

Scientification as a Condition for Humanization

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1

Regardless of the fact that the developmental processes of contemporary world history are subject to the particular conditions and situations in particular regions – forming a barely reducible picture of contradictory movements that we cannot always qualify with complete clarity, according to the laws we find to be essential for the events in contemporary history, and which would form our determined position in the context of the fight for a possible better world using ideas – nevertheless, in the basic events in the contemporary world, in the main direction of its contemporary change, it is possible to discern two general processes that, although they manifest themselves differently and perhaps start from opposite starting points, nevertheless complement each other, and in the final analysis, at least in some respects, are identical.

These two processes are: the process of industrialization, i.e. urbanization, and the process of socialization. Having in mind all the historical determinants of the initial manifestations of the two parallel developments that are dominant in the world today, and, regardless of all the nuances and variations, the only, that is unique, directions of possible developments – having in mind, therefore, the radical differences in their outcomes that essentially determine the ideology of capitalism and the ideology of socialism in their globality as clearly different – let us try for a moment to see the general and common features of a real and possible, unique development of a world in which these ideologies do not exclude each other, or where their words are not crucial, or where they are even the same. Let us try to determine the objectively valid basis of the whole experience of the world, which stays as the only foundation on which its future can be built, the only basis on which this future can be reliable – can become reliable.

This experience finds its most objective, that is, its most neutral expression – speaking in the sense of its maximum usability, applicability and efficiency – in science, where it takes its most abstract and reduced forms, but at the same time, the only ones that are instrumentally translatable into a concrete practice. We would like to give the word “science” a more comprehensive meaning, so we do not take it only in the sense of natural sciences and humanities, but in the sense of the integrative nexus of all knowledge, including philosophical knowledge; contemporary science, of course, is not equal to this yet.

Namely, all human experiences cannot be comprehended by science, because of their constant growth and overlapping, and because the experience of science for a human being is still more an experience about the human experience than human experience per se: that is, it is still not subjectivized, and human beings necessarily act subjectively; therefore their experience of science and its uses is characterized by the unvanquished dichotomy human-inhuman, which leads to the constant bifurcation of the potential powers of man and the actualized powers of his whole experience, including the scientific. In other words, this means that an enormous part of knowledge that was acquired in fact does not exist as a living agent of human doing, and an enormous energy of the human is being exempted from the domination of knowledge, never reaching it, not recognizing it, or recognizing it only in a reified form. But precisely because it is being more and more reified, as the modern age is oriented towards the reification of human experience and knowledge itself, this experience has the strongest instrument of its expansion and the most probable perspective of its complete actualization.

We are in the midst of this process: torrents of humanity converge to this experience as a hope of their humanization, as the instrument of their civilizing, and they destroy the centuries long petrified division of people to the knowledgeable and not knowledgeable, to haves and have-nots. The process of socialization opens itself precisely in the sense of the socialization of all existing values; therefore it is primarily and before everything else characterized by the widest

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opening of the enlightenment of all human individuals, for the most rapid acquisition of knowledge and the creation of the means for a more civilized life.

But, what knowledge is, where it is situated, how it is divided, how humanity as a whole can actively participate in it today – this is the question that, figuratively speaking, incarnates in itself all the crucial and vital problems of the very destiny of the human world, which has no other way but to acquire a correct picture of the concept of its collective being, of the modalities of equaling its own existential condition with the purposefulness of this picture in the nearest possible future and in the greatest possible measure; in other words of the modalities of finally reaching the possibilities of knowledge in which and by which the human world will not be determined but determining. This is the way that will have to lead it to the field of absolute freedom, that is, free self-governing within the freely recognized borders of the objectively known, and the way that is going to make it objectively knowing.

