Natural history of Communism

II. Autonomous dynamics of memes and institutions

Ladislav Kováč

Center for cognitive biology, Comenius University, Mlynská dolina CH-2,

842 15 Bratislava, Slovakia

E-mail: kovacl@fns.uniba.sk

Summary

Communism was an attempt at a rational construction of society, founded on false theoretical premises. Traditional institutions, products of spontaneous evolutionary processes and embodying evolutionary knowledge, should have been smashed up and replaced by institutions created by rational design. The conceptual basis of such an action was social animism. Instead of achieving rational institutions, spontaneous dynamics of society under Communism gave rise to institutions that, by their irrationality, had no precedent in history. A political and economic system arose lacking virtually any feedback. The Leninist Party may be considered as one of the greatest inventions of the 20th century. Negative selection, which was determining dynamics of society, promoted into political functions first fanatics and psychopaths, later opportunists, and eventually ontological pragmatists. The intellectuals who were serving the political power were evolving from affectuals to corrupted personalities marked by moral insanity. But neither the intellectuals who were chased into dissident ghettos could fulfill the genuine mission of intellectuals, to function as self-consciousness of society. The situation of an individual may be typified by a dilemma of the Communist scientist: whichever option of those available he/she may have chosen, his/her behavior remained inconsistent. Society was regressing by a process analogous to Muller´s ratchet of biology. Social regression was gradually returning the part of humankind living under Communism

down to the level of social life in small non-anonymous groups in the savanna. Evil in the totalitarian system may be banal, as far as human individuals are concerned. However, the evil of totalitarian institutions was not banal. Indeed, it had inhuman, monstrous proportions. In order to prevent the rise of new totalitarisms, such institutions should be eradicated in their incipient stage, when they are still no more than theoretical projects. This statement is not normative, but stipulative, as are also the other implications of the analysis. In democracy, politicians should have an obligation to erect legal and institutional barriers against spreading doctrines that reject tolerance and polymorphism. Intellectuals should incessantly supply the meme pool with that brand of memes that would compete with and eventually displace the memes of myths and utopias. The dazzling rate of technological evolution, rapid changes of technology, requires parallel changes of institutions. With cultural sciences, which aims at understanding human nature and dynamics of society, lagging behind the spectacular progress of natural sciences, humankind is entering a unique, precarious stage of its evolution. Will humankind progress quickly enough in its knowledge of human nature and of society to be able to master its own institutions? This may be the fatal question of the 21st century.

Introduction

What do quantum physics and totalitarism have in common? They both appeared in the 20th century and both took humankind by surprise. In the last decades of the 19th century, some scientists – extrapolating the achievements of physics from the days of Galileo, three centuries ago, upwards – claimed that all mysteries of the universe had already been solved, the edifice of physics was essentially completed, only some small embellishments being left to be done (as commented for instance in Weinberg 1993; Zeilinger 2000). Analogous extrapolations may have been implicit in writings of the 19th century specialists in human and social sciences (which have been proposed to be called "cultural sciences", paralleling "natural sciences" [Kováč 2002a]). Out of prominent authorities, at least three, Hegel, Marx and Comte, by having presumably accomplished synthesis of contributions of predecessors and contemporaries, each proclaimed that he himself eventually discovered the fundamental laws governing social life. By knowing the laws, the future path could be foreseen, or even designed. There were no more obstacles for humankind to progress to its bright future.

Two phenomena brought about by cultural evolution in the 20th century, Nazism and Communism, turned up no less unexpected than the theory of relativity and quantum physics. Aristotle, Machiavelli and Montesquieu, and, equally, Hegel, Marx and Comte, did not presage such totalitarian systems and would probably be no less amazed by their emergence and their accomplishments than anybody else. This indicated that something essential must have been lacking in human knowledge of social dynamics. There may have been no causal relationship between the new discoveries in natural sciences and the emergence of Nazism and Communism. Yet, natural sciences have their share in both: they provided tools – by intermediary of their stepchildren, technoscience and modern technology – for what the systems were capable to accomplish. As a sort of compensation, contemporary natural sciences, in particular biology, may also provide ideas necessary for understanding the very basis of the two totalitarian systems. Such a "bottom-level" inquiry, attempted by "hard sciences", may lay foundations for analyses by cultural sciences at "upper" levels.

The present paper extends the first part of this study in applying arguments mainly from cognitive biology to account for basic traits of Communism, from its constituting as a social system down to its disintegration. As already mentioned in the first part, it would be impossible to observe scientific rigor in describing these complex phenomena. Accordingly, the paper may be considered more as an essay rather than a genuine scientific communication.

Elaboration of conceptions

1. Fallacy of social animism

It belongs to human nature that any human being has a need to understand the world in which he/she lives. This need is apparently as strong as are the needs of eating and sexual gratification. Human ancestors who lived many thousand years ago as hunters and gatherers in the savanna did understand the world no less than contemporary humans do. The term "understanding" is not equal to the term "knowing". Understanding must be simple, consistent and all-encompassing. Introspection gives humans the impression that any human individual act ensues from striving, intention, volition. Accordingly, intentions and wills were ascribed to the events in nature and society as well. Nature was full of ghosts and gods. Such a view has been called by Monod **animism** (Monod 1970, p. 43). First attempts to get rid of

animism appeared in ancient Greece**.** Yet, the substitution of countless gods by a few ones and eventually a single one, even in the abstract form of a unifying principle, Logos, need not necessarily mean the end of animism. The peak of Greek philosophy, Aristotle's system, is, in fact, a supreme form of animism: The world as a whole is the result of a project accomplished by the First Mover. Every thing, every phenomenon has a purpose – even a stone, thrown upwards, returns to the ground because it tends to achieve its natural state, which is the rest on the surface of the earth, and which is, at the same time, its purpose.

Evolution of modern natural sciences has been a process of progressive abandonment of the purposive, teleological explanation of nature. Nature, in Monod's words, is *objective* and not *projective* (Monod 1970, p. 17). Monod has shown how in biology the concept of teleology was abandoned and replaced by the concept of teleonomy: purposes with which the living beings appear to be endowed are projects only when looked at *a posteriori*; in fact, however, they are outcomes of evolutionary processes of variations and selection. At the same time, Monod criticized the continuation of animism in explanations of social dynamics. He pointed out that Marxism, the theoretical basis of Communism, is a patent animistic projection (Monod 1970, p. 36).

Marxism – Hegelian idealism dressed in a materialist suit – conceives of the course of history as being determined by social laws. The laws give history direction and purpose. The end of capitalism and its superceding by Communism is a process just as inevitable as is the fall of a stone, thrown upwards, down to the earth. The law determining this social change may be akin to Newton's law of gravitation but has in it, at the same time, the internal purposefulness similar to the one ruling the fall of the stone to its "natural state" in Aristotle's conception. Marxism is eschatology in which the role of God is taking over by social laws. Marx maintained that these laws could be deduced from the analysis of material life of society, economy, the manners of production. Relations of humans to the means of production represent the "basis" which, in turn, determines the "superstructure" of a society: spiritual life, politics, culture, social institutions and, eventually, human behavior. A human individual, in Engels' understanding, becomes free when he/she recognizes and obeys these laws.

As already pointed out in the first part of this study, many scholars have suspected, but rarely made explicit, that the Marxist doctrine is internally **inconsistent**. Treating Marxism as a kind of social animism makes its inconsistency still more apparent. In contrast to the social determinism of Engels and "mature" Marx, in the conception of "young" Marx the individual human being is a genuinely free creature, endowed with a tendency towards personal self-fulfillment. This freedom and self-fulfillment is only incapacitated by capitalism – humans are

"alienated" to their inherent freedom – but will unfold under Communism (Bottomore 1963). Many Western Marxist theorists found major inspirations in Marx's early writings, not caring much of the inconsistency. Marxists in the Communist countries, specialists in "applied Marxism", were preserving consistency of the doctrine in a most easy way – omitting the ideas of the "young" Marx from the orthodox system.

In its faith in the inherent lawfulness of social motion, orthodox Marxism considered the free market system of capitalism not as a free system obeying rules of game, but as a disordered interplay of blind forces which enslave humans. Objects generated by the competitive and acquisitive capitalistic production are alien to humans. Fortunately, in the Marxist view, the individual human reason is able to discover the underlying laws, to understand them and to function as a midwife of historical necessity speeding up the lawful and inevitable progress of history from capitalism to Communism. "Mature" Marx himself, analyzing the lecture of the French Commune of 1871, came to the radical conclusion: As the capitalistic institutions have been no more than a system of coercion serving to protect bourgeois ownership of the means of production, the insight of the individual reason should be used to smash them up (Marx, 1). Marxist *hubris*, pretending that new institutions could be created by rational design, may be regarded as the supreme form of social animism.

Since the birth of Marxism, in parallel with its monumental experimental testing in the Communist countries, cultural sciences have followed suit of natural sciences: they have also been continually diverging from Aristotelian teleological explanation of cultural phenomena. Some scientists went so far as to equalize cultural sciences with natural sciences, distorting, in fact, both: social physics and social Darwinism are the cases in point. This has not been productive and has been largely abandoned. Other kinds of rapprochement have enriched cultural sciences with novel concepts of natural sciences: non-linearity, bifurcation, complexity, self-organization. The most rewarding unification may be represented by the recognition that cultural evolution is essentially the same type of evolution as is biological evolution: ruled by Darwinian principles of uncorrelated variations and of selection from the variants. It has been proposed by Dawkins (1976) that, analogous to genes in biological evolution, there is another kind of units in cultural evolution: **memes**, units of variation and of replication or imitation (Blackmore 1999). If Darwin has exorcised animism from living Nature, Dawkins is one of those who have exorcised it from society.

Just like genes are not beans in a bag, but they organize and integrate to constitute individual organisms, memes do organize and integrate to give rise to specific institutions. Institutions are cultural constructions, arrangements with restricted degrees of freedom, sort of

"social machines" with the ability to do work on their environment. They exhibit equifinality: a particular institution can be put together by combining different memes in different proportions. Stable institutions are essentially evolutionary constructions, fashioned by trials and errors and selection (Kováč 2002b). Consequently, they carry embodied knowledge of the environment. Yet, any institution carries also, more or less, embodied beliefs. Institutions impose restrictions on behavior of human individuals, arranging selfish actions to be coupled with socially useful effects. In addition, they enforce, by conditioning or by legal power, individual's actions that would not occur spontaneously.

The autonomous dynamics of memes and institutions, in parallel with but independently of the dynamics of material production, and essentially independently of awareness and wishes of humans, has accomplished an evolutionary feat: it has elevated humankind out of existence in small non-anonymous groups of hunters and gatherers in the savanna to existence in large, anonymous, over-biological social groups. The power of dominating individuals, enabling to control behavior of other members of a group, has acquired in these over-biological groups a new character: a character of political power. Politics was born – the struggle for political power and, after its gain, for its preservation. The socioworld emerged – a supercomplex world, refractory to simple conceptualization by human mind. Just as the microworld of atomic processes and the megaworld of galaxies, the socioworld extends beyond "Kant´s barriers" (Kováč 2000). In order to grasp and delineate it one has to take recourse to the principle of complementarity: to depict it by two or more internally consistent, but mutually excluding, descriptions.

