominant point of view in the historical representations on the relations of victim generation, and the paradigm shifting from the standpoint of victims.*

By using the last scientific research in anthropology, ethology, archaeology, and by recalling Konrad Lorenz's, Freud's, Erich Fromm's and René Girard's explanations, the first part deals with the problem of the dominant ideology's legitimating of the human aggressiveness as an inherited animal instinct. The above-mentioned references prove that the animal origin of the human aggressiveness is not sustainable. The differences between the animal aggressiveness and the human one are displayed as well as the historical development of the generalised and banal victim status.

An interesting feature of victims was their historical "sacredness". In mirror – as the Interlude mentions – the contradiction between the holiness of the child and, when he matures, his transformation into a victim suggests the necessity to consider the problem of victims as culturally/socially determined and thus not eternal.

The last part focuses on the problem of dialogue space of victims. The regular discourse from the dominant point of view in the name of victims excludes them from the public space. On the contrary, this one is filled with the "only correct" view in variants which do not challenge the questioning of victim creation process. Since the most ardent will of victims is to no longer be victims, the necessity of paradigm shift in the theoretical approach of social relations was imperious. It concerned the perspective from which the approach is promoted, i.e. the perspective of victims. The paper ends by illustrating this shift.

Keywords: *victim, animal aggression, human aggressiveness, sacrifice, sacredness of victim, Freud, Erich Fromm, Konrad Lorenz, René Girard, Giorgio Agamben, Kant, The International.*

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I. Precedence

1. Introduction: Putting the problem

The social analysis, but also the social values and goals were always provided from the standpoint of those who could do them. These mighty persons were interested *how* society does function and, as truly materialists, considered that *what is* explains the *why* of existence. Without their endeavour we would not have today all the concepts and clever nuances of the pictures of social relations developed as a created endowment of humans. While concerning the values and goals, these ones always showed the *cultural hegemony of the powerful, of the victors*.

Over time, these *victors* were conquerors, vanquishers, but also champions and winners. All of them believed that the world was “the best possible one” because it was *their* world, where they took all.

Obviously, that world had also a grey spot, full of spectres *without face*, who were like the ants running, feeding and servicing their anthills, important to the viewers from above only as a quantity, or a *quantitative* force from the below of existence: a *force* without which there would have been troubles in the enjoyment of life but, nevertheless, indefinable and forgettable most of times. Only sometimes this force’s screams of rage were heard, and as very disturbing ones. But most of time the spectres without face endured their reason to be: this reason to be was granted to them by the victors.

What can be the name of the cohorts of spectres *without face* standing behind the victors? Those bowing their heads behind the victors were and are *the defeated* ones. By overcoming the defeated, the victors have fundamentally changed their specificity. Obviously, the defeated ones are humans, are rational and thus, the potential power to understand and humanly use the world, but by becoming vanquished, beaten, losers, they show themselves as less human. The name of the *humans as less human ones* was – and is – that of *victims*.

This name has been configured with the development of the human society.

2. Human aggression and destructiveness as process of victim creation

2.1. Not rooted in animal aggression

The general *animal instinct*, as it passed also into the human species, was that to killing *other* species: and only when other species are competitors for the same food, while the prey is never exterminated by predators, or only

by fear from other species². Even the killing of members of the *same* species or family is a “defensive aggression” and, “in most mammals, it does not aim at killing, destruction or torture, but is essentially a threatening posture which serves as a warning”, thus it is not „bloody”. And in any case, the animal aggressiveness is far biggest in captivity than in wild³. In any case, what is essential – and was demonstrated both by the neurological / neurophysiological evidence that the predatory aggression (for food) is distinct from other types of aggression (it is genetically programmed), and by behavioural evidence that the predatory instinct “does not show rage, is not interchangeable with fight behavior, but it is purpose-determined, accurately aimed, and the tension ends with the accomplishment of the goal-the attainment of food. The predatory instinct is not one of defense, common to all animals, but of food-finding, common to certain animal species that are morphologically equipped for this task”⁴ – the animal defence instinct manifests either by aggression (or even only a threatening posture) or by flight.

This intra-specific aggression is also instinctual, integrating the interest of the individual animal in the interest of his species, since the result of the killing always was beneficial for the species as such. (If a joke is allowed, if the animals could speak /could have spoken, they would call the killed confrères “damages in the name of the species”, but not “victims”). More specifically, even some such instincts have been transformed through a complex biological process (ritualization) so as the aggressiveness was limited by “a new autonomous instinct which interferes as an independent force in the great constitution of all other instinctive motivations. Its primary function which consists, as we know, of a communication, can prevent the harmful effects of aggression by inducing mutual understanding between members of a species”⁵.

Just this animal basis of the human being enables us to understand that the human aggressiveness and the relations of domination are not explained by a simplified “original animal instinct” and less by a single

² Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression* (1963), Translated by Marjorie Latzke, with a foreword by Sir Julian Huxley. London, Methuen, 1966, pp. 20-25.

³ Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, New York, Chicago, San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973, pp. 102, 103.

⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 98-99.

⁵ Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression*, p. 82.

cause, as the instinct, but by the intertwining of chains of social, thus cultural, causes. "Man's destructiveness and cruelty cannot be explained in terms of animal heredity or in terms of a destructive instinct, but must be understood on the basis of those factors by which man *differs* from his animal ancestors"⁶.

The more so there is not a "simple" aggressiveness – that is *defensive* and instinctual, both in animals and man – but a hyper-aggressiveness, full of incredible *cruelty and destructiveness*, that is specific just to the human being who has created "aggression-producing conditions". The animals "exhibit extreme and vicious destructiveness when the environmental and social balance is disturbed, although this occurs only as an exception – for instance, under conditions of crowding"⁷. Therefore, the human aggressiveness, cruelty and destructiveness are the result of environmental and social disturbances *created* by man in specific social relations.

And for concluding this note about the problem of animal origin and human peculiarity of aggressiveness and destructiveness, a difference between a *benign aggression* – "biologically adaptive aggression is a response to threats to vital interests; it is phylogenetically programmed; it is common to animals and men⁸; it is not spontaneous or self-increasing, but reactive and defensive; it aims at the removal of the threat, either by destroying or by removing its source" – and a *malign aggression* is important. The malignant aggression is "not a defense against a threat; it is not phylogenetically programmed; it is characteristic only of man; it is biologically harmful because it is socially disruptive; its main manifestations – killing and cruelty – are pleasurable without needing any other purpose; it is harmful not only to the person who is attacked but also to the attacker. Malignant aggression, though not an instinct, is a human potential rooted in the very conditions of human existence"⁹. It is huge,

⁶ Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, p. 186.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 185.

⁸ Common, but not identical: "It could be said that the neural equipment for defensive aggression is identical in animals and man; this statement is correct, however, only in a limited sense. This is mainly because these aggression-integrating areas are part of the whole brain, and because the human brain with its large neocortex and its vastly greater number of neural connections is different from the animal brain", Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, p. 195.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 187.

especially nowadays, when we claim to experience the highest level of science, technology, “so” of human rationality. And anyway, even the benign aggression is “many times greater” than in any other animal.

2. 2. Man’s aggressiveness as not the origin of the humans’ evolvement

There are *common* behavioural traits in animals – at least in some mammals and especially, in primates – and in humans. These traits demonstrate that the natural, so innate aggressiveness was circumscribed in few extreme situations (as pointed out above, and as understanding that the killing of food and sex competitors is always *benign* and “the exception”, not the rule in the animal kingdom¹⁰; rather “spontaneous prosociality (the helping impulse) and socio-cognitive performance is well documented for nonhuman primates and likely for other taxa. An extrapolation of these general findings to the hominin lineage suggests that humans also fit this pattern”¹¹; anyway, the aggressiveness is not tantamount to war¹².

