

GENERAL ANTHROPOGENY

SECOND PART – FUNDAMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Chapter 12 – THE THREE WORLDS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 12 - The three “worlds”	2
12A. A topological articulation almost a priori: close continuous, distant continuous, discontinuous	2
12B An articulation in “worlds”: WORLD 1A and 1B, WORLD 2, WORLD 3.....	3
12C. A phylogenetic articulation.....	3
12C1. The succession of worlds.....	3
12C2. Overlapping and superimposition of worlds.....	4
12D. How anthropogeny is not only history	5
12E. Causal layers	6

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Chapter 12 - The three “worlds”

In the second part of *Anthropogeny*, we will broach Homo’s developments and accomplishments, i.e., its detailed images, musics and dialects, its mathematics and theories, etc. This approach requires an articulation of events following some stages, phases, steps.

One preliminary question emerges. Are these stages unpredictable? Could other stages have taken place? Or whether, despite the happenstance of geography and history, was there a form of overall suite that somewhat formed hominid developments? Or at least, a non-reversible suite? Nuanced answers to these questions will be elaborated in each of the following three parts. But a very general answer seems possible. And it is so general that it will be useful to propose it here in an opening chapter.

12A. A topological articulation almost a priori: close continuous, distant continuous, discontinuous

If hominid productions obeyed an overall sequence, this one must concern what is most original about the upright primate, i.e., segmentarization, transversalization, distanciation. We must therefore turn to the very central capture in this respect, i.e. topology. And four topological concepts stand out at first sight: vicinity, distance, continuity, and discontinuity. Or, in a more conflicting manner, two couples of opposites: close/distance, continuous/discontinuous.

Homo is a mammal who spent several months in a matrix and for whom contact, i.e., the close and the continuous, remain fundamental. Homo was therefore not able to broach close and distant, continuous and discontinuous in an arbitrary order. And it’s difficult to imagine how discontinuous could come before the continuous. Or how, in continuous, the distant continuous would have preceded the close continuous. Said positively, Homo, techno-semiotic mammal, had to practice the continuous before the discontinuous. And in the continuous, close continuous before the distant continuous. There is there a global order that is seemingly forced. And we shall find the following sequence in all hominid developments: close continuous, distant continuous, discontinuous.

12B An articulation in “worlds”: WORLD 1A and 1B, WORLD 2, WORLD 3

Let's take another step forward. If such a sequence is pertinent, it concerns at every moment not only the topology of hominid specimens at this moment, but also their cybernetic, their logico-semiotic, even their presentivity, in a word, what *Anthropogeny* calls their destiny-choice of existence <8H>.

So, when a destiny-choice of existence appeared in a field, such as cooking or clothing or music or image, it had to spread out to several other fields when it did not spread to all. It would not be understandable that a mammal as rhythmical <1A5> as Homo could practice one dosage of close/distant and continuous/discontinuous in one field of activities and elsewhere a completely different dosage. We expect some consonances within a choice of existence. Since these are the same organisms that activate and passivate the various fields. Then, also because these fields are each a model for the others, and cross one another.

If this verifies, it will be very convenient to refer to our three stages, steps or stratus as “Worlds”, taking “world” in its wide acceptance of *woruld (wereld, world, Welt), which we adopted as soon as in our first chapter <1B>. Homo's developments would thus have known three main “worlds” until today: (1) the close continuous of the WORLD 1, which we can also call WORLD 1A or ascriptural when it does not know writing; WORLD 1B or scriptural when it knows writing; (2) the continuous distant of WORLD 2; (3) the discontinuous of WORLD 3. As the capital letters stand out from the pages, it will help punctuate historic reviews, which can often be found in an anthropogeny.

12C. A phylogenetic articulation

It remains to be seen whether these theoretical deductions respond to facts gathered until now by historians and anthropologists. The answer seems to be yes.

12C1. The succession of worlds

Indeed, WORLD1 of the close continuous has been well represented in prehistory as well as in traditional black Africa and Polynesia, where grasping by pulsatory aggregation can be found in the dances, music, images, languages, foods, sacrifices, etc. There, the parts of any set tend to refer to the adjoining parts before referring to the set. And consequently, sets do not stand out much from their background.