From the supercomplexity of the socioworld, very little may be known yet. However large may be the knowledge of social and historical facts, the knowledge of the principles behind them may still be quite slight. No much different from the knowledge of principles of physics in the days of Aristotle (Kováč 2002a). The socioworld, with myriad of memes and their unknown dynamics and with intricacy of institutions may be compared to an iceberg that is yet almost entirely submerged in the ocean. Only a tiny part has been lifted over to the surface so far. Only this tiny part can be conceptualized. Seen and conceptualized from different standpoints: specific was the standpoint of Marx, another that of Freud, still another that of Husserl. All together useful in their complementarity. Any single of them one-sided, precarious; and dangerous if to be used as a basis for rational control of human affairs. None of them, with the exception of Marxism, has got such an opportunity. Imagine a political and social system designed and ruled by monopoly of Freud's doctrine. Disposing of modern

technology, it would be probably no less totalitarian, no less inhuman and inhumane, than was the system backed by Marxism.

The underlying principles, largely unknown to us so far, serve to generate plethora of events that altogether compose history. How to grasp, if not the principles themselves, at least some characteristic, typical features of a history? By recounting the frequency of events? By averaging them? The analysis of this study is based on two distinct approaches: on exploring case studies, implicit or explicit, which often relate to the author's personal experience; and on devising extreme, **ideal types** in the sense of Weber's (1960) methodology. The ideal types do not exist, but they are useful mental schemes – scaffolds for ordering and patterning the world of no recurrence. One attempts to range existent countless singular cases, which are far from being simple and overtly similar, into a small number of distinct groups according to their relatedness to particular ideal types.

The failure of Marxist animistic utopia should serve as a conclusive proof that humankind has to rely upon spontaneous variations, trials and selection for stability in that part of the social iceberg which remains submerged under the surface and cannot be directly observed. By discarding those forms that are unstable, social systems are automatically accumulating evolutionary rationality. There is no purpose in the evolution of the systems, no predetermined goal. The meaning of a system, its sense and its direction, are being generated in the course of its dynamics. Advancement of science, accumulation of knowledge is a most important constituent of the dynamics. It is a process of gradual lifting of the iceberg from the ocean, so that more and more of it becomes accessible to human comprehension and conceptualization – and eventually, last and least, to human control.

Animism may continue to thrive in attempts at apprehending human mind. Is the evidence, furnished by introspection – that our actions are free, led by our intentions and by goals that we set deliberately – justified? B. F. Skinner (1972) attempted to prove that this impression of freedom and purposefulness of our action is a kind of biologically useful illusion; our behavior has been shaped by conditioning in the past and is determined by contingencies of reinforcement. In the golden era of cognitive psychology, Skinner's views have been sharply criticized and almost relegated to oblivion. As implied by some considerations in the first part of this study, and as will be further substantiated by the arguments of the present paper, human behavior under Communism may found a most consistent explanation within the framework of Skinner's conception. Of course, amended and enlarged by all new achievements of science, particularly of cognitive biology and evolutionary psychology. As has been pointed out, the Communist experience calls for a new

reading and new appreciation of Skinner. The lesson of Communism might help to exorcise animism from its last resort.

2. The science of power

In view of the great number of distinct branches of science it is rather striking that no autonomous science of power has been established. Since 1938, when Bertrand Russell (1938) pointed out to this fact, not much has changed. A unifying theory of power should start from the description of power in small groups of social mammals, such as rats, wolves and non-human primates ("social associations") and use it as a basis for the analysis of power in over-biological groups of the socioworld ("societies"). So far, such approaches have rarely been attempted; a commendable exception is the book of Roger D. Masters (1989). Psychology of power should be another inevitable part of the science of power. Psychological aspects of power have been taken up in the first part of this study.

A precise delimitation of the concept of politics and, accordingly, of political power is prerequisite for the science of power. The concept of politics is often used in too broad a sense. As a rule, broad concepts are of little explanatory and heuristic value. In this study rather restricted definitions have been adopted: **Political power** is a power of dominating individuals in over-biological groups enabling to control behavior of members of the groups. Politics is a struggle for political power and, after its acquisition, for retaining it. Politics is then a subset of a larger set that may be called **publitics**. Along with politics, publitics encloses **civitics**: actions of people in the social space known under the name of civil society – a social life that also exceeds the size of biological groups. However, the actions aiming not at seizing political power, but at influencing and restraining it. Also, public administration is not politics, it is another part of publitics. The machinery of public administration is closely interwoven with the machinery of political management, but it seems advisable to make a clear conceptual distinction between them. With such a classification, the subject of political science would be not only politics itself but also the other areas of public life; in fact, publitics as a whole. As politics came into existence late in evolution, when humans started to form large, non-biological groups, politics is not biology. By implication, the same applies to political science. Yet, politics is grounded on biology and hence biological science, including biopolitics, should be considered to be the groundwork of political science.

Political power is one of subsets of power in over-biological groups. Other subsets are economic, bureaucratic, legal, mediatic, spiritual powers. The former differs from the others by containing an apparent strong component of intentions: it appears as if subjects of politics consciously and deliberately acted in order to seize power and to retain it. Political power seems to be to a considerable extent an intentional power, while the others have more a character of non-intentional power. The latter is the power generated in the course of actions of subjects; the subjects themselves may not even be aware of possessing it. Yet, the power of subjects is but a tiny part of the total power. This applies to the political power as well. Memes, and their integrated units, institutions, are exerting a tremendous, **dominant non-intentional power**. If humans are sometimes considered to be "slaves" of their genes they may just as well be considered as "slaves" of memes and institutions. The recognition of the existence of non-intentional power and the appreciation of its dominance in social affairs may be the key to disclosing the essence of Communism.

Separation of powers, division of power in three parts, legislative, executive and judicial power, has evolved in Europe spontaneously, by trials and errors, by continual evolutionary testing, in the course of centuries. The theories of the separation of powers appear to be *a posteriori* conceptualizations of the evolutionary outcome. The American Constitution may have been the first attempt at an intended rational design of a society. Its success, apparent in the relative stability of the instituted political organization, seems to be due to the fact that the Founding Fathers observed – of course, without being aware of it – the principle of minimal prejudice, formulated later by Jaynes (1957) (see also Kováč 2000): they did not claim anything more about human nature and society than had been known in their time. With no explicit knowledge of non-intentional power inherent to institutions, they introduced the principle of checks and balances and of the mutual control of the three powers, in fact, feedbacks between them, that has considerably "humanized" the non-intentional power of institutions. It has become evident only much later that the operation of feedbacks is one of preconditions for stability of any dynamic system. This holds also for political system and it is one of the lessons to be drawn from the Communist experience. Market economy too is essentially a dynamic system self-organized and maintained by myriad of feedbacks. The leading thread of the present paper can be made explicit here: **Virtual absence of feedbacks** was one of the main reasons of instability and the eventual collapse of Communism. Hardship of post-Communist transition may correlate with lingering and defective re-establishment of the historically constituted set of feedbacks.

The idea of the power of Soviets, bodies combining legislative and executive functions, brought forward in Russia by the October revolution in 1917, was also an attempt at a rational design, as had been the ideas of the American Founding Fathers. However, in contrast to the achievement of the American Constitution, the Russian conception was doomed to failure just because its view of human nature and of its potential was false. At the same time, it was also a negation of the evolutionary acquisition of the separation of power. But even before the idea of the direct power of Soviets could be exposed to practical testing it was in fact supplanted by another idea: the notion of the Party as "vanguard of the proletariat". Its first outline had been laid down by Lenin in 1902 in his book "What is to be done" (Lenin, 1) and 1904 in another book "One step forwards, two steps back" (Lenin, 2). Marx himself was stressing the importance of the workers' party for efficient actions, especially in his analysis of the lesson of the Paris Commune of 1871 (Marx, 2), but what he apparently had in mind was a "classical" party similar to those existing in his time. Lenin's name for the organization he invented is a **misnomer**. It should always be used with adjective and be called "Leninist party", or, as a synonym, "Communist party". The organization has no resemblance and nothing in common with the political parties as they have evolved in Europe. It is a new kind of organization that has no analogy with anything in human history. In fact, the "Leninist party" can be designated as one of the greatest inventions of the 20th century, equivalent to the inventions of the atomic bomb, television and Internet. The Leninist party, in combination with another great invention of the 20th century, mass indoctrination (Bertalanffy 1967), has given the Communist system – and, admitting that Mussolini and Hitler were inspired by Lenin in constructing their respective parties, also the fascist and Nazi systems – its monstrous character.

According to Lenin, capitalism predisposes the workers to the acceptance of socialism, but it does not spontaneously make them conscious socialists. The proletariat of its own can achieve only "*trade-union consciousness*". It was necessary to institute "a party of a new type" capable of imbuing the working class with revolutionary consciousness. He conceived of the Party as a highly centralized organization with a core of experienced professional revolutionaries. Even though it may have been originally intended to be constructed in this way in conditions of illegality prevailing in the czarist Russia, the principle of organization was preserved after the October Revolution of 1917 and was generally adopted as a model for all Communist parties.

The principle of structure and operation of the Communist party was named "democratic centralism". It was a highly centralized system. At the top, there was a group

called "political bureau" ("politburo") or "Presidium of the Central Committee". It consisted of ten to twenty-five members. Below it was the Central Committee, followed, at the descending scale, by regional, district, local and works organizations, each with its own committee. Members of the local and works organizations were still divided into smaller units, "Party groups". The term "democratic centralism" should have expressed the procedure of hierarchical election of functionaries of the upper level by Party members at the lower level, but the main idea behind it was the absolute liability of members of groups of the lower level of hierarchy to comply with the decisions taken at the upper level. At the same time, at will be exemplified later, the statute of the Party made individual members of the Party responsible for the acts of the Party as a whole.

The Communist party was neither a political nor a civic organization. It was an organization *sui generis*. It also exerted a power *sui generis*, without precedent in history. It permeated the entire society as a nervous or a cardiovascular system. Local organizations existed in any village, in any quarter of a town. Works organizations were established not only in factories, but also in every office, school, research institution, university chair. The duty of the organizations was to implement the decisions of higher authorities in their setting, but also to supervise and control the workplace. The objects of interest, and also of decision, of these organizations were all matters of the workplace. In a research institution, for instance, the Party organization fully controlled the personal composition, took decision of who would be director, who would be hired or dismissed, who would be allowed to present thesis and receive a degree. The budget and the research priorities of the institution were also its legitimate concerns. The Party organizations dealt also, especially in the first, orthototalitarian stage of Communism, with the private matters of the employees, such as housing, family life and even marriage conflicts or adultery. No wonder that, according to the estimate of Kornai (1997, p. 20), Party machinery (in Hungary, but there is no reason why it should be different in other countries) was almost twice as large as was the machinery of the State.