¹⁰ Marta Miklikowska, Douglas B. Fry, “Natural Born Killers: A Critique of the Killers-Have-More-Kids Idea”, in Daniel J. Christie and Joám Evans Pim (Eds.), *Non-Killing Psychology*, Center for Global Nonkilling, 2012, pp. 43-70 (48: and “to kill conspecifics is rarely favored by natural selection”).

“evolutionarily the most successful strategy is that of retaliator...being nonaggressive unless attacked, at which point the retaliator fights back...timid individuals that retreated did not fare very well compared to aggressive individuals; however, fighting entails risks of injury and therefore overly-aggressive individuals also accumulated evolutionary costs...the agonistic strategies that fare the best are those that are limited and restrained, not lethal ones” (45); “For the most part, animal studies show a recurring pattern wherein aggression against conspecific rivals is limited, restrained and rarely lethal...It is in the survival interests of both contestants to follow the rules of restrained, ritualized fighting so that they minimize the risk of injury and reduce energy expenditure” (46); “A selection force favoring nonlethality in humans and other animals involves inclusive fitness. The concept of inclusive fitness holds that since relatives have alleles in common, then selection should favour the good treatment of one’s relatives” (48).

See also John Horgan, Anthropologist Finds Flaw in Claim that Chimp Raids Are “Adaptive”, November 25, 2014, <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/cross-check/anthropologist-finds-flaw-in-claim-that-chimp-raids-are-8220-adaptive-8221/>.

¹¹ M. Burkart, S.B. Hrdy, and C.P. Van Schaik, “Cooperative Breeding and Human Cognitive Evolution”, *Evolutionary Anthropology*, 18, 2009, pp. 175–186 (180).

On the contrary of the politically aimed dominant theory of the innate characteristic of killing in humans, the animal and anthropology studies showed, as a pendant of the above-mentioned studies about the exception of aggressiveness, that both chimpanzees and children split the rewards almost equally when cooperation with partners is required¹³; and that the prehistoric hunters-gatherers developed an equalitarian social organisation “reversing the dominance hierarchy” of “technical” leaders, curtailing the advantages of individualistic behaviours¹⁴ and thus empathy and moral sanctioning – as moral selection – have shaped the human character¹⁵. And this equalitarian organisation both arose naturally from the equality of sexes in and for the survival of the communities, and has generated equality of sexes that, in its turn, protected equality and prevented a hierarchy of sexes or domination of hunter males over gatherer women¹⁶.

Actually, the *migration* and dispersion of *archaic* hominins and humans (1,8 millions B.C.R. -15,000 BCE) was related just to the refraining of aggressive competition for food resources: people had and transported

¹² R. Brian Ferguson, “Masculinity and War”, *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 6, No S23, February 2021, pp. S112-S124: “war is a relatively recent development in our species”. (As previously in Erich Fromm, p. 147).

¹³ Darby Proctor, Rebecca A. Williamson, Frans B.M. de Waal, Sarah F. Brosnan, “Chimpanzees play the ultimatum game”, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of USA*, 110(6), 2013, pp. 2070-2075.

¹⁴ Christopher Boehm et al., “Egalitarian Behavior and Reverse Dominance Hierarchy [and Comments and Reply]”, *Current Anthropology*, 34 (3), 1993, pp. 227–254; Christopher Boehm, “The natural selection of altruistic traits”, *Human Nature*, 10, 1999, pp. 205–252. (As before, Erich Fromm, p. 160).

¹⁵ Christopher Boehm, “The moral consequences of social selection”, *Behaviour*, 151(2-3), 2014, pp. 167-183.

¹⁶ The excellent PhD thesis of Morna Finnegan, showing the deep symbolic culture developed by the hunters-gatherers in order to keep the most fitted social relations for their complex fabric of existence in an environment felt as their extension, Morna Finnegan, *The Political is Personal: Eros, Ritual Dialogue, and the Speaking Body in Central African Hunter-Gatherer Society*, PhD thesis, The University of Edinburgh, School of Social and Political Studies, 2008. By using “the imaginative language of biology”, the permanent dances of women are “ritual forms of egalitarian counter-power” (p. 217), not being “disqualified by their labour choices from ritual, symbolic power” (221) but, on the contrary, being the sine qua non force of hunting.

only what they could carry, and preferred to disperse over an ever expanding territory, than to fight, with injury costs, and keep the already used territory and the already scarce resources. The phenomenon of migrations superposed to the hunter-gatherer organisation of humans. (The pattern of the old migrations was the basis of later (agricultural Bronze Age) development of contact between civilisations¹⁷). When moving, the humans met and communicated.

The humans developed the altruistic traits by enhancing the previous non-aggressiveness: discovering that they could control the fire – a common frightening external force – the humans discovered the cooking and they used it as another, absolutely new way of socialisation, the sharing of meals with other humans¹⁸. This sharing was a sign of acquisition of new and *distinctive* traits of humans and at the same time it was an institution continuing throughout millennia the altruistic socialisation of equalitarianism.

But first, the altruistic traits were developed through *cooperative breeding* or allomaternal care in primates¹⁹: this was a *shared intentionality* and generated *active prosociality* and something more than response to signals of need, expectation of reciprocation and cognitive empathy; since “the strongest reliance on allomaternal care and provisioning is found in humans and callitrichids”²⁰, the difference between callitrichid monkeys and humans was cooperative communication, collaboration, and instructed learning. When the spontaneous prosociality extends from donation of food to donation of information, a new socialising and evolutionary force arose: *teaching*. This involves spontaneous prosocial *motivations* which led not only to social cognitive tasks and performance but also to non-social ones. Only the humans have acquired non-social

¹⁷ Xinyi Liu and Martin K. Jones, “Food globalisation in prehistory: Top down or bottom up?”, *Antiquity*, 88(341), 2014, pp. 956-963; Martin Jones et al., “Food globalisation in prehistory: The agrarian foundations of an interconnected continent”, *Journal of the British Academy*, volume 4, 2016, pp. 73-87; G. Motuzaitė-Matuzeviciute et al., “Ecology and subsistence at the Mesolithic and Bronze Age site of Aigyrzhal-2, Naryn valley, Kyrgyzstan”, *Quaternary Journal*, Volume 437, Part B, 5, 2017, pp. 35-49.

¹⁸ Martin Jones, *Feast: why humans share food*, Oxford University Press, 2007.

¹⁹ J. M. Burkart, S.B. Hrdy, and C.P. Van Schaik, “Cooperative Breeding and Human Cognitive Evolution”, *Evolutionary Anthropology*, 18, 2009, pp. 175–186.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 178.

cognitive performance: through the social ones, because of the transformation of imitative learning into shared information learning.

2.3. The historical positioning

The human behaviours, for instance aggression, are better explained in historical terms.

In the human society, these behaviours were formed during the transition from the horde of predators – still “naturally”, in an animal way organised around the strongest male subduing all the members of the horde – to the first form of social organisation, the matriarchy, associated with the “renunciation of instinctual gratification, recognition of mutual obligations; institutions declared sacred, which could not be broken”, with the establishment of more stable institutions (which are social relations and behaviours), declared inviolable (“sacred”)²¹. Matriarchy corresponded to a *hunter-gatherer* society.