However, it is known that science itself has expressed a doubt, and it confirms it daily – a doubt that it has the power to lead the world. Moreover, it has loudly and clearly renounced this role, and under its own wing it finds enough reasons for giving up and retreating. Science itself was the first to reject the notion of the objective and made it nonexistent. But we will not err if we remember the cause of this, and see in it only the greatest confirmation of the fact that distanced the modern world from itself – the fact of distancing and alienating the human being from humanity, which affects the contemporary science precisely by totally nullifying the purposefulness of its doing. Science had to meet these kind of borders sooner or later, if it did not previously abolish the borders within man, the borders that were not only biological and mental, but primarily determined by the obstacles of the insufficiently developed ethical measure of his sociality; this sociality is the only thing capable to transform the position of man vis a vis man and vis a vis the world, and finally vis a vis the universe. If science turns its gaze in this sense and towards this goal, from which it is completely turned off today, then it will meet countless vital but solvable problems, before which it hangs back, not by its own choice but because of the tendencies and imperatives of the incompletely enlightened human striving. This feedback loop and the close interweaving of the human and the scientific levels of existence is the essential dialectics in which one should observe the actual dilemmas of the destiny of the world, which for the first time from its origin manifests itself in terms of the totality of everything that exists in it; within this destiny, the actual and the future history of humanity must not be seen in another way but as the integral history of the whole human world, which is the only thing that can lead to its real humanization.

All this is supported by numerous facts whose real meaning only now starts to manifest itself and to be seen – and before all, the final entering of all nations into history, as well as the abolishing of the physical, that is, the spatial and temporal borders on the globe and beyond, including the possibility of leaving it and, finally, the very impossibility of the isolated existence of any ethnic and social group on it. But, more than everything else, the ever more evident and necessary parallelism and complementarity of the two processes that we mentioned: the ever faster industrialization and the ever more necessary socialization necessary for the true and all-encompassing urbanization of all parts of the globe. These processes are not even imaginable without science, and science is not imaginable without them; science becomes their instrument, an instrument that is more necessary as the need grows to complete them, and as the contradictions of the modern world become more total, universal, and general; science becomes the only way to overcome them. Today, science is needed not only in the production, but also in the exchange and distribution of goods; its criteria are being recognized in ever greater extent, and it is equally needed in those parts of the world where the abundance of production is contradicted by the lack of sociality, and in other parts, where the possibility of abundant sociality is limited only by the lack of production.

Modern scientific socialism has already been acquiring this knowledge of the need to scientifically found all social movements and transformations, which has always been its powerful weapon. Even now, this allows the possibility to see the development of social forms

and social-productive relations in a more synthetic way, to interpret them in terms that determine the very development of the modern civilization as the purpose of history, and gives a blueprint for its further way as the way of all-encompassing urbanization. This view would give science in general – as well as all aspects of its instrumentalization, as the means of human cognition and agency, and as the basis for constructing the world – a much greater role, its real role that awaits it; and, the differences between the existing social and economic systems would reveal themselves as being only relative. On the level of pure science, and especially of technology, these distinctions are almost completely erased, and they determinedly manifest themselves only on the plane of ideology, although even there they are not exclusive or complete; additionally, the differences exist on the plane of the criteria for social purposefulness, the usability and distribution options for material and spiritual goods, and they are especially pronounced, and often artificially enhanced, on the plane of pure ideological fight.

However, the differences between the systems, their political interests and tactics, cannot erase the fact that the sides in contradiction always must, in the direction and interest of its own development and strengthening, use the same means: science, and scientific application of its results. If the main source of their power is in expanding and perfecting production, and not in passive exploitation, then this factor of the scientificity of production and of the economic system is of decisive importance, and therefore cannot and must not be ignored.