In the contemporary terms, the network of Party organizations may be superficially compared to a hierarchical, multilevel neuronal net. However, a net in which the connections and the strengths on junctions were undefined and unstable, essentially of stochastic nature. What had been intended to be a rationally designed and ordered organization, did exist as a highly **disordered system**. The character of the power that ensued from it is described in the next section.

As the analysis in this paper focuses essentially on institutions, it would remain an incomprehensible fragment of the "science of power" if everything that has been said in the

first part of this study of individual behavior of the actors were not included. In particular, the main statement concerning the relationship of the individual to power, advanced there, should be kept in mind: Political power, if possessed for too long time, must corrupt any individual.

3. Irrationality of institutions and "savannization" of social life

The ambition to create a social system of Communism, rational in its structure and functioning and easy to be rationally conceptualized, resulted in a system that may have been the most irrational in history. An attempt to describe main features of its irrationality can only be tentative:

(1) Economy, according to Marxism the first and decisive „force" of social progression, should have been taken out from the hands of blind, „irrational" market and rationally controlled. The essence of the rational control consisted in central planning of production and consumption. A rationale behind central planning is straightforward: The size of the population of a country is precisely known from a census. From the number of citizens one can calculate the number of clothing required; hence, the amount of textiles needed and the number of sewing machines; hence, the number of needles; hence, the quantity of steel necessary for the production of the needles; hence, the number of engineers necessary for the production of the given number of needles (which adds to the number of engineers necessary for the production of knives, pens, cars and their spare parts etc.) Instead of squandering talents and resources, the State wisely determines, on the basis of such a calculation, how many engineers are needed to produce the reasonably fixed number of needles. In this way, the need of all citizens to protect themselves against cold will be satisfied equitably and with no wastage. To do such calculations for all commodities, and for all professions, may be pretentious, but, in the era of supercomputers not impossible, claimed even some Soviet established economists. Incidentally, it was a prominent Soviet economist, who emigrated to the West and earned the Nobel prize for economy, Wassily Leontief, who once remarked that market is the most efficient computer, much more powerful than would be all human-made computers connected together.

The disastrous consequences of Communist "rational" economy have been analyzed extensively (*e. g.* Kornai 1985, 1990, 1992; Karasz *et al.* 1994). Invalidation of the information-carrying function of prices resulted in the **economy of shortage** (Kornai 1980).

As a matter of fact, the only rational element was, paradoxically, the existence of the parallel "gray" economy founded on rudimentary, even though deformed, market. Its omnipresence, inevitability and, at the same, deformation, was one of the reasons not only of consumers' dissatisfaction but also of universal demoralization of society.

(2) In the centrally planned economy, the State was the absolute monopolist. It was the only owner of the means of production. Superficially, this statement seems simple and well circumscribed. In fact, however, it reveals well the irrationality of Communism. Contrary to the official claim, there was no "all-people ownership". "People" were mere employees of the State. There were the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Party who were taking decision on what would be produced, on the number of needles and engineers. But neither they themselves were proprietors, they could not freely appropriate profit and they did not carry responsibility for losses. Accordingly, the claim of Milovan Djilas (1957) that the real owner of the factories was the Party bureaucracy as a new social class seems not to be entirely substantiated. In the era of the mature, paratotalitarian Communism, managers played a major role in factories. They may most likely be considered as owners as they could appropriate part of profit, even though unofficially and largely by fraud. Yet, they could not decide of what would be produced and their fate was fully in hands of the Party. Ownership of all and nobody opened the path toward wide pillage, often officially recognized, tolerated and rarely prosecuted. If one wants to have the most concise, and at the same time precise, characteristic of the outcome of the Communist economy, here is it: a full-fledged and universal **tragedy of the commons**. Hardin (1968) may be satisfied to witness such a monumental corroboration of his concept.

One of the most devastating effects of this "fuzzy" ownership was a "delocalization" and arbitrary fluxes of capital. Factories did not pay taxes to the State, but "handed over their share of profit". In this way, the factories that did not function properly, generating no profit but nevertheless considered as "socially necessary", were delivering to the State their "negative share" – they were steadily subsidized by the State. This however was not a situation of equilibrium: the capital was not simply redistributed but it was being continuously exhausted and debts were generated at the detriment of future generations. Václav Havel (1991) has aptly used the term "Communist exploitation of the future". The debts were created not so much by foreign loans, but mainly by neglecting innovation of the means of production, by decay of infrastructure, by technological deterioration. (Kornai 1997, p. 75, has enumerated some, but not all, forms of this debts.)

An illuminating example of the generation of the **internal debt** may have been housing policy, in particular the construction of housing quarters. The monotonous rows of prefabricated buildings may still be the most conspicuous objects of the urban, and even village, scenery of post-Communist countries. The apartments were extremely cheap and, accordingly, there was shortage of them. The acquisition of an apartment may have been the most frequent subject of political blackmail and barter and of corruption. The cheapness of housing served, at the same time, as a demagogical proof of the social justice of the system. The apartments were cheap because their construction was subsidized by the State, but also because they were of lamentable quality. Hence, their inferior quality has been one of the forms of the internal debt. According to the recent reports of the Czech press, the reconstruction of the existing dwelling houses would require three hundred billion Czech crowns, which amounts to the half of the total yearly budget of the Czech Republic.

It is rather surprising how the appreciation of the **immensity of the internal debt** is generally lacking both among politicians and in the general public of the post-Communist countries. This point will be taking up later. One may get an idea on how large the debt is by taking into account money transfer from West to East Germany. 85 billion-dollar equivalents have been annually poured from the West Germany into the former Communist German Democratic Republic to finance reconstruction and investment (Bonfante 1998). Altogether, the total transfer from the West to the East would nowadays amount to one trillion dollars, and yet the differences between the two parts of Germany are still far from being abolished. The implication may be appalling but seem to be inevitable: the other post-Communist countries are not different from the post-Communist part of Germany. They are facing the same deficit of the capital and would need it in the proportionally same amount in order to recover by wiping off the internal debt.

(3) The Communist State was not only the monopoly owner of the means of production. It was also the only and total owner of all its inhabitants. It was the owner of all the working people because all were its employees; of all the retired people because it only paid them their pensions; of all the children and adolescents because all schools, from kindergartens to universities, belonged to the State. Accordingly, it was easy for the State to enforce obedience and conformity. In the first, orthototalitarian, stage of Communism it was still necessary to imprison those who had resisted and had not conformed or to send them to forced labor camps. In the ripe stage of Communism this was no longer needed – it was enough to dismiss them from their work.

An instructive, and at the same time revealing, example have been the purges in Czechoslovakia that followed the Soviet military intervention in 1968: the pacification of the population, which has been officially called "normalization", was achieved by dismissing hundred thousands of people from their work. But the purges and dismissals were not accomplished by the State as sort of a Supreme Reason residing in a concrete institution. Once the Politburo of the Party had taken decision on the purges and the Central Committee had approved it, the purges were being executed by thousands of local Party committees. In many cases, perhaps even in the majority of them, not by meticulously verifying the loyalty of the checked individual toward the State. Inferior people, possessed with malice, envy and hate, took advantage of the purges to get rid, by dismissing from the working place, of those who professionally surmounted them and to took positions that became vacant.

Generally, this has not occurred only in intermittent purges of Party members or, as has been the case of Prague Spring aftermath, of all citizens. Permanently, incessantly was running a queer process of **negative selection**. In the beginning of Communism there were a handful of fanatics who had ceased power, but the system continually tended more and more toward a diffuse power of mediocrity, and hence of majority. Of course, of a majority within a minority, as there were always the members of the Communist Party who in principles had in their hand decisions about the fate of non-Party people. Yet, as the Party was getting weaker, other organizations were gaining a relatively heavier weight, including those in which non-Communists had dominating positions. Being selected for mediocrity and sub-mediocrity, at the moment of the Implosion of Communism the power was also debilitated because – just as was the case of ownership – it belonged almost to all, and thus to nobody. Notwithstanding the fact that, at the same time, almost all were unsure in their power, removable from their positions at any moment and therefore dissatisfied. Even those occupying the highest positions, the members of the Politburo of the Party, had to be afraid of losing their positions.

The situation reminded the character of politics and law in the Byzantine Empire, as it has been described by the Russian ethnographer Gurevitch (1972). According to Gurevitch, principles of service and mutual help did not hold in Byzantium, there was only a unilateral serf-like dependence of those with lower positions on the superiors. But even the most powerful and the richest at the top had no rights and the law did not protect them from the Emperor who could by caprice and at any time divest them of property, of rank, and even of life. "Individualism" of the Byzantine nobility was an individualism of serfs who only cared of their career and enrichment. But neither the person of the Emperor was sacred. The serfs, who cringed to him, could betray him at any moment: the every second Byzantine Emperor

was stripped of the throne by force, mutilated or assassinated. Byzantium suffered from the absolute lack of legal liability and of respect for law as the guaranty of rights.

Gurevitch presented this situation in Byzantium as an antithesis to the situation in medieval Western Europe where order and stability had been largely assured by the sovereignty of law. In Western Europe even the sovereign had been amenable to a law. Byzantine tradition had survived in Czarist Russia and may have markedly shaped many features of Communism in Russia and the entire Soviet Union. Yet, the Communist system in countries outside the Soviet Union, including those with the Western tradition, had also essentially the **Byzantine character**. The Soviet influence or pressure notwithstanding, the "Byzantinization" of society may have been the result of an intrinsic, and unavoidable, dynamics of Communism everywhere.

 (4) The last statement may well apply to the institution of secret police that was pervading the Communist system and remains, along with the Communist party, its most conspicuous mark. Such as institution appears to run counter the original demand of the "full power to Soviets", but it also cannot be found in the original Lenin's outline of the Communist power monopolized by the Party. Neither did the standard textbooks of "scientific Communism" (*e. g.* Fedosyev 1981) treat, and not even mention, the role of secret police in the administration of the State. On the other hand, the secret police had been a permanent constituent of the Czarist regime and its ominous presence in the Russian society can be derived even from reading books of the Russian literary classics of the 19th century. It may have been tempting and easy for Lenin and his followers to copy the structure and methods of the Czarist secret police once they seized power and faced the necessity to crush the enemies and to pacify the population (Albats 1994). The Soviet model may have been then later adopted in the Central European Communist countries.

Yet, development was certainly not so simple. The existence of illegal power structures in parallel with more or less legal ones may be an unavoidable precondition of relative sustainability of totalitarian systems. The Nazi system had its own variant of the secrete police, the Gestapo. Genesis of the Communist secrete police, from its very birth in the revolutionary days after the change of the previous regime, may be typified by the Czechoslovak example, described in the book of Hejl (1990). Obviously, the role of Soviet "advisors", who had been sent after the World War Two to help building up this system, should not be underestimated. Establishing secrete police made the institutionalization of the illegal violence possible and once the self-reinforcing process had been set in it could not be suspended. Its spontaneous dynamics was pushing it out of control. In Czechoslovakia those

prominent persons, who had initiated the system and had been instrumental in its rise, became successively its victims. A number of them were executed. The Party itself, for which the system had been intended to serve as a main instrument, was losing control of it: the first secretary of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia, who had had the supreme supervisor of the secret police, became its victim and was eventually hung.