²¹ Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism* (1937), Translated from the German by Katherine Jones, Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1939, p. 132.

Freud mentioned that, already in *Totem and Taboo* (1912), he borrowed from Darwin the idea of first predatory hordes ruled by an older male, from J.J. Atkinson the idea of the rebellion of the sons, and from Robertson Smith the theory of Totemism.

Actually, see rather Freud, *Totem and Taboo. Resemblances Between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics* (1912), Translated with Introduction by A. A. Brill, London, George Routledge and Sons, 1919; also the extremely interesting *Social Origins*, by Andrew Lang, and *Primal Law*, by J.J. Atkinson, London, New York and Bombay, Longmans, Green and Co., 1903; also W. Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of Semites* (1889), London, Adam and Charles Black, 1901, emphasising the original significance of animal sacrifice and the development of sacrificial ritual.

The way to impose, through mutual assumption, the new behaviours and relations was, obviously, an *ideology*, a *conception about society and humans, and about the world but from the standpoint of humans and, more precisely, from the standpoint of humans in a specific time and space*, in the form of religion. That form was Totemism: “the Totem, which contains the prohibition against killing or harming it; exogamy, that is to say, the renunciation of the passionately desired mothers and sisters of the horde; the granting of equal rights for all members of the brother horde, i.e. the restriction of the impulse to settle their rivalry by brute force...Its sense lies in the need of preserving permanently the new order which was established after the death of the father. Otherwise reversion to the former state would have been inevitable”, Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, pp. 188, 189.

However, in order to understand the basis of the ideological representations of humans, we need to remember that matriarchy corresponded to the *primitive commune* mode of production (until the end of Neolithic). The mutual help of members of a tribe and their equal position of common use of the fruits of labour in common did not transpose into divisive interdictions, and the taboos were necessary for the tribe as such. (Obviously, the equal position of common use is not tantamount to absurd absolute equal shares of the fruits of labour, as the mutual help of members in their endeavour does not exclude but, on the contrary, progressively involves a certain “technical” or functional division of labour – as shamans, quacks, etc. With the transition to stable *agricultural* communities²², in the Bronze Age (in the urban revolution, as Fromm pointed out), with the discovery of new techniques and exploitation of resources, that first “technical” division of labour evolved as craft division and gradually involving privileges – and gradually hereditary – so the physical and “intellectual” division of labour became also a *power division or a division of positions in the process of work and use of its fruits*).

In this framework, we can presume that violence as aggression²³ as an organising phenomenon *inside* the tribe was weak during matriarchy and slowly increased in the following patriarchy, i.e. with the development of primitive commune and its disintegration. While aggression *between* tribes accompanied their evolution: it was not the only organising phenomenon preserving them and assuring their rise, however.

2.4. The psychoanalytical explanation of human aggressiveness

Freud, partially Erich Fromm, and later, René Girard have explained psychologically / psychoanalytically the fundamental division of the fundamental positions of humans within the aggressive relations: inherently, in historical frames.

Freud outlined a three stages evolution: first, he insisted on the fear and rebellion of sons against the dominant father of the horde, that forbade the use of his females by the sons; then, on the transfiguring of the (murder

²² Kent Flannery and Joyce Marcus, *The Creation of Inequality: How Our Prehistoric Ancestors Set the Stage for Monarchy, Slavery, and Empire*, Cambridge Ma., London, Harvard University Press, 2012

²³ Thus we do not equate the violence of general interdictions with the violence of aggressions.

of the) father in the animal totem (during matriarchy) that was forbidden to eat/touch, but that once a year was eaten by the entire clan signifying the remembrance of the murder that founded the subsequent social order based on exogamy (thus an absolute ban of incest, as a continuation of the father's interdiction against his sons); then, on the transformation of the animal totem into a god: in that moment, firstly, the former *social order* of exogamy was *maintained* including with the feeling /idea/ meaning of interdictions and the deep hidden opposition against them²⁴ but, at the same time, the necessity to obey them; while secondly, this ambivalent position of the members of the tribe gave the *transition* to a new or the final form of patriarchy – where the fathers had no longer the omni-potency of the first one in the horde, they also respecting the primitive commune's rules – and at the same time to the god (gods) which inherited the sacredness from the totem, thus becoming omnipotent.

(The gradually general assumption of divine origin of chief of (technical) chiefs, thus of the convergence of the human limits and the divine omni-potency, has attested just the new type of strengthening of domination: much more powerful than before, absolutely general and annulling rebellion). All of the members of the community became subdued to the god (gods). Then: to the divine chief of chiefs.

We can link Freud's theory with that of René Girard.

Giving a more general meaning to the sexual origin of social differentiation, Girard stated that the basis and origin of human behaviours are the mechanisms of appropriation: the desire of one to imitate the other, in essence to possess what the other possesses; this is the *original mimetic rivalry* for the object. Of course, both the imitators (the ancestral father, the brethren) and the communities around them have developed what Girard calls *the repression of the mimesis of appropriation*²⁵. Why? Because the mimetic rivalry has developed the mutual violence, to the point of chain revenge; as a result, the mimetic dissolution of the community may occur.

The conclusion of this mimetic crisis (for example, the remembrance of the initial murder) staged by the rituals is the sacrifice. Sacrifice is a

²⁴ Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, p. 208: "return of the repressed" material in the mental life of those humans.

²⁵ René Girard, *Des choses cachées depuis la fondation du monde*, Recherches avec Jean-Michel Oughourlian et Guy Lefort, Paris, B. Grasset et Fasquelle, Paris, 1978, p. 18.

victim creating process for one²⁶ to die for all; "Limiting violence to the maximum, but resorting to violence as a last resort to avoid greater violence"²⁷. In fact, the parable of the scapegoat means just throwing to the crowd, aiming to weaken his appetite for violence, a victim. The chaotic multiplicity of particular conflicts is followed by the simplicity of a unique community-victim antagonism. The atoning victim always reconciles the community.

2.5. The endowment of man and his waste

Summarising at the level of scientific studies until then the ethological, historical, psychological and psychoanalytical approaches of aggressiveness, Erich Fromm noted: "The difference between defensive and predatory aggression is important for the problem of human aggression because man is phylogenetically a nonpredatory animal, and hence his aggression, as far as its neurophysiological roots are concerned, is not of the predatory type"²⁸. And because man has amplified aggressiveness more beyond a defensive level, causes related to the social environment (social relations) of man are those which explain it.

Man was the result of two biological conditions: the "ever-decreasing determination of behavior by instincts" and "the growth of the brain, and particularly of the neocortex"²⁹. On this basis, absolutely new motivations developed. Animals have instrumental thinking; man has and "requires a picture of the world and of his place in it that is structured and has inner cohesion"³⁰. This picture is "a *map* of his natural and social world, without which he would be confused and unable to act purposefully and consistently"; it orients man and helps him to have fixed points or criteria according to which it thinks and acts.

Besides the map, man needs a *goal* "that tells him where to go"³¹.

And man needs *strong affective ties* to the world and to other humans. Without them, he "suffers from utter isolation and loneliness"³².

²⁶ René Girard, *Le bouc émissaire*, Paris, B. Grasset, 1989, p. 169: the scapegoat, "the final revelation of the sacrifice and its origin".

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 168.

²⁸ Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, p. 99.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 223.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 230.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 231.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 233.

“The existential split in man would be unbearable could he not establish *a sense of unity* within himself and with the natural and human world outside. But there are many ways of reestablishing unity.