The primary empires of Sumer, Egypt, India, China and South America did not break with this destiny-choice-of-existence although this one took a very new articulation due to writing, which very quickly dominated. *Anthropogeny* will therefore speak of an ascriptural WORLD 1A for Africa and Polynesia and of the scriptural WORLD 1B for primary empires.

Still seeing from above the facts known to us, WORLD 2, that of the distant continuous, was vigorously established by the Ancient Greek and, through Rome, continued in the Western World until recently, with only a relative interruption in the Middle Ages, particularly the High Middle Ages. Architectures, images, music and the texts produced in that era have proposed wholes in the strong sense of the term, i.e., wholes made up of integral parts; this is for the “continuous”. And consequently, forms strongly standing out from their background; this is for the “distant”. In this grasping of things, each part aims at referring directly to the whole, and indirectly only to the other parts; therefore aiming to wholes and to one whole, that the Greeks would call *Cosmos* and the Romans would call *Mundus*.

The discontinuous of WORLD 3 first appears in the West in 1850, before entering several domains in 1900, and progressively invading the entire Planet since 1950. In this general engineering, few wholes, few integral parts, few samplings on a background. But, on the other hand, many heterogeneous series perceived and understood as windowing-windowed graspings, in networks. Ordinarily, many effects of chance and triggering intervene, are even sought and made ostensible, at the beginning and at the end. We do not speak here of *Cosmos* (order) but rather of Universe, i.e., simply turned-towards-one (unum, versus). And even of “infinite multiverses” <Martin Rees, *Scientific American*, Dec. 99, 49>.

12C2. Overlapping and superimposition of worlds

We can imagine that these three “worlds” influenced each other and combined together. For example, it would have been difficult for India and China, after the conquests of Alexander, to avoid blending their destinies-choices-of-existence, belonging to the WORLD 1B, with the influences of the Greek WORLD 2, while at the same time marking some resistances and inventing compromises in relation with them <13L, 14H>. Similar nuances enlighten Islam, which experienced Greece not along its path, as China and India did, but from the outset.

Some “nomad” people superimpose “worlds”. For some contemporary Hebrews, reminiscences of the Bible prolong the mentalities of WORLD 1B (promised land, race, language, elected writing), whilst the diaspora targeted on the active centers of the planet (Western Europe, United States of America), encouraged the adaptations to WORLD 3 (multiform cultural fecundity of Jews throughout the 20th century), already prepared by a millennial repugnance to the WORLD 2.

More subtly, the distinction between ascriptural WORLD 1A and scriptural WORLD 1B is not obvious, because the distinction between writing and image is not absolutely clear. Some images are like writings that display opposite elements and that work as veritable macrodigital traits <2A2e>. In Southern Peru, the Naska civilization, which preceded the Inca, already boasts the features of a primary empire through its urban mechanisms and

cosmic ceremonies but does not have a writing per se. But its images are very “writing”. The Aztec show the opposite phenomenon with a very “image-filled” writing.

12D. How anthropogeny is not only history

The anthropogenic distinction of three “worlds” implies that each of Homo’s cultural production only takes its sense when it is duly situated in one or the other. And that there is a threat of misinterpretation when this minimal referential is neglected.

A simple example of such misinterpretations is the qualifier Negro Art, which was attributed to some early 20th century European productions. Indeed, some asymmetries could be found in traditional African sculptures and in the works of Picasso on the eve of analytical cubism. But the similarity ends there. Indeed, asymmetries and “formal” gaps of black African sculpture declare the close continuous of ascriptural WORLD 1A, while those of the “*demoiselles d’Avignon*” the discontinuous of WORLD 3. In black Africa, elements refer to one another, from family to family, aggregately. In the works of Picasso, they refer to one another according to the windowing/windowed discontinuous functioning and to the reticulation of generalized engineering, which was just starting to emerge around him in the era. To conclude, the only common point between these two arts is that they are situated outside the problematic of the Greek WORLD 2, that of wholes made up of integral parts with sampling of the form on a background. Picasso and Negro art independently build from the “totalizing Greek” form, which leads to say that both “disform”. For the rest, they radically diverge.