In the incipient stage, the power of secret police was in hands of fanatics and psychopaths and its ruthlessness and cruelty toward people declared enemies of the Communist regime corresponded to it. In the terminal stage of Communism, short before its Implosion, rank and file of the secret police may have mainly consisted of routine bureaucrats. Still, remarkable was in the latter stage its elite: lucrative salaries and other privileges had attracted to the leading positions in the extensive machinery of the secrete police intelligent people, well trained and professionally skilled, adherents of ontological pragmatism, only slightly covered with a thin layer of self-deception. The contemporary Russian president Vladimir Putin, who had made a successful career in the Soviet State security, may be instituted as a symbol of such a singular elite.

Another protagonist, Alojz Lorenc, the chief of the secret police in Czechoslovakia shortly before the fall of Communism and during the dramatic weeks of its dissolution, provided an impressive testimony (Lorenc 1992). Trained in mathematics and computer science, he avowed in the book that he had been attracted to work in the State security by the prospect to fully apply his professional skill. As he put it, he had intended to gauge the scope of his personal capacities. *"I conceived of my work at the special department as normal, even if specific, profession and the question of ethics got a form of fulfilling or not fulfilling of what had been expected from me."* When he was prosecuted after the fall of Communism, he was arguing that he had committed no crime because his activities had been *"in keeping with the interpretation of law of that time and with its many years standing application. With no objection on the part of the President, of the Chairman of Parliament, of anybody"*.

According to Lorenc's report, the Politburo of the Party deliberated all principal plans and activities of the State security organization; but this had been in full accord with the Constitution, which had enacted the leading role of the Communist Party in society. In his book, he admitted that control of power, when it is highly centralized, is a problem, since *"the structure of centralized power exhibits a pathological propensity for self-deception"*. But he refused the commonly held view that the "*deformation of lawfulness with tragic consequences*" had been due to evasion of the State security from the control of the Party. Rather, he seems to suggest, prevention of such "deformations" presupposes a perfect

organization – which he had attempted to install and which he described in the book – and professional quality of its staff. Decisions should be taken with cool head, avoiding emotions and ideological regards. This was the reason why, in the critical days when the Communist power had been undergoing disintegration, he refused a violent intervention of the State security into the events. At the same time, however, he ordered a mass annihilation of records. Up to now he keeps his conviction that, by ordering that, he *"had not acted with intention to harm the interests of the State and of its citizens"*. He had acted *"in the interest of people in the security sector and also outside it. In the interest of peaceful evolution of the situation"*. Protection of agents of the secret police forms, according to him, part of "professional ethics".

This system, according to his principal protagonist a *"rational system"*, reached, in the final stage of Communism, a monstrous proportion. According to Lorenc´s report, *"the number of people actively collaborating with the State security was higher than 100 000 and many collaborated without being registered in official records"*. Only relatively few of them had been regularly paid. *"Apparently more than money, the agents expected other benefits: travels abroad, schools for children, promotion in career."* He did not report the proportion of those who had been placed under menace and extortion. Yet, he did not lack an insight that gives support to the main implications of the present analysis: *"Nothing should be more apprehended than frightened people. Nothing is more dangerous than fear, when it reaches political dimension."* Even many opponent and dissident organizations had been infiltrated by secret agents.

The testimony of the last chief of the secret police in Czechoslovakia is most revealing. To acquire a terrible, inhuman dimension it is not necessary for a centralized political system to have fanatics of idea as protagonists, as had been the case in the first, orthototalitarian stage of Communism. Specific roles in which people have been casted are sufficient to make the views of the actors blurred and one-sided and to make of pragmatic professionals, who maintain the illusion of rational thought and action, disseminators and executioners of irrationality. Even though Lorenc was writing his book after the demise of Communism, he boasted of how the organs of State security had controlled the whole economy, had been illegally tapping telephones of diplomats, had been placing agents of the security at the diplomatic posts of their own country, had been suspecting scientists from betraying State secrets, had taken international collaboration for a means of infiltrating culture by enemies, and had kept a paranoid conviction that their adversaries in democratic countries dispose of the equally powerful machinery of spying and control. According to Lorenc, the disintegration of the Communism was caused by the *"loss of gravitation and immunity of the*

system" and by shortcomings of the *"communication in the system", "poor and inaccurate informations, insufficient for recording relevant signals"*.

To get an idea of the extent of power of the secret police and of the depth of its intervention into life of people under Communism, data presented in an authoritative book of John Koehler on the secrete police in the former East Germany should be consulted (Kohler 1999): The Soviet secret police (KGB) had 480 000 full-time agents to oversee over 280 million people, or one for every 5 830 citizens; the Nazi secret police (Gestapo) had one for every 2 000; and the East German homologue (the Stasi) had one for every 166. If one adds the number of regular informers, it came to one for every 66. A world record, unique in human history!

A separate chapter on secret police concerns the espionage of Communist secret agents, both of Soviet and Western origins, in foreign countries. Its extent and methods have been revealed by former Soviet agents and compiled in books co-authored with C. Andrew (Andrew and Gordievsky 1990; Andrew and Mitrokhin 1999). Even though probably intended to be primarily useful to historians, the books provide an instructive reading on a phenomenon, which may be called "rationality in service of irrationality". The most successful spies, ingenious in their rational calculations, were originally apparently motivated mainly by their religious devotion to Communist ideals; the spell of money or power changed many of them; but it was the loss of zeal and of ideals that eventually destroyed their personalities. Yet, the machinery was smoothly running, independently of human actors, until the bitter end of the regimes.

(5) "*Moral is everything that serves the cause of Communism*" – such was the concise definition of the Communist morals by Lenin. The goal is well defined and the matter is to minimize the trajectory to achieve the goal – such has been a description of rationality (Kováč 2000). Contrary to traditional morals, there is no ambiguity, no inconsistency in Communist morals. And yet, it may have just been the very moral state of society in which the irrationality of Communism reached its peak. Where Communism had succeeded in damaging stereotypes of the traditional morals, no new morals but moral chaos took sway. It is this experience of Communism that can be taken as the best proof of the claim that the institution of traditional morals, with principles which may in some respects escape understanding and explication, is not irrational but may represent evolutionary rationality (Hayek 1973; Lorenz 1987). It seems embodying knowledge that has been acquired by centuries of evolutionary trials and failures. Knowledge far from complete, not the best one, perhaps just islets in the

ocean of beliefs and prejudices, yet evolutionary sifted in the most convincing manner: it has enabled persistence and stability of human groups of over-biological size.

(6) What applies to the traditional morals, applies also to law: traditional law embodies evolutionary rationality with complexity that may exceed the possibility of simple exegesis by individual reason, taking into account our poor knowledge of human nature and of society. Marxism conceived of law as an instrument of coercion designed to protect capitalist ownership of the means of production and to enforce obedience of the oppressed. This is the reason why, according to Marx, law will no longer be needed in the Communist society, it will "wither away" and administration would replace "law" (Barry 1989, p. 53). In fact, however, in the real Communism law became the instrument by which the Communist party enforced obedience and conformity. In addition, law served the rulers as a means for annihilation of competitors.

The most flagrant demonstration have been the monstrous lawsuits in the Soviet Union in 1936-1938 and in Czechoslovakia in 1952. Leading functionaries of the Party, devoted Communists, were put to trial, after being first coerced to learn by heart confessions in which they pleaded guilty of having served as agents of imperialism. Alexander Solzhenicyn (1973) has given an impressive description of the Soviet trials. In Czechoslovakia, in a single trial – one of several ones – with the "leaders of the treasonous conspiratory center headed by Rudolf Slánský" eleven Communists of the highest rank, including the first Secretary of the Communist Party, who himself had been responsible for introducing and supervising the previous similar trials with his friends and Party comrades, were sentenced to death and hung. Psychological aspects of the trial have been considered in the first part of this study. It was essentially chance that determined who of the functionaries would be sued: the victims may have just as well become those who voted on death penalty for the others, and vice versa – the roulette of Communist irrationality was blind and merciless. These well-known lawsuits at the top had pendants in thousands of trials at lower levels, no less iniquitous and often no less irrational. Even the plain criminal law was not observed: many cases have been known when the functionaries of the Party were not brought to justice even after having killed a person in a car accident. There was no secret that in many cases sentences and the amounts of punishment were deliberated and decided in the organs of the Party.

Absurdity of these trials as the consequence of destruction of traditional institutions, irrationality of the new institutions and lamentable banality of the human executioners, became evident when the details on the events became public (Löbl 1968; London 1986; Hejl 1990; Šnajder 1990). In Czechoslovakia, two officers of the State security, uneducated and

dull, had been essentially responsible for extorting fabricated confessions. One of them, Doubek, was, at least at the beginning of his career, a devoted Communist; the other one, Kohoutek, was apparently a sheer self-interested creature, compromised by former collaboration with the Nazi occupants. Members of the Politburo of the Party had insisted that the officers had to convict the imprisoned and demanded continual reports on the progress in the "work". Of how to proceed in the "work", the investigators got instructions from a couple of Soviet advisors. Although officially the two advisors had no power, their real power was such that the very chairman of the Communist Party, Klement Gottwald (as well as the General secretary Rudolf Slánský, until he himself became the "agent of imperialism") was mortally scared of them. The advisors had been emissaries of Stalin, who apparently suffered at that time of clinical paranoia and had been obsessed by certitude that there existed conspirators at leading positions in each Communist party of the satellite States. The mission of the "advisors", personally responsible to Stalin, was to "detect" the conspirators and to "convict" them. Paranoia of the leader at the top of the centralized power pyramid, two obedient puppies high at the hierarchy ladder, two other puppies at one of the lowest bar of the ladder, all-penetrating fear – and the results were persecutions of innocent individuals and suffering of hundreds of direct and millions of indirect victims.

(7) Since Marxism was conceived of as science it should have become the single universal worldview. Simple and all-encompassing comprehension of the world was embraced by Stalin's four principles of dialectics and three principles of historical materialism (Stalin, 1). In Marxism as a worldview, human mythophilia got a **secularized religion**. The complexity of the world resisted such a primitive conception and forced – no less than simple explanations provided by theistic religions – those that adopted the Marxist worldview to inconsistent behavior. Difficult was the situation of people who were enforced to declare their adherence to Marxism but had been imprinted by their family to adhere to traditional religious faith. If, for instance, one should trust the claim of the first and the second post-Communist presidents of the Slovak Republic, they would have been Catholic believers during the whole period of Communism and only feigned their devotion to Marxism. They both were members of the Party, the second one even the member of the Central Committee. The Statute of the Party (1971) stipulated that the member of the Party is liable *"to fight resolutely against religious prejudices, petit-bourgeois habits and other manifestations that are alien to Marxism-Leninism"*. The consequences of such splitting of personality was already apparent under Communism and have become manifest in the post-Communist era: loss of personal stability, the absence of persistent values, opportune behavior, pragmatism

not as a strategy in pursuing goals and asserting one's values but as an ontology – **ontological pragmatism**. The mass occurrence of such personality splitting and inconsistency may have been one of the reasons of general instability of society under Communism. Another reason was the tremendous impoverishment of polymorphism of views, exclusion of plurality, absence of interactions and recombinations of different ideas. It has its obvious analogy in the loss of stability of a biological ecosystem upon reduction of species diversity and diminution of polymorphism.