Man can anaesthetize his consciousness³³, or he can be active, able “to accomplish, to realize, to carry out, to fulfil”³⁴, this meaning psychologically to exercise or excite his nervous system³⁵ and to stimulate his relationship to the world. Otherwise, boredom, craze and inability to control one’s own mind and impulses, reason³⁶ and passions occur. “Destructiveness and cruelty are not instinctual drives, but passions rooted in the *total* existence of man”³⁷. “The historical record as well as the study of individuals indicate that the presence of freedom, activating stimuli, the absence of exploitative control, and the presence of “man-centered” modes of production are favorable for the growth of man; and that the presence of the opposite conditions is unfavorable. Furthermore, an increasing number of people have become aware of the fact that *it is not the presence of one or two conditions that have an impact, but a whole system of factors*”³⁸.

Beyond this methodological principle, Fromm emphasised what is much connected to the victim status. The social phenomena that lead to malign individual psychological states have been transformed nowadays into a coherent complex of estrangement and estranged environment described by the ruling strata as “normal”. This is the “pathology of normalcy” – as Fromm already wrote in 1955 – and it gives to the individual a fake feeling of being sane. This pathology “rarely deteriorates to graver forms of mental illness because society produces the antidote against such deterioration. When pathological processes become socially patterned, they lose their individual character. On the contrary, the sick individual finds himself at home with all other similarly sick individuals. The whole culture is geared to this kind of pathology and arranges the

³³ *Ibidem*.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 235.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 237.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 263: “I propose to call rational any thought, feeling or act that promotes the adequate functioning and growth of the whole of which it is a part, and irrational that which tends to weaken or destroy the whole. It is obvious that only the empirical analysis of a system can show what is to be considered rational or irrational, respectively”.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 73. (I underlined, AB).

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 260. (I underlined, AB).

means to give satisfactions which fit the pathology. The result is that the average individual does not experience the separateness and isolation the fully schizophrenic person feels. He feels at ease among those who suffer from the same deformation; in fact, it is the fully sane person who feels isolated in the insane society-and he may suffer so much from the incapacity to communicate that it is he who may become psychotic”³⁹.

3. The historical significance of the victim

So, the killing of a fellow man was required by the subordination to / the need to calming the extra-human forces (perceived quite early as spirits, their souls) and by the violated hierarchies. Murder integrated the killed being into the spirit system, it “sanctified” it (*sacrificium*). By sacrifice “holiness” was given: to the slain being, to the act of killing, to its result. Sacrifice, accordingly, has two origins: the respect for inter-tribal (internal) relationships and fear of the forces of the human environment (and the ideal explanation of this environment) by subordinating it to the *ideal system of human guidance*.

Therefore, the historical process in a cascade of cause-effect phenomena gave birth first to the *holiness*, understood as *sacredness* – something extraordinary with powers beyond those of the members of the social group, giving both incredible privileges and fear from it⁴⁰ – and later, when the sacredness of the totem became sacred god, to *victims*. They were those who should pay for the benevolent face of sacredness towards humans. From outside the community or inside it, they were killed, annihilated: they became “sacred” since they were forced to abandon the human life and to be a sacred price paid by the community to gods and thus, to become in an obscure way trans-human, as the gods were trans-mundane. Initially, the victims were sacrificed: paid to gods as before, the animals, and haloed by their function.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p.356.

⁴⁰ Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, pp. 190, 192: “The sacred is obviously something that must not be touched... originally nothing but the perpetuated will of the primeval father... ‘Sacer’ does not only mean ‘sacred’/ ‘blessed’ but also something that we can only translate by accursed/ worthy of disgust. The will of the father, however, was not only something which one must not touch, which one had to hold in high honour, but also something which made one shudder because it necessitated a painful instinctual renunciation”..

However, no one wanted to be a victim. For this reason, more and more with the passage of time the crueller force was used to transform people into victims. Because there was / there is a *fundamental difference between a usual profane punishment of people who violated the human laws and, on the other hand, the sacrifice that transforms an innocent into a victim*. Historically, this difference was felt as an ambiguity: on the one hand, the sacredness of the human life but on the other hand, the limited power of this life.

In the Roman law, *homo sacer*, a man guilty of a crime became “sacred”, that is, he could be killed by anyone, so outside the law putting limits to murder. And just because of the shadow of his crime, his sacredness forbade his use as a sacrificial object⁴¹. The power of the human life was annihilated by both the man himself who committed a crime – ultimately, against the human life – and the community that defended its own life by excluding physically the malefactor. While by forbidding the sacrifice of the guilty, thus his transformation into a victim, the difference between the victim creating process and the lawful punishment once more appeared.

By criticising the discourse of the social sciences between 1890 and 1940 providing the mixture of religious and politico-juridical meanings⁴², Giorgio Agamben showed that only by delimiting the two fields, one can understand more than the religious and anthropological ambiguity of the sacredness: not only the double *exclusion of homo sacer* but also – which is of interest to our problem – “the *violence* to which he finds himself exposed”⁴³. Politics is that which generates and explains that the exception of the impure *homo sacer* becomes rule.

4. From the old exceptionality of the victim to its banal status

Violence – or aggressiveness – is organically leading to victims. However, what is a *victim*? Literally, the victim is the being – animal or human – that

⁴¹ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1995), Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford University Press, 1998, p. 47.

⁴² *Ibidem*, pp. 49-51.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 52.

is to be sacrificed⁴⁴: to superior trans-mundane entities, as a prey given as a gift in order to propitiate them. The sacrificial animals were only a historical moment in the process of religion creation, thus of the creation of (official) ideologies. But in this creation, all parts were defined – the sacrificial beings, those who prepared the ritual, the *victimarii*, and obviously the gods – but not the technical way of sacrifice. This way was violence.

This violence was *special*: it was not the technical way to get meat for the survival of families and communities, or to defeat the external humans regarded as life and death perils for families and communities; what was essential when people deemed that technical way was the ability, the control, the tools to achieve it. Then, the sacrificial violence was special also because it differed from the eventual individual violence that transgressed the rules of tribes: this *violence violating the rules was punished and it was punishable*. On the contrary, *the sacrificial violence was accepted, even welcome, as an “unsanctionable killing”*⁴⁵.

Since the animal is not a person, it was considered an element of the technicality of sacrifice. But because the humans are persons, they were slowly excluded from the religious sacrifice. One could kill sacrificial humans without any impunity, but since they were persons, brothers and sisters of the members of the group even though many from absolutely different groups, it was not the technical *impunity of the killing* that was decisive but the unique peculiarity of being *human persons*. The religious offerings became to consist in animals and more and more in plants and inanimate things.

This interdict of killing the humans was the undersigned and indirect ideological critique of the continuation and exacerbation of violence and aggressiveness in the real world.

Since the sacrificial killing was unpunishable, we must underline another feature of the sacrificial killing: it was *official*, issuing from the impersonal will of the group. Later on, this feature is related to the general political leadership or control and to the institution that settled the relations between the rulers and the ruled, the state. In this way, the resistance of the

⁴⁴ *Victus, -us* is food and kind of life. *Victito, -are* is a form of *vivo, -are*, showing the repetition of the action and means to live, to feed oneself. *Victimo, -are*, to sacrifice. Thus, *victima, -ae*, sacrificial animal, more generally, victim.

⁴⁵ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, p. 52.

community ethos was transformed into killing “out of solidarity”. In its name appears the acceptance of suffering and sacrifice for the common good, that is, for the dominant values of guidance, even on the part of those sacrificed, of the victims. The sacrifice – so the creation of victims – becomes a normal way to resolve the violation of the rules when this violation endangered immediately and on the long run the standpoint of the powerful.