But, the field of material production, of course, is not independent; it is only a part, perhaps a minor part, of the totality of the vital and existential activity that became so diverse and multiple in itself that it is difficult to define and determine where the very notions of productive and unproductive begin and end. Insights and experiences of purely theoretical nature can very soon find their application in some productive or other work practice, while the way from the invention to its application can be indirect to the extent that the former does not have to, or cannot, even be aware of the latter. There is no need to even mention how complicated are the ways, channels and systems through which social practice as a whole is being applied, implemented and run, and how complex and dysfunctional is the circulatory network here; and, from the standpoint of ideally conceived social purposefulness, it is totally inappropriate and superfluous. In this network there are too many dead channels, blocked straits, side-rooms, and countless apparently necessary obstacles and wrong turns; so, its very functioning is possible only with dire consequences for the health and normality of the social organism as a whole. The reason for this lies in the uneven, unbalanced and disordered structure of all the constitutive elements and particles of the social being itself, in its internal fissures and disharmony. The principle of the greatest possible organization – to the extent that it was discovered by science as the law of the essential existence of things and as the principle of order in the world, and which is recognized by science itself as the governing principle of its own activities and its own organization – is not implemented, nor is it possible to implement it in society itself as the vital scheme of its own structure. The essential task of the future, its goal, its way and its only possible solution is its complete scientification. This concept, conceived and realized in its real sense, would exclude all the negative labels and pejorative senses given to it by today's world, which is burdened by scientific mechanism, formal technicism and pragmatism, and would abolish all the dryness and alienation that would, based on the superficial notions, the half-baked experiences and the unreasonable haste of science itself in its contemporary stage of insufficient socialization, be expected for the future. On the contrary, the final purpose of science, and therefore, of scientification, cannot be anti-human or anti-humanistic, if we take into account but only one fact: that every scientific insight is also, directly or indirectly, an insight about man. The whole problem is how to make this insight efficient, namely, how to abolish the distance between the real, that is, every human being, and its abstract, unrealized knowledge of itself as human – as an epitome of not just any biological species, but the species that is going to take the whole reality of the world in its hands. And, those hands, with everything that they will be able to do correctly, will be science, and this will be possible to achieve only through science.

But, the process of totally encompassing society with science is still very far away. In the last century, significant steps have been taken only in the scientification of the means for production,

in technology, but even there it was done insufficiently, regarding the potential and perspective possibilities. On the contrary, the process of the scientification of the social, thinking, governing, and intentional sectors and activities of life, has not even begun. The scientification of science itself has begun only recently, and only in its most distant and vanguard parts that, precisely because of the undeveloped scientification of fundamental activities belonging to human purposefulness itself, remain directed, stimulated and are used for unscientific, that is, non-human purposes.

This way of thinking may not be acceptable at first sight. It is intentionally schematic, but not as much as it seems. It deliberately passes over all complex difficulties in reducing the dynamic and self-contradictory and elusive human matter to any reliable and secure norm and normalization, but it also wants to emphasize that today's science is not about schemes, that science itself is dynamic, elastic, and able to face all phenomena, as multiple or multilayered as they may be, because today, science itself is such a phenomenon. This does not exclude a possibility of a science of sciences on a higher level, but this will be achieved only when the number and sum of phenomena not encompassed by science is diminished. And there is a vast ocean of them, and they constantly multiply, not only in science, but also beyond it, and the advances of science lead to new phenomena, in a chain reaction. Then how is it possible to even think that science could be sufficiently powerful to solve the destiny of humanity? How is it possible to trust science? But, nowadays even this is a matter of science.

However, we have unjustifiably elevated science to a pedestal that it still does not possess in contemporary society, and will not possess until contemporary society elevates itself to the level that science has already taken. Even the fervor of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century would not suffice to emphasize the importance of the elementary popularization of science, not its abstract, theoretical aspects, nor in some concentrated digests for instant-education, but before everything else, its materialized aspect of vital and productive means, and realized experiences of them. Clearly, its popularization and vulgarization should not stop here. Moreover, if we take into account what we discussed before – the underdevelopment of the scientification of extra-scientific sectors of thought, and of the activation of those regions of society (these are more or less all of them) in which their activity manifests itself as a determinant of complex motives of human behavior and actions – it is necessary to emphasize the way of the popularizing scientific knowledge whereby pure human spirituality will manifest and reflect itself through it.

We will briefly mention the field of art, and immediately emphasize the need of its scientification also; because this is the field in which the complex of multiple delusions, collected and accumulated from all zones and levels of unscientific human and social existence and spiritual history, are still protected in their cocoon. To analyze it sharply and without compromise, one would need a lucid action of science, but, because of higher interests, science still does not reach it and leaves it to dabble in the slow backwaters of the developmental stream. Similarly, many other sectors of social existence and thought are neglected, under the pretext of other things of primary importance – but before all, because of other, non-humanized interests that comprise the huge ballast in total circulation within the vital and social medium and in its general movement. And, in this situation, causes are the same as consequences, and vice versa: insufficient scientification in a particular sector is caused by general insufficient scientification, and vice versa.