(8) Attempts at rational comprehension of events and at a rational management had an unintended consequence: many important problems of the modern society were being ignored as if non-existent. In not being resolved and not even being apprehended, they were, in fact, "frozen". The fall of Communism resulted in their "de-icing" and full exposure. Such "frozen" were antagonisms between ethnic groups and between nations for the sake of "Socialist internationalism" and their "thawing" brought about outbreak of nationalism and ethnic conflicts in all post-Communist countries. Similarly, controversies between generations were being concealed and this is one, even though not the only one, of the reasons of their present exacerbation. The official doctrine of scientific management of economy did not allow for recognizing environmental pollution as a social problem, even though the extensive squandering economy was dealing out to the environment blow for blow. Perhaps paradoxically, externalities were ignored much more than they are in societies of market economy. Also, for the naive historical optimism the risks implicit in the uncontrolled expansion of science and technology did not exist.

All the eight listed features of the "sham rationalism" resulted in simplification and primitivization of all institutions of the Communist society. If it is difficult to assess who was in fact the owner of the means of production and where was the "seat" of political power, it is due to the fact that the nature of the Communist State itself was getting, in the course of it regressive evolution, fuzzy. Abolition of the separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers may have been conceived of as a beginning of the end of politics in Communism. Just as the individual human being was descending down to the animal level of needs and values, social regression was gradually returning the part of humankind living under Communism down to the level of social life in the savanna. Groups of biological dimension became the main identification (reference) groups for an individual. With disappearing over-biological, political groups, politics disappeared as well. At first sight, such a statement may appear to contradict the general feeling of those living under Communism: that the life was "overpoliticized", that politics was invading family life, penetrating even to bedrooms. But

the ubiquitous nuisance was not politics. Human political action was essentially replaced by primordial biological behavior.

This **fundamental transformation** may have escaped the analysts of Communism. The "savannization" of human individuals and of society may have remained unnoticed because an analogous regression did not afflict science and technology. Machinery in the factories was decaying and getting obsolete and the quality of products declined, but industrial production remained essentially at the level of the 20th century. Modern technology furnished efficient methods of mass communication, mass indoctrination and mass oppression. The existence of such a formidable social colossus as was the Communist Party would not have been possible in the past when the means of communication had been sluggish and efficient only at a local level. For example, the Czechoslovak Communist Party had usually about 1.5 million members (the number was oscillating due to periodic purges in the Party), so that in the country of 15 million inhabitants every tenth person was a member of the Party. (Incidentally, the situation in the Soviet Union was not much different. The Communist Party at its height had some 19 million members for 267 million inhabitants.) Notwithstanding the size of the Party and the modern powerful methods used in communicating resolutions and messages along the Party hierarchical system, routine functioning of the Party consisted in activities of people in small non-anonymous groups of biological dimensions. According to sociometric studies humans are only able to maintain very intense relationships with 10-12 other individuals at any one time (Buys and Larson, 1979); the basic Party group was usually of this size. Concerning the other Party groups, figures from the former German Democratic Republic may be typical: Politburo of the Party had 21 members and the Central Committee of the Party 165 members (Koehler 1999). These figures may be compared with the estimates of Dunbar (1993) on the size of two classes of genuinely biological human groups. Groups of the first class, referred to as bands in some of the hunter-gatherer literature, consist of 30-50 members. The mean size of a typical human group of the second class, homologous to habitual groups of social animals, was derived by Dunbar by extrapolation of figures valid in 36 primate genera: such a group would have 148 members. Struggle for dominance, signals of submission, feigning of solidarity with the alpha-individuals by subdominant individuals, cheating and subterfuge, formation of coalitions in groups of the Communist Party may have not much differed from the similar strategies used by our predecessors in groups of hunters and gatherers.

Yet, with one substantial difference: success was not conditioned by physical strength and neither by intelligence, provided that one does not understand under intelligence the

capabilities that were the most important for victory: flexibility, the absence of culturally imposed constraints on action. Centuries of cultural evolution have worked out such constraints which were pulling out humans from their primordial biological state to the state of civilized humankind and which became inevitable for life in post-savanna agricultural and industrial societies. The faster and easier a person got rid of these cultural constraints, the larger became his/her chance to ascend in the hierarchy of the Communist groups. For those who happened not to be members of such groups, other kinds of groups, less malicious or plainly benign, but mostly again of the biological size, remain refuges. But even such groups, for instance professional organizations, groups of co-workers at workplace, or even clubs of anglers or small allotment holders, could scarcely escape this Communism-specific kind of selection for group dominance. The meme of unscrupulousness and of cultural disinhibition was highly infectious and was spreading rapidly. Even though it was one of the causes of the Implosion of Communism, nowadays it is being only slowly diluted out from the post-Communist society. It impedes the re-establishment of the full-fledged politics by reimposing cultural constraints to that human behavior which had been appropriate for life in the savanna.

The "savannization" of group life under Communism is, however, only one side of biological insight. The other side is no less important. The population under Communism was divided into two distinct categories: those who were members of the Communist party and those who were not. Even though the power of the Party was almost continually diminishing in the course of devolution of Communism, there were always the Party committees that had the last word in any public decision. As already mentioned, in academic life, for instance, even the presentation of a thesis must have been approved by the Party. In the situations of legal vacuum and moral corruption any Party decision may have had hard and lasting consequences for an affected individual. If the individual was personally known to the committee members, they may have had any reason to be severe, but the inhibitions against excessive aggression, which are part of behavioral repertory of all social mammals, may have been in operation. Different was the situation in case of an unknown individual. Such a situation may have been rare in primitive societies – perhaps just in the case when members of a group were to take decision on the fate of a captured member of a foreign group. Yet, to take decisions in matter of an unknown, anonymous person was quite common business of Party committees. It was in this domain that the Communist irrationality reached its peak. Unbridled malice, complex of inferiority, envy, personal troubles, endogenous depression, a momentary whim – anything could have played role in negative attitudes toward an unknown, and in a Committee decision for which there was no revocation and no appeal, and also no

indemnity. In addition, because of the biological character of the decision group, a dominant male or female may have aroused fear in other members of the group and impose his/her will unrestrictedly. Secret voting, a parody of the democratic procedure, may have added still another dimension to the farce. Again, this practice of Party committees spread easily to other social groups. The life path of many million people was determined by irrational outcomes of such fickle decisions.

This experience may be generalized. Modern means of communication are transforming the world into a single "global village" on the one hand, but they are reducing direct human contacts and making relations ever more anonymous on the other hand. The decision in the matter of individuals, whom we do not know personally, under simultaneous exclusion of all biological signals and safeguards, may be dubbed "**the syndrome of the Party committee**".

4. The role of lice in history

Decisions taken by the Party committees, however irrational, may still be considered as an expression of intentional power. However, non-intentional power of institutions in contemporary society is much larger than is the intentional power of people in political organizations. Under Communism, the Party succeeded in considerably reducing and controlling the non-intentional power of the means of mass communication. Non-Party organizations, such as trade-union or youth and women organizations, were also subjected to a strict Party control, being considered as "transmission levers" of Party will. On the other hand, disabling the institutions of morals and law resulted in a vast increase of weight and power of another segment of society – **bureaucracy**.

Bureaucracy has always been a serious problem of any political system, including democracy. It continues to defy a comprehensive understanding. There is large literature dealing with the subject, including a book on the biology of bureaucracy (White and Losco 1986). The latter may have received a valuable material from the Communist experience.

Bureaucracy under the Communist rule did not fit the conceptual system of the Communist theory. As in the case of other phenomena that did not comply with its simplex rational scheme of society, Communism was also afflicted by selective blindness with respect to bureaucracy. It could essentially see bureaucracy only as an economic problem. As the number of officials was permanently growing, the Central Committee of the Party in all

Communist countries was periodically taking decisions on drastically reducing it. The measures had helped for a while, but the number soon reached the previous value and continued to grow

The extent of the non-intentional power of bureaucracy under Communism is hard to assess because it was spread over large number of individuals. It may be guessed that the total power of bureaucracy was no smaller than was the power of the Communist Party. For Max Weber (1960), bureaucracy was a prototype of rationality. If he could derive such a view from his experience with German bureaucracy of the early 20th century, the opposite claim seems to be justified as far as bureaucracy under Communism is concerned. The power of bureaucracy was certainly even more irrational than that of the Party. Kornai (1990) has indicated how the State bureaucracy was penetrating every single spot of economy. In the situation in which the functions of the institutions of morals and law were essentially paralyzed even a lowest-ranking official could occasionally determine the fate of an individual no less profoundly and persistently than could a Party committee. The impossibility or futility of appeal against bureaucratic decisions may have lamed motivations and brought about resignation more than caprices of the Party itself. The three universal shortcomings of bureaucracy, bureaucratic rigidity, incompetence and nepotism (Masters 1986) reached unheard-of proportions. Sale of services and corruption became commonplace.

The immense ocean of bureaucratic insensitivity, anonymity and indifference was being poised by complementary practices. Bartering and favoritism in providing goods and services only to persons ready to reciprocate turned into a new life style. Proponents of human rational choice might find here corroboration of their theory of humans: rationality was invading the vast field of irrationality. Obviously, nepotism can be considered as an expression of inclusive fitness and favoritism as an expression of reciprocal altruism. "*Socialist acquaintances*" was a name for networks of individuals and families linked together with such ties of mutual aid and reciprocity. The fact that they encompassed non-anonymous individuals and had dimensions of primordial biological groups is another demonstration of Communist regression toward the pre-civilized forms of social life. Incidentally, post-Communist societies have inherited these patterns of behavior. The patterns continue to be maintained and even reproduce themselves, particularly in those countries and those segments of population that have not been much "refined" by education and do not experience uneasiness in adopting behavior that had been appropriate to human animals in the savanna. Along with other constituents of the Communist legacy, this persisting "savannization" of behavior adds to other constituents of the Communist legacy that determines idiosyncrasies of post-Communist "wild capitalism".

Under Communism, in the absence of constraints imposed by appropriate, evolutionary established institutions, trivial, petty, formless, imperceptible individuals, themselves not aware of their role, were often determining the course of events. In critical bifurcation points of social dynamics they may have decided the trajectory after bifurcation. They incapacitated or suppressed talents of gifted people and compelled individuals with high creative potential to resignation. Their names have not entered history and yet, their actions were shaping it. This is why it is so difficult, and also painful, facing millions of victims of Communism, to pinpoint those who would be designated as responsible. In their imperceptibility, they may be compared to lice, which played the crucial role in spreading plague that decimated Europe in the Middle Ages.