Murder continued to be, even more and more, a legitimate solution, justified and transfigured into dominant religious and secular ideologies. So the apologists for the *status quo* have sought to show that killing one's fellow man (as well as inducing suffering) would be natural, determined by man's aggressive genetic impulses. But at the same time the dominant ideologies coexisted with the old rooted universal moral rejecting murder and cruelty, and because this moral issued from the victims – from those already transformed into victims but also from all who could be transformed into victims, therefore, the most of humans in communities and worldwide – even the dominant ideologies contained, most of time silenced, the idea of the paramount importance of the human life.

The contradiction between an ideology sanctifying the human life and, on the other hand, the daily violence increased and is incredible nowadays. The more so the humans became citizens – so even in the states external to a state, thus one generally (but in fact only theoretically) assuming at least mutual equal rights of the defeated citizens – and thus their human personhood forbidding their transformation into victims.

Nevertheless, in the modern (capitalist), humanitarian, progressive states (full of science and technological marvellous devices) the *official standpoint of states is the accepting of victim creation*. As citizens, people are the sovereign, logically outside a victim creation process. But “*The sovereign sphere is the sphere in which it is permitted to kill without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice, and sacred life – that is, life that may be killed but not sacrificed – is the life that has been captured in this sphere*”⁴⁶.

Modernity has strongly emphasised the contradictory coexistence of the fundamental ideology of sacredness of (the human) life and the fundamental practical pattern of domination implying the official killing of humans who did and do not violate the laws: this official killing is not punishable – since it is official – and is not a punishment of criminals.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 53.

“Life’s irreparable exposure in the relation of abandonment”⁴⁷ is just the subjection of life to the domination/power relations.

Thus, beyond the above mentioned roots, violence as aggression became a *normal and legitimate* way to impose “the sacredness” of the power, so of the domination-submission relations. In this regard, the victim creation became also a *normal and legitimate* way to impose “the sacredness” of the power, so of the domination-submission relations; the ubiquity of victims is in tandem with the ubiquity of domination. *The victim is a banal founding figure of the entire history of the domination-submission relations.*

The insistence of this paper on the roots of the human aggressiveness – questioning if it is the only and natural origin of the human society and showing that the human aggressiveness and destructiveness are not “natural” – has as a conclusion the idea of *non-naturalness of the victim status*. The victims are not a “collateral damage of evolution”. Obviously, the victim creation process, as also the domination-submission relations as integral relations, is/are the result of historical conditions and ultimately, of the low level of productive means. In a scheme linking the level of submission / dependence (always of the ruled) and the level of productive means, one can note the indirect proportional relationship between these two levels: the lower the level of productive means, the bigger the state of submission of the ruled⁴⁸. But this doesn’t mean that the victims would be a natural cost of the development: the victim creation process was not natural but *social, cultural*, and it was *determined* but if so, it is not forever inevitable (as a natural phenomenon). And the acceptance of the historical determinism is not tantamount to the *moral* acceptance of the victim status.

Because of this feature of being a constitutive element of all the societies based on domination-submission, the embarrassment of the rulers and their ideologies has been transfigured into the shrinking of the *concept* of victim: it designates today only the vanquished (the killed) by an

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁸ Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, p. 261: “the productive forces were not sufficiently developed to permit the coexistence of both technical and cultural progress and freedom, to permit uncrippled development for all. The material conditions have their own laws and the wish to change them is of itself not enough”.

inimical state and only the humiliated persons within supplementary domination relations; a meaning disfiguring the original sense of the concept of victim. In the official narratives, the harassed women are victims – and they are, letting aside the biased and often fake and absurd “Me too” campaigns – but never their and their male partners’ social condition do lead to the idea of their *common* victim position. The killed soldiers of the invader state are counted and deemed as heroes and victims, but never the ordinary people and the soldiers of the invaded state or territory are counted and considered victims⁴⁹, let alone heroes.

Summarising, the dominant ideologies have long time discussed the *victim creating process*: conflicts, wars, aggression and non-aggression, laws to regulate them, clever strategies to blow up the recalcitrant resistance, evaluation of and pride for victors; but never the *price* of these atrocious attitudes and facts, the victims.

II. Interlude: every victim was a child

Every child is a miracle. For his/her mother, for his/her parents, he/she equates with the universe: this is not an exaggeration, nothing is interesting for them as living beings, nothing is important, namely, *nothing has meaning* when the child is sick, vulnerable to death, dies. The child is the truly miracle of life, his/her parents *reason to be*. Obviously, in the whole animal kingdom the impulse of reproduction and the care for offspring are the instincts of life – called in the old philosophy *conatus*⁵⁰ and being its parts

⁴⁹ They are considered victims of the leaders of their invaded state, these leaders not surrendering to the invaders and causing to their own peoples suffering and human rights violation.

⁵⁰ Platon, « Définitions », *Oeuvre de Platon*, Tome XIII, Traduites par Victor Cousin, P-J Rey Libraire, Paris, MDCCCXL, pp. 195, 197. (Actually, the author was Speusippus, the nephew of Plato (according to Diogenes Laërtius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, Translated by C.D. Yonge, London, G. Bell and Sons, 1915, Book IV, I, XI, p. 153); then the stoics (Zeno of Citium, in Diogenes Laërtius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, Book VII, I, LII); then Benedict de Spinoza, *The Ethics (Ethica ordine geometrico demonstrata)* (1677), Translated from the Latin by R.H.M. Elwes, Loki’s Publishing, 2017, Part III, prop. 6, and prop. 7, pp. 83, 85; Leibnitz, *On the Reform of Metaphysics and of the Notion of Substance*, 1694, in W. Leibnitz, *The philosophical works of Leibnitz, comprising The Monadology, New System of Nature, Principles of Nature and of Grace, Letters to Clarke, Refutation of Spinoza, and his other important philosophical opuscles, together with the*

(*conatus essendi*, the effort of living, of being, of conservation of the self, this self being both individual and of the species) – but for the humans as they have been configured as a distinct species the significances of the child surpass its simple biological function of perpetuation, they are based on and reflect the *affective*, the highly affective nature of humans as another, new, biological feature, beyond the instinctual background, as well as their cultural, *symbolic* nature. The child seen through an instrumental lens – as in the tradition of the rulers where the child is the guarantee for the preservation of private property and power – was, though this instrumental view was historical and cultural, a kind of extension of the animal instinct in its non-human purity. In fact, the (new-born) child is *adored*, is loved with *n* meanings equating the *good*, the *beautiful* (more, the sublime) and the *truth* as in a quintessence of life and the reason to be of parents.

No one denies the existence of instincts in humans, but as the biological *conatus* is shaped by the human conscience – the culturally formed area of spirituality –, by the *meanings* created within the human conscience and which supply to man the reasons to live, so the instinctual care for the child is imbued with *human* love.

The meaning of a child is that of “Messiah”, of the *harbinger* of the future fulfilment of what is in the moment of birth only a potentiality. But with the appearance of this *potentiality*, an entire reason of *hope* arises: the future is *open* and becomes the space of ardent *activity* so as the promise, the prospect brought by the child *to be accomplished*.

The meaning of the child as “Messiah” is that of a *saviour*: through him/ her the present has a future. The most ardent will of parents is that the potentiality embodied in the child to become *actuality*⁵¹: the child is the promise of life only insofar as he /she develops as a human being: good, beautiful and truth bearer. The child is a saviour of the present only at the extent of his /her fulfilment *qua* human being.