But, this is not the exhaustive list of the causes of the unequal stages of development and structural incompatibility and inhomogeneous development of different social and existential sectors, levels and orientations. On the contrary, certain social interests – different in different systems, but identical by nature – favor or disfavor the scientification of certain fields, and the descientification of other fields, and not in line with general interests that a normal process of development of civilization would require, but on the contrary, it is as if they oppose these requirements, or do not recognize them. Most often, the real roots of this stay deeply buried in excesses or even in the blindness of certain ideologies, which are like this for a reason, and the

reason is the need to amplify their antagonism, which excludes any scientification, because it would lead to the unwanted detente – although in the “non-ideological” fields it forces the same scientification, also with the purpose of strengthening the antagonism. In this way, the rift between the possible and real agreement on the historical and potential evolution of civilization “artificially” widens on the plane of its actualization worldwide, but this strategy is a consequence of countless, small internal shifts and dislocations that are, in concrete social practice, an expression of opposition of scientific and non-scientific thoughts.

Here, we should raise the question how science depends on ideology, and question all the factors and forces that determine ideology. But, with regard to our subject, maybe the following problem is more important: Could science (and in what way) attain such a position in society, and such social power, so that it can lead society and control its functioning? However, this question is completely unrealistic, and it will stay this way until human society in its evolution creates this possibility, that is, until it creates the conditions in which social practice will necessarily turn into scientific practice. These conditions are, in the final analysis, a matter of general material and social development in which the process of creating, developing and forcing ideologies is the expression of the aspirations of certain social powers, which, in the mechanism of social relations can be progressive or reactionary, both absolutely and relatively. To strengthen its power, each will use science and interpret and apply its results for their own interests. These facts could lead us to lose all confidence in science, as well as our faith in the possibility of any criteria for the social correctness of its orientation, but one must not forget that, where science is developed in sufficient measure, it can, following its own logic, begin to erect barriers against the further non-social use of its abilities. On the other hand, under the influence of science and the same social laws and social principles that science reveals, social forces themselves are subject to changes and incremental transformations; therefore, when science attains a higher stage of complete development, it could really take on the role of the main regulator of society. But then, as a precondition for this, one could not talk of science as an instrument: science itself, in its final stage of evolution, in the fullness of its competence, would become the only and final subject, because the whole humanness of humanity would manifest itself in it, and not outside of it. This would be the stage of absolute scientification of man, and of absolute humanization of science.

This is the conclusion of a foreseeable line of development of scientific civilization that seems most probable, even if it is completely hypothetical, and we have only outlined it here, without going into any of the arguments that it undoubtedly inheres. It imposes the necessity on us to understand, support and emphasize in our everyday practice this parallelism of the processes of scientification and humanization of man and society, the mutual dependence of these processes. It is understandable that, while doing this, we do not forget the concrete duality of these two processes in the contemporary world, as well as the immense inappropriateness of the historical conditions for this parallelism to be really established and harmonically developed. Furthermore, we emphasize all the ugliness of today’s world as the monstrous consequence of this separation of man from humanness – both where developed but incomplete scientification is not included enough, and directed to the purpose of humanization, as well as where the state of nonexistent scientification supports the state of the most painful humiliation of man. This is where we face the living and hard soil of historical necessities that we so often do not want to see, and the official conscience of the world does not want to face them. The question of liberating all human beings from material, moral and spiritual slavery is the question that this century would have to clearly articulate – at least – so that the means of science could make it solvable.

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Matko Meštrović was born in 1933 in the island of Korčula. He graduated from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Zagreb, with a major in History of Art. As a critic and writer, in 1956 he started to work in the editorial board for arts and culture in Radio Zagreb. He contributed to many journals and newspapers. He translated texts from Italian and French. He was a member of the Gorgona group. He participated in forming the international art movement "Nove tendencije," which had its first exhibition in 1961 in Zagreb. He taught theory of design at the University of Architecture in Zagreb, he was the director of the Institute for Culture of Croatia (1987 – 1992) and before that the advisor of the general director of Radio Television Zagreb. Now he is a long-time scientific researcher at the Institute of Economics in Zagreb.