As mentioned above, in the preparation of the monstrous Stalinist lawsuits, in which the first secretary of the Communist Party and other leaders were tried, a handful of petty people had been involved. To them, a ten of lawyers who took part in the court should be added and, obviously, the hangman who executed the victims. People who mean nothing and whose name historians will not record. But also many pivotal feats of prominent politicians will remain unknown, despite the fact that they were shaping history. The Soviet military intervention into Czechoslovakia in 1968 affected life of millions of people. And yet, according to the report of Arnošt Kolman (1982, p. 331), the decision to send the army had been taken in the Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party by the majority of one vote. What if the individual whose consent decided the vote was favoring the intervention only because the previous sleepless night had made him ill-humored for the while?

History as a whole may be a drama of similar contingencies. But one of the unintended functions of the evolutionary formed institutions may be **curbing the role of chance** and minimization of consequences of such contingent decisions. Evolutionary institutions may have intrinsic buffering capacity that prevents capricious or ill-willed acts of human individuals to have large and uncontrolled social effects. Institutions of Communism, despite – or, possibly, because – of their rigidity, lacked such a buffering capacity and allowed, and they themselves were exposed to, all kinds of vagaries, including those of the "lice of history".

5. Faulty ratcheting

Dynamics of the living systems at all levels, from molecular to social, consists in unidirectional ratcheting (Kováč 2000). A simple mechanical ratchet is represented by a wheel with asymmetrically skewed teeth and a spring-loaded pawl, which allows it to spin in one direction only and prevents backward motion. Molecular, evolutionary, developmental, cognitive, social ratchets are all based on this simple principle.

In evolution, both biological and cultural, steady increase in complexity can be accounted for by the mechanism of ratcheting. Trials and errors and selection are creating ever more complex constructions and the reversion to the previous simpler states is being prevented by all kinds of evolutionary ratchets. It has been in this way that complex institutions of law, morals, culture, political organization have evolved, being selected for stability and prevented to descent backwards by appropriate ratcheting arrangements. Evolutionary wisdom is being accumulated in the ratchets. The major accomplishment of Communism was breaking out the teeth of these ratchets (perhaps with a single exception of the one represented by technology), returning humanity to the previous, more primitive stages of evolution. The consequences of such a regress for the hierarchy of human needs and values have already been described in the first part of this study.

If building up complexity, turning forward of the evolutionary ratchet is a slow, step-wise process, the destruction of complexity can be accomplished easily and rapidly by breaking out the teeth of the ratchet. As Gould (1998) put it, in our universe of natural law, complex and adaptive systems can only be built sequentially. But the architecture of structural complexity permits moments to undo what only centuries can build. Gould has called this state of affairs The Great Asymmetry.

There is another, an opposite, kind of ratchet considered in evolutionary theory. It has been named Muller´s ratchet. In a biological system in which recombination is absent, Muller´s ratchet is responsible for degeneration of population: the probability of a deleterious mutation is much higher than that of a mutation that would represent an improvement of a property (Maynard Smith 1989). Accumulation of deleterious mutations results in deterioration of the population. Interactions between individuals, mutual exchange of genes by sexual crossing, appear to be a biological safeguard against degeneration. This is why in the world of higher, sexual organisms Muller´s ratchet is a virtual one – it may never operate, or perhaps, just exceptionally. An intrinsic mechanism that was one of the causes of degeneration and eventually collapse of Communism may be called the social Muller´s ratchet. Communism, with its monopoly of economy, politics, philosophy, with the reduction

of polymorphism and exclusion of recombinations, had built in a huge Muller´s ratchet that, by clicking round notch after notch, was driving it ever closer to the inevitable precipice.

The principle of ratcheting may underlie human cognitive ontogenesis (Kováč 2000). With imprinting at the bottom, through the very first filling in of the genetically determined abstract, but nevertheless specific, mind's "letterboxes" with concrete concepts, ideas and habits (incipation), through contingencies of reinforcement up to the conscious reflection. As has been suggested (Kováč 2000), the earlier in individual life has a cognitive module been assembled, the more resistant is it to any subsequent modification. Difference in degrees of resistance of particular individuals to extorting fabricated confessions and to self-degradation in the course of preparation of Stalinist trials may have been due to different proportions of those modules that had been acquired by imprinting and the others acquired by standard Pavlovian and Skinnerian conditioning.

Optimistic expectations that recovery from Communism would be a rather quick process have not been met (Kováč 2002b). To build up the lost complexity, developmental and evolutionary ratchets need be reassembled and then operate in their usual step-wise fashion. As wisely foreseen by Dahrendorf (1990), post-Communist countries might accomplish Constitution reforms in six months, economic reforms in six years, but it might require at least sixty years to build up social basis for normal and stable institutions. Particular care must be taken to make the skewed teeth of the ratchets sufficiently resistant to breaking down and to bar new regression. A comprehensive knowledge of processes that brought about breaking down of the ratchets in the past may be the foremost prerequisite for how to avoid repetition of the process of abolishment of evolutionary built-in complexity.

6. Chieftains and shamans

Groups of non-human social animals, including the human closest relatives, chimpanzees, have a simple linear organization of power: from a dominating alpha-male (or, rarely, alpha-female) stepwise down to bottom individuals subordinated to the all up in the hierarchy. Such may have been also the organization of incipient groups of human ancestors in the savanna. On the other hand, the groups of recent savage peoples, who have been studied by ethnographers, have a more complex organization. They exhibit a structure composed of two powers: a political power, with the dominant position occupied by the chieftain, and a spiritual power, represented by the shaman. The frequent occurrence of such duality of power

indicates that it may have been enforced by natural selection for stability in both natural and social environments. Apparently, the groups with duality of power had higher fitness and preferentially survived: By applying legitimate force, the chieftains asserted peace within the group and effective organization in procuring food and in defense. At the same time, the shamans generated and maintained a strong motivation of all members to achieve the goals of the groups through indoctrination by group symbols and by a common myth (Lévi-Strauss 1958, p. 191).

Despite a substantially more complex structure of modern societies, this basic differentiation of the two powers and of the two social functions continues to persist: in the large, over-biological groups of contemporary humans the role of the chieftain is taken by the politician and that of the shaman by the intellectual. Science and technology have provided new means for execution of power. Especially in the case of intellectuals, the new means make generic continuity of intellectuals with shamans less obvious: they are no longer magicians, they do not practice magic. Yet, the true intellectual continues to be recognized by his/her adherence to magic – to the magic of words.

The chieftain (politician) and the shaman (intellectual) are evidently two different, if not contradictory, psychological types (Lévi-Strauss 1958, p. 205). Taken as two Weberian ideal types, they both are authoritative personalities. Both endowed with strong emotions: they are emotions that drive their motivation motor to outstanding performance. But while the chieftains are mostly capable to master and bridle their emotions, the shamans are overflowed with emotions, they give them free path, in extreme cases the emotions bring the shamans into trance and become particularly contagious. This is the reason why in the first part of this study, an equivalent name "affectuals" has been used to designate intellectuals. The gain of power is a dominant motivation of chieftains. The spiritual power of shamans may be more a secondary gain, a by-product of their need for displaying themselves and of their strive for personal emotional and cognitive equilibrium. In their methods, politicians are pragmatists; genuine intellectuals are "in the service of the Truth" (of course, their own truth, the only valid) inconsiderately, at any price.

Depicting the ideal type of a politician in a relatively stable society as a person with no principles, opportunely accepting any values which would be instrumental in his/her access to power, would be a false description: it seems to be ruled out psychologically, even biologically, neurophysiologically, for a strong personality to be without values, ready to change them at any moment. In addition, the strength of personality may be more often and more unambiguously communicated by non-verbal means, not verbally. A formless

opportunist, however eloquent, would not be much successful in persuasion. In the very moment of communicating with the public, a politician must be self persuaded of his/her views, whatever tactics he/she may be using in presenting them. A politician should be a **master of self-deception** – even more than would be an intellectual.

The role of an intellectual as a shaman is blurred in the modern society, because the word "intellectual" is itself used in different meanings. In the broadest meaning any educated person is being considered as an intellectual. However, educated people have many distinct functions in society. In this study, the intellectual is conceived of as an educated person who communicates his/her analyses, reflections, convictions by intermediary of means of mass communication. Not necessarily in order to disseminate knowledge, but in the service of interests of a group. This is how the concept of an intellectual has been understood in France since Dreyfus' scandal in the 1890s. French enables a useful distinction: an intellectual "*prend parti*" (is engaged, takes part with) and not only "*prend part*" (participates, takes part in) a social discourse.

The functions of a politician and of an intellectual appear to be mutually incompatible in a single personality. A politician out of service might turn an intellectual. It may not be ruled out that an intellectual may become an able politician but then he/she should – not only externally, by appearance, by intrinsically, by himself /herself – cease to be intellectual.

When the standard institutions of society that are ensuring the duality of power collapse, a confusion of the roles of chieftain and shaman set in. This happened in the Great French Revolution as well as in the Russian October Revolution. In the transitory period of power void, affectuals seize political power and soon either undergo personality degradation or are being displaced by people with ambitions of politicians. In Communism, a return to the "classical" ideal types of chieftains and shamans never took place. The Leninist Party instituted negative selection that was continually increasing deviation from these "classical" types. Eventually, the negative selection culminated in two new ideal types of the politician and the intellectual, specific for paratotalitarian Communism:

The Communist politician.

Since he/she had not acceded to power by soliciting for support of masses and by competing with political adversaries in obeying the rules established in biological groups, he/she unscrupulously struggled for a single goal – to keep the power at any price. Negative selection brought almost automatically to leading political positions people with no stable values. There was no longer need to pretend, not even under the veil of self-deception, that they adhere to any values. However, if the fanatic politicians in the orthototalitarian phase of

Communism had often been people with poor intelligence, retaining power in the paratotalitarian phase was not a simple matter – it required intelligence, in particular one type: social intelligence. Not inevitably education, but certainly social skill.

It is to be regretted that after the fall of Communism its prominent politicians have not been put to psychological tests as had been the case of bosses of the Nazi regime. Those of the latter who had been on trial at Nürnberg had mostly turned out to be men of high intelligence (Gilbert 1947). Among politicians of mature and senile Communism, people with low intelligence, even feeble-minded, could surely be found. However, those of them who had been intelligent and socially clever have, in fact, passed successfully an indirect psychological test: in post-Communism, they have quickly turned into successful prominent democratic politicians. Their most facile change of attitudes and values epitomizes their main characteristic: they have been and continue to be ontological pragmatists – pragmatism for them has not been a method of politics, but a worldview. The only fixed trait of their flexible personality.

The Communist intellectual.