Abridgment of the Theodicy and extracts from the New Essays on Human Understanding, Translated from the original Latin and French, with notes by George Martin Duncan, New Haven, Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor, 1890, pp. 69-70; and *ibidem*, *The Monadology*, 1714, pp. 219, 220.

⁵¹ The concepts of *potentiality* and *actuality* are of Aristotle.

No sacrificing of a child is saving the world: neither the present and lesser the future. By killing the potentiality it is sure that no actuality – as realisation – will occur.

The child is “saint”: it is the *meaning of all meanings* of the parents – and of all humans – and thus his /her “mission” is to fulfil, not to languish, not to die out.

The child is celebrated as “saint”: he /she is “anointed⁵²” with the fluids of the beneficial plants and is cared for with the deepest love. His /her anointing is the sign of his /her consideration as the most precious being for his /her parents, for all other parents. No reasonable human expects that the sanctity of the anointed child to be transformed into self-sacrifice in order to better the sinners. By striving to live humanly, the child pushes the world to live humanly.

As an anointed one, the child expresses the fundamental human relations: *χρᾶίνω* meant lightly *touching* the surface, hence the *anointing*, coloring, but also soiling, staining, so offending. The concept of recognising the other was formed by the experience of coexistence with others – or rather, of existence-together – lived not only by noticing the expressions of others but, especially, by mutual acquaintance. This mutual acquaintance did not only mean mutual services, that is, activity together for common survival, but, even within and through this activity, touching, approaching. This touch could, of course, be comforting, a sign of good to the other and to himself (manifested, how else ?, by mutual anointing, that is, by the mutual covering with the gentle matter of plant juices, powders, and animal fat, to take power). Just as the touch could hurt, soiling the other, offending him. Accordingly, *χρᾶω* meant to touch that is, to make known, with two meanings: to make available, to borrow, to procure, to take a thing in hand, to take it for temporary use, and to need, to be in need. *Χρεία* –use, matter you use, but also need, necessity; *χρέος* – duty. From *touching* (the primary way to make yourself known to the other person, to make your intentions known, friendly or hostile) to *helping* (by giving the other person what they need) or to *asking for help* and then to duty: does the common root (*χρ*) of the Greek words of *touching* (*χρᾶίνω*), *anointing* (*χρῶ*) and, ultimately, *demanding a sacrifice* (because of existential need) (*χρᾶω*) legitimise the sacrifice of the child or the mature human? No, this common root illustrates only the historical experiences of humans. The sacrifice of

⁵² In Greek, *χριστός* from the verb *χρῶ*, to anoint.

the mature human who was a “saint” child was and is the result of the historical social relations already mentioned.

Every victim was a child. Every victim was “saint” and by transforming the child full of promises into a victim, all the meanings of the child vanish. The future closes, humanity closes, it does not save itself by producing victims, wasted children and matures, destruction.

III. From the standpoint of victims

6. To speak

Because the victims became aware of their condition, they fought to express their standpoint. For this reason, the most important mean of the rulers was and is to speak *in the name of “all”, of the “nation”, thus including the ruled, the victims.* This dominant position of speaking *in the name of “all” and for “all”* was and is the *system of dominant ideologies*, hiding behind the apparent differences the essential will to control the victims and *to perpetuate the victim condition.*

Since the victims do not speak for themselves / in their own name / from the standpoint of their fundamental position, they lose their personhood, their unique individuality, their autonomy as individuals and become statistical sizes and references. Therefore, they matter only as an indefinite totality, as a “without face” *arrière plan*. The expression “without face” is borrowed from Antiphon, the ancient Greek philosopher who called matter – as the abstract background of everything – the “without face”, i.e. without the individuality of concrete beings / substances.

7. Ignoring the existential motivation of victims

The revolt against victimisation does not come from a simple individualist position. If we know that “aggression of so many animals towards members of their own species is in no way detrimental to the species but, on the contrary, is essential for its preservation”⁵³, in no way can we extrapolate this to the humans: because the human aggression towards other humans *is detrimental to the human species itself*, the evolution of this species depending just on the expression of creativity by every and as many members of the species as they can exist. Thus, we did not offer, as an argument, the fact that the human species is cultural, comprising moral values and criteria, and so the fact that the moral values forbid the

⁵³ Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression*, p. 46.

“cleaning” of the human species from undesirable, disabled individuals. Since to the argument that moral forbids one can legitimately ask why that and how can one substantiate that moral, we must remain in a more exact realm, circumscribed by the functional point of view in biology. As the preservation of animal species depends on the (highest) fitted traits acquired in the process of evolution in their environments, as the preservation of the human species depends on reason, rationality; thus the quantitative and – today, absolutely visible – qualitative reduction of the human rationality jeopardises the species itself.

Consequently, the most ardent will of victims is – not to speak, or it is to speak in *their own name*, because only with this means their condition can be and is abolished. *The most ardent will of victims is to no longer be victims.* The victims were and are forced to remain silent, because the power of the word is so huge that its presence is already a step toward the transformation of the social condition of victims. For this reason, the voice of victims is both silenced and ignored, erased from the ears and conscience of the entire society – thus, from their own ears and conscience, too – and accordingly, the victims are considered in all the official ideologies and often *even by themselves* as inevitable, “natural” and constitutive means of the social order.

Even by themselves: otherwise how can we explain that victims despise and hate other victims instead of their common oppressors, that victims enthusiastically support their “national” tormentors in waging wars, subjugation and exploitation of other victims – the victims of the attacking states remaining in their old victim situation –, that victims assume both the dominant narrative about “some disadvantaged groups” which covers, even annuls the deep and larger class origin and victim statute of all the members and groups of the dominated ruled, and the fact that not even the “excesses” related to the “disadvantaged groups” are and can be solved in the most modern capitalism? How can we explain and not be shocked by the victims who no longer shudder and alarm neither in front of the unpleasant and hidden “excesses” and nor in front of their own “honourable”, “decent” victim status?

Are the professionals who do not prevent the harms made to humans – and to the environment, to the world – but comply with all the processes provoking them, and even enthusiastically, are they not victims? If we consider that estrangement is general in capitalism, the fear from society and the misunderstanding of the reason to be of the human persons

marking both the proletarians and the bourgeois, as Marx has demonstrated, we might consider those professionals as victims. However, the estrangement is not tantamount to the status of victim. As we know, those who acquiescing the goals of wrongdoers are accomplices⁵⁴. Consequently, even though the professionals are constrained by their social dependency status in order to (comfortably) survive – since they are only wage-earners – and thus they are *victims*, at the same time they are *accomplices* of the perpetrators generating victims and a society based on the generation of victims. All members of society are alienated, but this doesn't mean they cannot radically oppose. Those members of the ruled strata who accept and assume the relations generating also their own estrangement are accomplices of the rulers.

8. The present fake criticism of the structural injustice that creates structural victims

We are discussing about the decades *after the World War II* – when those rejoicing in the standard of living in the Western states ignored both the wars and destruction in the “Rest” and the amplifying price paid for that standard of living in the entire world – including the *last ones of the 20th century*, and *including or especially the first decades of the 21st century*. Can the above-mentioned professionals deny the possibility of information that allow them the clear knowledge of the victim creating process worldwide, and their self-limitation to the reception of official messages and worldview *from the standpoint of the dominant “elite”*?