It is by its perception of topologies, cybernetics, logico-semiotics, deep presentivities, and therefore destinies-choices-of-existence <8H>, that the anthropogeny differs from history, and very often from cultural anthropology. In its current practice, history determines events, links together the most significant, picks out trends, believes to recognize causalities and motivations. For the anthropogeny, which assuredly benefits from the work of historians, any specific event is only thoroughly understood once it falls into the evolution of Homo as a state-moment-of-universe, and thus also in its articulation in three worlds.

In this sense, so-called universal “human” phenomenon such as friendship, love, lying, work, playing, war, sacrifice, violence, humanity, inhumanity, pleasure, pain, human rights, animal rights, etc. can never be understood immediately or unambiguously. Anthropogeny only knows violence, cruelty, joy, pain, truth, doubt, etc. in such a “world”, such “civilization”, such country, such language, such musical, image or language environment. And, at the end, in such nervous system, at such age, in such a variety of x-same <11K, 30>. In any event, it tries never to confound structures, which are easy to relate by their characteristics, with structurations, attractors, and basins of attraction underlying them. And which, for a same apparent structure, sometimes have opposite or contradictory convections. In Worlds 1A, 1B, 2 and 3, sacrifices have common traits, which are almost identical as traits, but have almost opposite and contradictory senses.

12E. Causal layers

Let us wander what, in these three anthropogenic “worlds”, defines the passage from one to the next. And let us consider the vincible and vanquished “obstacles” invoked by Arnold Toynbee, i.e., mixtures of urgencies and possibilities working as *provocations*. Probably, the end of last ice age played this role for the rise of neolithic WORLD 1A. Or the combination of violence and fecundity of the flooding of the Nile for the scriptural WORLD 1B in Egypt. Or the heroism of navigating the Aegean Sea for the Greek WORLD 2. Or the explosion of the information technology-cybernetics during the aftermath of the Second World War for WORLD 3. Insofar as we take into account the concordances or gaps of this new data with, at the same moment, the virtualities of organisms, environments, and former cultures. To trigger ancient Greece, a certain form of trade on the Mediterranean had to combine with geography, climate, light, the famines of the Hellas, with the semantics and syntax of the Greek language, with the contractual aspect of the Phoenician vehicular writing, etc.

More specifically, some technical maturations, such as the steam engine and intensive coasting gave rise to major punctuations such as the industrial revolution that, around the coal-steel couple, ran from Napoleon to Hitler and Stalin. We shall however note that this huge revolution did not immediately put an end to WORLD 2. Instead, it played the role of the paroxysmal twilight.

There is therefore a difference of order between a revolution, which can make a king’s head fall in an instant and erase a monarchy, and the passage from one “world” to another “world”. This passage can take centuries or generations, because the challenge consists in changing the destiny-choice-of-existence - thence the topology, cybernetic, logico-semiotic, and presentivity – of all areas of activity-passivity of a group. Each area is taken specifically and in its interaction with others.

SITUATION 12

Under the title “Les trois moments de l’art” (the three moments of art), the sketch of the three worlds was orally presented by the author at the Sorbonne’s cercle philosophique on an invitation by Jean Wahl in 1961 and in writing in the Le Nouvel Age (The new age), in 1962. The author extended this articulation to everyday objects in his article “Sculpture” in the first editions of Encyclopaedia Universalis. To signal the comprehensiveness of this approach, the terms World 1, World 2, World 3 were introduced in Les Opérateurs (The operators), which was published as a series in the magazine “Le Langage et l’Homme” (1978-81) and in the “Intermédiaire” during those same years.

The dates would suggest that this topological and cybernetic and techno-semiotic vision, which is consistent with that of “Les Arts de l’Espace” (The arts of space) in 1959 was influenced by the growing popularity of (generalized and differential) topology, and cybernetic, even semiology. But more simply, WORLD 3 was becoming so patent in the early 60s that it called for a differentiation with WORLD 2. And that it simultaneously invited to articulate a WORLD 1. And on that impetus, to make the difference between an ascriptural WORLD 1A and scriptural WORLD 1B.

Translated by Paula COOK, 2018

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