Gradually, two ideal types crystallized. They were the most conspicuous in the countries of paratotalitarian "tough" Communism, such as Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. In countries with a "mellow" form, intermediary types superimposed them. The intellectual who was part of official structures represented one type. Relieved of his/her utopic visions, tired of struggle for carrying through self-evident improvements, pacified by privileges which he/she had received for his/her conformity and service to political power, he/she ceased to be affectual and mythophil. He/she had then no choice – cynicism became his/her world view: Humans are genuinely selfish beings, society has always been based on dissimulation; totalitarian and democratic countries only differ in the forms of omnipresent conceit and lie; the totalitarian system is stable, it corresponds to human nature and will last for centuries. He/she was voicing such judgments in the intimate and confidential milieu of family and friends, while in public he/she was pretending his devotion to the Party. Into the mass communication media, he/she had been no longer smuggling allusions and allegories against the establishment; what he/she was smuggling now was this cynicism hidden behind the empty words of the official propaganda. Thanks to such an activity, the **meme of cynicism** was rapidly spreading over the entire population.

The dissident, an intellectual excluded from official structures, represented the second type. Excluded not always deliberately, on his/her own decision. For instance, the purges in Czechoslovakia in 1970 enforced the position of dissidents to many intellectuals who had

simply miscalculated the chances of Dubček's era. Enforcing the state of dissidents opened the eyes of a number of proscribed Communists. In the dissident circles, remarkable works on Communism and on the totalitarian power arose. Deeper to the substance than attempts at conceptual analysis may have been reaching works of art: they were expressing something that may have been hard to be put into words – irrationalism of the system. Analytical studies mainly resulted in the creed that Communism and capitalism would gradually converge – a typical representative of such a view was the physicist Andrei Sakharov – or in preaching the necessity of "life in the Truth" and of individual "existential revolution" – the eloquent advocate of such an attitude was the writer Václav Havel. Only shortly before the Implosion essays of some dissidents appeared claiming that Communism had been worn out and that its decay may be imminent.

From the point of view of what is being taken as normal in democratic society, the position of dissidents was no less abnormal than the position of intellectuals in official structures. Dissidents had practically no spiritual power. They could not fulfil the main function of intellectuals: to exert influence on public opinion. They had virtually no feedback with the public. They were essentially confined to narrow dissident ghettos. It was a situation providing quite specific contingencies of reinforcement and it was specifically shaping personalities. The community of dissidents has its biological analogy with a small island population. An island population, exposed to random drift, may diverge in adaptation from a major population and evolve into quite bizarre forms. A dominating personality, with his/her idiosyncrasy, may have played an exorbitant role in the dynamics of any small community. After the fall of Communism, in the post-Communist era, many dissidents have difficulties to accommodate and have failed as intellectuals or as politicians.

Although Communism was a dictatorship of mediocrity, it did, at the same time, favor the ascent of extreme, largely psychopathic, personalities. Along with paragons of mediocrity and with ontological pragmatists, the pantheon of Communist chieftains, from the early orhototalitarian era down to its agonizing phase, abounded in psychopathic, even pathological, personalities: Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Husák, Milošević are the cases in point. For someone who may wish to explore **psychopathology of politics**, Communism would be a rich source of empirical data. Shamans, both traditional and modern, may be largely eccentric individuals; yet, the high frequency of moral insanity may have been unique among Communist intellectuals.

In fact, it would be hard to find a more appropriate term than "moral insanity" to characterize the outstanding deed accomplished by Communist intellectuals: assigning

different meanings to familiar words, misuse of customary terms, language confusion. The words such as democracy, justice, law, morals acquired opposite meanings than they have had in European culture for centuries, yet under the pretence of being used in the traditional way. This method of deceiving became commonplace. There was no escape from the State lies: in addition to monopoly of schooling and mass communication, every adult, being inevitably the employee of the State, was compelled to take part at regular political instructions at the working place. In the last decades of Communism the entire society was permeated by the web of lies packed in the disorienting language of distorted meanings: the official language was quite akin to the "*newspeak*" vividly depicted by George Orwell (1954) in his novel Nineteen Eighty-Four. Instead of serving as "self-consciousness" of society, Communist intellectuals were effectively contributing to its obnubilation.

A posteriori, Communism poses a question: How can an individual remain normal in an abnormal society? This is part of a larger question, one of the most fundamental: What is a normal human society? Should we adopt the statistical norm – normal is anything that occurs in the highest frequency and corresponds to average? Or, alternatively, should we consider as normal only those social structures that virtually conform to human nature? If, however, human nature is adequate for natural and social environment that had existed in the savanna, what is normal under conditions brought about by cultural evolution? Stability of a particular social formation? Would Communism have been a normal formation had it lasted for centuries as was anticipated not only by its founders but also by many of its opponents? Scientists, in conformity with the vague postulate of value neutrality, have generally evaded the question. It should be admitted that it is a merit of Communism and its aftermath if humankind is facing now this question in its full acuity and urgency.

7. *Pars pro toto:* The dilemma of the Communist scientist

Let us consider a young man, intelligent, sensitive and ambitious who wishes to become a successful scientist, recognized by the communities of peers both at home and abroad. He lives in a Communist country. To facilitate the analysis, let us keep the number of relevant variables at a minimum: He was born in a worker's family, so that he has the appropriate "class origin"; he has received atheistic education in his family, so that he is not handicapped by "religious superstitions"; he has no relatives abroad in a capitalist country, so that he need

not be suspected of being exposed to the influence of "class enemies". Because of these favorable circumstances he met no obstacles to attend a good secondary school and a university. Now, however, other variables enter the stage: He is aware of the discrepancies between the theory and the praxis of Communism and of the corruption of the political system; and he is reluctant to adhere to the State religion, dialectical and historical materialism, for a simple reason that the doctrine appears to him naive and primitive. At the same time he is aware that the system is stable and will not change in his lifetime. What behavior would be optimal under these conditions? Theoretically, if he has no social obligations he could quit the country. However, under Communism, emigration was not officially permitted and clandestine attempts were risky, if not impossible: they were qualified and punished as high treason.

Considering again ideal types, he may face **five possible options**:

First, to declare openly, to the representants of Party committees and in public, his views. This would automatically cut his career: if not plainly dismissed from an institution corresponding to his qualification, he would be assigned to an inferior position with no access to postgraduate education and to professional grades, no independence and with subordination to superiors. These may well be his classmates, less gifted and less educated, who, however, had no problems to accommodate. In the best case, he would make a bargain with them: he would be allowed to do an independent research, but with credits given for it to the superiors who would thus be promoted in their careers and gain recognition and respect from colleagues all over the world.

Second, to guard one's views but to conceal them, to pretend loyalty. To compromise in such a way that his gain would be maximal and his actions detrimental to nobody. On the contrary: being successful and promoted to superior positions he would be capable to promote others, to support gifted collaborators, to protect those who may not match him in the skill of dissimulation and faked conformity while preserving one's (moral?) integrity.

Third, to accommodate more genuinely. To rationalize one's pliability by noble arguments: doing the best science is the highest obligation to humankind; one has to sacrifice one's personal values for larger and higher values of global importance; to stifle deployment of one's talent by fighting with the unchangeable and inevitable would be a crime against humanity.

Forth, in seeing the inevitability, to accept it by adopting a cynical attitude toward life. As already mentioned, cynicism was spreading out in the paratotalitarian stage of Communism. No rules, no commandments, sheer selfishness, taking maximum of personal

advantages at any price. As the old wisdom has it, if you are to be raped and you see that there is no escape, lie down and enjoy yourself.

Fifth, to mobilize one's capacity for self-deception and striving for dignity and to become a devoted adherent of the doctrine. It may need much effort at the beginning, but later, when the joy from privileges becomes addictive, automatic mechanisms set in: self-amplifying selective blindness and the dazzling magic (and pathology) of power. Incidentally, this behavior was being vigorously reinforced by professional colleagues from democratic countries. In retrospective, the magic of power may be the only explanation, and excuse, for the odd respect and admiration which Western scientists showed toward the official representatives of Communist science. Not marked case of contempt or boycott may have ever occurred.

The five strategies are abstractions, in line with the "ideal type" methodology. At a close inspection, it becomes apparent that none of the strategies would be internally consistent and rational. In **vain attempts at consistency and rationality**, individuals were adopting mixed, quite often zigzag, strategies. It may be asked why an additional, obvious, pure strategy has not been listed: a conscious, premeditated and organized collective resistance against the regime with the aim to demolish it. The answer is simple: it did not exist. It was not possible. Rare attempts at such resistance, even armed, occurred at the very outset of the orthototalitarian phase, but they were crushed down with unseen violence and cruelty. They did no more reappear in the paratotalitarian phase when the society was becoming more and more atomized: not that they were no means for an organized resistance but because they were no more motivations and no more collective visions. (The Charta 1977 in Czechoslovakia was not a resistance movement, aiming at violent overthrowing of the system; it was a tiny group of outcasts trying at a dialogue with the establishment in matters of observance of human rights. It was heralding the necessity of an "existential revolution" as a kind of individual resistance.)

The most revealing insight into the problem epitomized by the dilemma of the Communist scientist may be provided by analysis of mass purges that followed the Russian invasion into Czechoslovakia in 1968. In a unique spectacle, every individual, first members of the Party and then all the rest of the citizenship, was asked a single question: On the very day of the entry of the foreign army, how did he/she meet the intervention? The expected answer was that he/she had welcomed it and appreciated as a brotherly help to repel contrarevolution. Since, however, probably as much as ninety per cent of the population had been shocked by the intervention and considered it as a criminal invasion, the question had a

moral and not a political dimension. Let us place a computer at a position of a citizen, with a built-in goal of self-preservation. The memory of the computer would store main events of human history with lessons drawn from them by expert historians, the existing knowledge of human nature, the past experience with Communist caprice. In making computation of how to behave rationally it would take into consideration the stability of the Communist regime, the geopolitical placement of the small satellite country and modeling of what would be consequences of respective answers. Its eventual answer would probably be the officially expected one. The more "intelligent" would be the computer, the higher would be the probability that it would grasp the futility of any alternative.

The action of human subjects may have been different. As has been already argued in the first part of this study, behavior of self-centered, permanently calculating *Homo economicus* appears to be a poor, inadequate model of human behavior in conditions under which *Homo sapiens* has been placed by cultural evolution. As may be inferred from the havoc in Czechoslovak culture as the aftermath of the purges of 1970, the best part of the scientific (and artistic) elite, the most intelligent persons, did largely not comply. As has been already surmised in the first part of this study, among many reasons that had prevented a seemingly „rational" calculation in a unique situation of the sudden assault on human dignity, even purely aesthetic aversion may have played a role. The consequences were disastrous. Most of those who did not comply were dismissed from their qualified jobs and became second-class citizens laid open to all kinds of molestation and drudgery. Not because the Russian occupants or the Central committee of the Party had wanted it to have it this way. Because in the situation of the late paratotalitarian phase, erosion of the traditional morals, and even of rules of descent conduct, and disintegration of society had progressed to such an extent that second-rate people, with complex of inferiority, members of local Party committees, used the outcome of the purges to humiliate those who had been objects of their envy, to get rid of competitors, to be promoted to positions that they would never achieve in a normal society. Scientists who had been afflicted by the purges were not only curbed in their creative work but often could not even publish their results. If they had before enjoyed recognition and fame, their names should have been now effaced and their work forgotten.