Obviously, this “elite” is getting people to be accustomed to its own ideas and to transform them into robots focused only on consumption and primary physiological needs, but aren't the professionals the excellent figures able to discern between values and between values and persuasive words? The whole modern history demonstrated that they are not. There are, obviously, social (economic, political, cultural) causes, but the fact is that the professionals, the intellectuals, are not lesser confused than the ordinary people, or rather even more. Anyway, they are those who explain and transmit the dominant values and narratives and those who influence,

⁵⁴ “Whoever remains neutral in the face of injustice, has chosen the oppressor's camp”, Desmond Tutu, quoted in *Redéfinir notre relation à un peuple en lutte*, 14 mars 2012, <http://www.info-palestine.eu/spip.php?article11909>.

form the public opinion: both by being silent and by being enthusiastic *spokespersons for the ruling stratum*.

And because this enthusiasm cannot be efficient only in the manner of yes-men, it also is displayed as being from the perspective of those who “criticise”: “well, not everything is perfect in the absolutely superior modernity of the formidable technology and civilisation of the last 75 years, but if one alleviate the *extreme*⁵⁵ poverty by ‘Giving What We Can’ (Toby Ord) or by a ‘global justice’ (Thomas Pogge⁵⁶) of philanthropy that does not violate the sacrosanct right of philanthropists, things will improve”. Both Thomas Pogge and Toby Ord are philosophers: whose subterranean presumption is that of the impossibility and ineffectiveness of the transformation of the basic social order of capitalism in every country and globally. “Au fond, this social order is the expression of social reasonableness – reflecting different and opposed abilities and merits that would arrange people in their different social positions (the structural power relations not being but the result of these different given capacities), thus changing this order would lead to the anarchical counter-productive stopping of the human civilisation –: however, some excessive or visibly uncomfortable injustices have to be attenuated”. The presumption is thus ridiculously *contradictory*: the world is as it should be, ordered according to the “logos”, and within this just world there are revolting injustices.

Beyond this logical inconsistency, the capitalist philanthropy as it is promoted by the theorists of official and private organisations appropriates

⁵⁵ The emergency of extreme poverty is undisputable. But the social emergency is larger than that, although it includes it as an uttermost target. There are not only starving to death / *undernourished*, but also *malnourished* people and obesity of the poor, and mass illnesses without the external aspect of obesity but evidencing chronic unbalanced organisms due to both the irrational mass consumption supply and to the poverty forbidding healthy choices. How does philanthropy treat the milliards of humans undergoing these diseases of capitalism? There are people consuming healthy bio-food, and there are people eating unhealthy and damaging food. And there is also the *impoverished former middle class* and *former decent blue-collarers (précariat)*, a new infra-wage condition of the majority of wage-earners (Robert Castel, *Les Métamorphoses de la question sociale*, Gallimard, col. Folio, Paris, 1999; Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. Bloomsbury Academic, London, 2011).

⁵⁶ See Ana Bazac, “Global injustice: what is known, what is assumed and what is promised?”, *Studia UBB, Philosophia*, 58, No.2, 2013, pp. 145-157.

the presumption that there are ontological benefits brought about by capitalism – including or even especially in its present late stage, its liberal-democratic form. Not concerned about the fact that with the huge sums philanthropically donated the social problems worldwide did not shrink, on the contrary, the theorists of (capitalist) global ethics /justice

- do not focus on the causes of injustice,
- are not interested in the suffering and wasting of unique and unrepeatable individuals,
- do not include alternative ways to the transfer of surplus money (of “what they can”) from the powerful to the “rest”,
- and transpose the task of ameliorating the social problems on the shoulders of common people as common individuals who must be responsible (and not only craving for rights).

In this way, they elude the responsibility of institutions, i.e. the necessity of radically new goals and values, opposed to the capitalist ones, and their promotion by institutions: the most sincere responsibility of individuals not being enough.

Being linked to the standpoint that for the sake of social order and progress (in other words, development of private profits so as they also could donate something) an inflexible so-called “law and order” (actually, inflexible repression of anti-system dissidence) is imperious, in the underground this standpoint cherishing the belief about the recalcitrant mood of humans – and thus the legitimate violent jugulating of this mood, the theorists of capitalist control through capitalist justice declare only moral intentions and abstract commitments and legitimize them.

But only the moral intentions and commitments do not work. For this reason, a universal declaration of human responsibilities⁵⁷ – next to the well-known universal declaration of the human rights – is only a theoretical exercise without the structure of social relations enforcing, i.e. strengthening it.

⁵⁷ Sue L.T. McGregor, “Human Responsibility Movement Initiatives: A Comparative Analysis”, *In Factis Pax*, Volume 7 Number 1, 2013, pp 1-26.

The capitalist view of “global justice” is limited and caricaturized: it would consist mainly in *donations* of the wealthy toward the poor⁵⁸, and *today* both the UN organizations and the private NGOs, voices of the powerful or of the dissidents, beg the donors for donations. The presumption is that everything has to be this way. All the “thinkers” who are concerned about the “injustices” behave *as if* the inhuman and mortifying results of hunger and suffering would never have noticed⁵⁹. In fact, it is not about new theoretical and ideological discoveries but about a new but continuous hypocrisy of intellectuals and political leaders who do not dare to question or to change the logic of capitalist system.

The words from above about responsibility accompany the facts of *expanded aggressiveness from above against the victims*. And because the moral of victims develops around the old rejection of murder and annihilation of the fellow victims – today the victims willing to be soldiers of the

⁵⁸ There is no fundamental difference between this theory and the old point of view of Saturnalia (obviously leaving aside the duration of the transfer of gifts to slaves, a week, 17-25 December, in Roman ancient times, while at present it ought to be practically permanent, according to global justice theory) see Lucian of Samosata, *Saturnalian Letters*, in *The Works of Lucian of Samosata*, v. 4, Translators H W Fowler, F G Fowler, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1905, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/47242/47242-h/47242-h.htm#Page_123 (accessed December 22, 2021): III. “I must compel you to bestow on them any clothes that you do not require, or find too heavy for your own use, and also to vouchsafe them just a slight sprinkling of gold. If you do this, they engage not to dispute your right to your property any further in the court of Zeus. Otherwise, they will demand redistribution the next time he takes his seat”; ...a liberality that costs you nothing appreciable will impress itself permanently by its timeliness on the memory of recipients”).

⁵⁹ First, Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, 1845; then, let’s mention only Charles Gide, *Principes d’économie politique* (1883), L. Lerose et Forcel, Paris, 1884, 415: in the same natural area, people from the poor strata live less than the rich, and the proportion and gravity of diseases are higher in the poor strata than in the rich ones).

And they are nowadays emphasized by scientific researches, Moshe Szyf, “The early life environment and the epigenome”, *Biochim. Biophys. Acta*, 1790, 2009, pp. 878–885 and M. Szyf, “Early life, the epigenome and human health”, *Acta Paediatrica*, 98, 7, 2009, pp. 1082-1084: insufficient food supply (especially during pregnancy and early childhood) generates later epigenetic aberrations and affects empathy and systemic happiness, both in individuals and societies as a whole.

aggressiveness from above are more and more scarce, with all the incentives or, rather, with all the existential shortcomings of the civil life – the dominant aggression expands drones⁶⁰ and enhanced killer soldiers⁶¹, more correctly, robots. Actually, the powerful are afraid of the moral from below.

9. Silencing the victims by speaking in their name

Even today many benevolent intellectual standards speak in the name of victims, never conceiving that their own bias – that many victims themselves take over – is opposed just to those in the name of whom they suppose to speak. The statistical view is clear-cut: as *the majority* of intellectuals are on the side of generation of victims – even though most of this majority are, ultimately, victims, pretending in their self-illusion that they would be “superior”, so something other – as *a majority* of the explicit victims support the endless generation of victims.

But is that true? How can the human victims uphold the process that wastes them, that mortifies them? Obviously, they are frightened by the physical violence from above, but they are also deeply influenced by the confusing messages and insistent illogical repetitions of the professionals of mass ideology formation. Namely, the repetitions might be illogical but their insistence overwhelms the public space of expressions of public concern. *Democracy* is caricaturised by endless media talks where “pluralism” manifests through the presence of representatives from different parties but whose ideas converge at a fundamental level; and no logical questioning is answered all the way to the end, as well as no argumentation is dissected with logic. The *critical spirit* is despised and scoffed, while its rare supporters are placed at the stake of infamy. And this

⁶⁰ Alaa Hijazi et al., “Psychological Dimensions of Drone Warfare”, *Current Psychology*, 38, 2019, pp. 1285–1296, published online 14 September 2017.

⁶¹ Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC), department within UK Ministry of Defence; Bundeswehr Office for Defence Planning (BODP), German Federal Ministry of Defence, *Human Augmentation – The Dawn of a New Paradigm*. A strategic implications project, May 2021, 110 p., pdf.

happens not only in backward spaces of democracy⁶², but also in the advanced ones.

Consequently, the voice of victims is weak: the public space is flooded by the “only correct” voice, that of the officialdom expressing the interest of big companies and their acolytes in a worldwide alliance. And it seems that people drowned in this muddy space.

The difficulty to disentangle the ideological messages and the meanings of ideas and fragments of ideas is common not only to ordinary people but also to professionals, to intellectuals. An interesting but exceptionally important problem is to discern between meanings coexisting in the same message and to understand them, and the reason to be of both the meanings and the facts they correspond to.

If we take an article interpreting Vance Packard’s left-leaning critique of capitalism in an era that many considered exclusively through optimistic rose lenses (in the 1950 and 1960, a timely popular critique of the consumer ideology creation and of the irrational pattern of a consumer economy), as a conservative voice because he was concerned with community cohesion and permanency⁶³, shouldn’t we be surprised that the meanings of the same ideas are seen differently and absorbed in the dominant labelling

⁶² See *Fundamental freedoms squeezed in Ukraine, Human Rights Council hears*, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/12/1107972>, where the critiques of the Government and ‘mainstream narratives’ do not even concern structural relations in economy, but only the state bureaucracy’s corruption (without disclosing the private origin of bribery and different state aids for the private societies) and the Covid restrictions implementation, but not even these critiques were /are tolerated by the officialdom.

And although the targeted human rights defenders were ‘journalists, media professionals, bloggers and individuals who had been critical’ – the ordinary citizens struggling for meeting both ends in the framework of a savage capitalist accumulation in the present final stage of this system, not being subject of concern – can we consider that ‘impunity fuel(ing) further attacks, contributing to an environment of self-censorship, narrowing civic space and curtailing pluralism’ is met only in such countries without a tradition of democracy as a result of the class struggle for this goal?

⁶³ Addison Del Mastro, *America’s Forgotten Post-War Conservative*, December 6, 2017, <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/americas-forgotten-post-war-conservative/>.

tactics? We shouldn't. This use of fragments of ideas in order to legitimising ideologies which are opposed to the set of ideas comprising such or such fragments pertains to those who want to convince without answering to the meanings *relating/ uniting* the fragments of ideas and especially to the reason to be of the use and the facts behind the ideas. Yes, the critique of the neo-liberal turn belongs to both left and cons, but the consequences of the critiques are absolutely different.

10. The paradigm answering the dominant ideology

The more people are silent, the narrower is the space within which they can express their exasperation of being victims and their willingness to annul this status. This conclusion is already old.

And the more the "elite's voice" speaks in the name of victims, the weaker are the ideas questioning and treating the victim status.

The answer to this situation could come only on behalf of victims: a *methodological* shift of the victims' treatment *paradigm* was (is) needed. "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it"⁶⁴. The shifting did not indicate the bigger importance of the political activism and practice over theory but the necessity to change the *perspective* of theory as ideology: to construct it from the standpoint of victims, and not only from the standpoint of dominant layers.

11. Two examples of the theoretical position from the standpoint of victims

Theorists, scholars strive to explain the world. In their struggle, they construct and falsify demonstrations and reasoning, and arrive to the understanding of *criteria* they use or they can use or they should use. Evaluation of criteria is a common procedure in science – its efficiency depending on this methodological requirement – but in philosophy and some humanities it is limited.

One criterion is that of the perspective, and more specifically that of changing the perspective, so the viewpoint from which a perspective is opened. A persistent criterion in philosophy was the *functionalist* view of man. Obviously, this view was related to the discovery of new and new functions of man: as a mean of the Creator or of the games of still obscure natural forces, as a being working and building, assembling, producing,

⁶⁴ Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach* (XI), 1845.

processing tangible objects, but also ideas, knowledge, persistent and evanescent art, as a being emanating sentiments of love, care, compassion and self-sacrifice, but also selfishness, cruelty and destructiveness; as a living being unlike any other animal, since no animal transform itself into a different one, but man, yes, can transform into a more ferocious beast than the savagest beast from the wilderness, and his brilliant ability to imagine – into a sickness that irreversibly change him into an absolutely different being.

Using his Enlightenment type epistemology⁶⁵, Kant radically changed the functionalist paradigm as it has been manifested in ethics. His *categorical imperative* was a *telic* paradigm⁶⁶: the *telos* / *reason to be* of the human is the fulfilment of the uniqueness or unique creativity of every representative of this species; therefore, the imperative “commandment” of ethics is to treat every human being as an *end in itself*, and not only as a means. In this *universalist* ethics, the standpoint of victims is expressed for the first time: to not be victims means to be considered, every one of them, a unique and unrepeatable being, with an incommensurable value; an end in itself, and not only a statistical element of the social functions.

In about a hundred years, a poem written (by Eugène Pottier) in 1871 expressed metaphorically, but simpler the Kantian telic paradigm of treating the humans not only as means, but always as ends in themselves. *L’Internationale* had the following lyrics: in 1871: “Nous qui n’étions rien, soyons tout” – “We who were nothing, let us be everything”; in the final version in 1887: “Nous ne sommes rien, soyons tout” – “We are nothing, let us be all”.

What does “We who were nothing, let us be everything” / “We are nothing, let us be all” mean? For his fellow humans, a man is what he signifies. A victim – having the function of victim – had no other meaning in the functionalist paradigm: he had no dreams, feelings, mind, force, aspirations, character, temperament; he was invisible, he was “nothing”. But as a human, the human victim wants too to be seen in his colourful

⁶⁵ Ana Bazac, *The Enlightenment Epistemology and Its Present Blurred Mirror*, *Analele Universității din Craiova, Seria Filosofie*, Nr. 47, (1/2021), pp. 30-72.

⁶⁶ See Ana Bazac, “The philosophy of the *raison d’être*: Aristotle’s *telos* and Kant’s categorical imperative”, *Biocosmology – Neo-Aristotelism*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2016, pp. 286-304.

uniqueness. The many meanings and colours of the personhood of victims mean just the words with universalist fragrance, “be everything”, “be all”.

Although our topic is not the *hero* and *heroism*, are there better words and criteria to discern the peculiarity of victims and to call them in a manner of, not the concrete opposition but, the concrete *action* against the relations which make the victim status permanent?

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