Many professionals who passed through purges with no reprobation and undamaged could continue in their work. It had been enough to bend one's back deep a single time to be allowed then to continue living with mild and supportable compromises. How simple it appears when viewing backwards! Those who had been hit because of their straightforwardness at the interrogatory during the purge were later forced to much greater

and painful compromises in order to hardly survive in their inferior position. After twenty years of molestation and humiliation, at the end of the period that was officially called "normalization", only part of them remained intact. It was amazing to observe how, as time was passing, ever larger part of those proscribed were willing to repent, to retract their attitudes and views expressed during the purges, to conform. Some self-critiques of intellectuals, made in public or amply publicized by the regime, were doubtless manifestations of deep personal degradation and loss of human dignity. What was going on? Behavior that had been shaped by conditioning before the proscription was undergoing extinction. It was no longer positively reinforced but rather exposed to continual aversions. Just as a particular individual had not been able to suddenly change his/her behavior at the moment of the purges, he/she could not change it abruptly after the purges. What was determining the course was the character of preceding programs of reinforcement and the actually present incentive and aversive stimuli. The structure of personality could be rearranged only slowly and continuously since the material, neuronal "carriers" of the behavioral stereotypes could only be rebuilt successively, step by step: not cogitation and emotion were the barrage against the instantaneous change of attitudes, but **the very physiology**. Speed and type of the rearrangement were determined by genetic predisposition of the individual. And the extent of his/her resistance was mainly dependent on the strength of his/her adherence to values that had been imprinted upon the brain in the early childhood and in puberty.

The intricacy of the dilemma of the Communist scientist has become fully manifest in the period for which it had not been constituted – in post-Communism. In order to reestablish standard democratic relations, it became mandatory in the post-Communist era not to continue in evaluation of people by political criteria even if opposite to those valid under Communism. The only fair gauge has been the criterion of professional skill. In science, this criterion has been generally met much often and more easily by those people who, in the Communist period, could do their research with no interruption, who could perfect themselves, publish, and who had received international recognition. And, of course, there have been not those who had been afflicted by the purges and may have been capable to hold out their dissent against the regime. Some of them, seniors, may have at least been appreciated as opponents and victims of Communism. Much more unjust, if not tragic, has been the fate of those young people who had been barred from access to a corresponding professional education and could not accomplish in the critical years of their life anything noticeable. Nobody will ever be able to count up how many potential talents had been stifled before being noticed by anybody and

how many of them remained undeveloped or underdeveloped. Without receiving the least compensation and satisfaction in post-Communism. The **extreme injustice** of Communism did not consist in having given the opportunity for easy life to mediocre and inferior people but in preventing growth and deployment of people of exceptional qualities.

Incidentally, the Czechoslovak "normalization" may be taken as a paradigm of the inherent features of Communism as an institution. If reductionism in science is an apt methodological tool for the analysis of complex phenomena, we are dealing here not only with methodological but even ontological reduction. Inhumaness and irrationality of Communism achieved here almost an "ideal" form, which may not hold for Communism in Poland or Hungary. This is also determining specificity of the Czech and Slovak post-Communist transition. The Communist legacy may have been an important, probably determining, factor in the reckless destruction of the Czechoslovak federation shortly after the fall of Communism.

The dilemma of the Communist scientist typifies a dilemma of behavior of any individual living under Communism. It may belong to the category of other social dilemmas, such as the Prisoner's Dilemma. Formalizing the former may be more difficult than that of the latter. But formal models of the Prisoner's Dilemma themselves may be oversimplifications of human behavior. Only rarely the models embrace emotions as an important, if not decisive, component of behavior (Frank 1988). What no existing models have embraced are the preceding programs of reinforcement – which is more than is involved in models of the Iterated Prisoner's Dilemma – and the role of imprinting.

Behavior of humans under Communism seems to indicate that **imprinting and conditioning** are two fundamental variables that determine which choices a person is making and how he/she is resistant to their abandoning and modification. There are memes and institutions of culture that determine the concrete nature of the contingencies of reinforcement. That is one of the reasons why European Communism had different forms in the Soviet Union and in the countries of Central Europe. It has been argued that the Russian form of Communism was marked by centuries long traditions of Russian political despotism and by the character of the Russian Orthodox religion (Kováč 1991). This was partly carried over into the other Communist countries. To claim that the type of Communism that existed as a political system in Europe was determined by the Orthodox religion would certainly be a simplification. But possibly not much different from Weber's (1947) assertion that the birth and the form of European capitalism has been determined by the Protestant religion.

Incidentally, behavior of scientists under Nazism, analyzed by Deichmann (1995), was strikingly similar to that under Communism. Here, the immutability of human nature adds to the similarities of the two totalitarian systems.

8. Nazism and Communism: The asymmetry of indulgence and the question of guilt

Communism has been often, both by laypersons and scholars, compared to Nazism. Arendt designated both as totalitarism (Arendt 1951). Both were founded on ideologies that had been proclaimed as the only truth and sanctioned as equivalents of State religion. Both were impregnated by hate towards anything that opposed their own ideology and used all means to annihilate opponents and adversaries. Regarding the price that humankind had to pay in human lives, Communism was much worse than Nazism: Altogether, the number of victims of Communism may have been as high as hundred million (Courtois *et al.* 1997). Rummel (1996, 1997a, 1997b) estimated that 62 million people were killed by Soviet Communists alone, compared to 20,9 million killed by the Nazi.

It is impossible to estimate which of the two systems brought about more human suffering. There have been some attempts to quantify suffering, and even a unit of suffering, a "dukkha", has been devised (Panetics 2001), but, unfortunately, we have no "dolorimeters". Suffering of convicts in Siberian gulags may have been no less intensive and extensive than that of prisoners in Nazi concentration camps. It may be said, not without some cynicism, that in absolute terms the amount of grief brought about by Communism was greater than that caused by Nazism, as the time of duration of Nazism and the size of population that had been submitted to the Nazi rule was only about a fifth of that taken by Communism.

It is therefore something puzzling in the fact that, after the fall of Communism, the afflicted countries did not settle their accounts with Communism as radically as did Germany with Nazism. Attempts to ban Communist party in some countries of the former Soviet Union failed and in no post-Communist country has Communist party or its heirs been excluded from the political scene. In some countries (e. g. Russia, the Czech Republic), the Parties have retained their original name and continue to proclaim Marxism as their ideology: They are quite successful, enjoying support of a considerable portion of population. In other countries, the original Communist Parties have undergone transformation into parties claiming to be

social democratic ones, yet they continue to have virtually the same leaders as well as the same constituency as in the Communist era. Remarkably, these parties take almost regular turns with liberal and conservative parties in government (Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Poland). Although under Communism many Party officials were violating laws, even those laws that they had passed themselves, after the fall of Communism scarcely any of them has been proscribed, or committed for trial and convicted.

Even more striking is indulgence on the part of democratic politicians of the West. Indulgence both to Communism as a political system and to its previous political representatives. Particularly to those that turned briskly from prominent Communists into devoted democrats. As already mentioned many of them are now publicly declaring their adherence to traditional religions. Apparently, they must have been somehow religious even in those days when they had taken part, as members of the Party, in persecution of overt believers. As politicians in newly established democracies, they are being taken by their Western counterparts as equal partners – why not it they have been democratically elected by their compatriots? There is nothing to reproach them, nothing to dispute about with them, once they pretend to be genuine democrats. The fact that they had belonged to the establishment of illegitimate dictatorships over many years and had taken part, directly or indirectly, in crimes against humanity, appears to be irrelevant. As has been argued above, the possibility of a sudden dramatic change of views and values that had been implemented by imprinting and conditioning seems to be ruled out: it may be barred at the neuronal level. Those who could accomplish such a somersault could do it for a simple reason: they never had any stable views and values, they have been – and they continue to be – ontological pragmatists.

Globalization may be one of the reasons of indulgence of politicians. Primarily, globalization of capital. To ostracize countries with potential large markets may appear irrational. Ruling out economic ostracism entails ruling out other forms of ostracism, political and even ideological. Long-term consequences do usually not loom in the agenda of politicians in democracy.

More understandable is indulgence on the part of Western intellectuals. Many books have been devoted to the analysis of this phenomenon, especially in France and Italy, and the book of Furet (1995) may typify all of them. Not long ago, the leftist orientation was a fashion at the Western universities and Marxism was a much-favored doctrine, particularly among social scientists. The Great October Revolution of 1917 in Russia has often been compared with the Great French Revolution of 1789. Selective blindness that laid hold on

intellectuals in the Communist countries was just as common among Western leftist intellectuals. With a delay, a stereotype that was characteristic of a number of intellectuals in the Communist countries in the paratotalitarian stage, may now be spotted in the West: A number of intellectuals, who had been fascinated by Communism over some period of their life became its adversaries after being disillusioned. Their sharp verbal criticism of Communism notwithstanding, they were showing remarkable forbearance toward those who continued to adhere to the Communist doctrine. One can easier vindicate one's own erring, faults and guilt by pointing out to those who need more time to rectify. To insist upon moral condemnation or punishment of the latter would mean to apply the same procedure to oneself.

A discussion between two historians, the French F. Furet and the German E. Nolte (1998), may be representative of two ostensibly harmonizing, but in fact contradictory, attitudes of Western intellectuals. Nolte cautiously, but distinctly, manifests indulgence to Nazism in pretending that Nazism was essentially a subsequent, secondary, reaction to Communism, if not plainly an attempt to protect the West from Communist totalitarism. According to Furet, Communism on the contrary was tolerated in the West because it was declaring itself "antifascist" (remarkably, both expert historians carelessly and without substance mix up Nazism and fascism) and it even legitimated itself by having military defeated the "fascism". It seems that both historians are committing the fallacy of "*post hoc, ergo propter hoc*" – they confuse causal relation with time succession. Nolte rationalizes his view by designating his approach to totalitarism as being "historico-analytical", in contrast to Arendt's "structural" approach. The views of both of them may serve as a paradigmal proof of two persisting deficiencies of cultural sciences: ignorance of the Darwinian principle that underlies social dynamics, and a tendency to reduce the immense multiplicity of causes and effects to one or a few ones.

In post-Communist countries, two prominent traits are apparent in the attitudes of the general public to the Communist past. First, the figure of one hundred million of victims of Communism is often being belittled by pointing out that these people perished in "savage" countries, China, Cambodia, the Soviet Union, and that the number of victims in the "civilized" part of Europe was much lower. A more "civilized" character of Communism in Central Europe may have simply been due to the fact that legal and moral inhibitions, imposed by traditional institutions that had been built up by centuries, continued to exert their effect, however fragmented and decaying. Still, the accomplished "feats" are appalling: As an example, these are the figures for Communist Czechoslovakia (Mandl 2001): 234 persons were executed for political reasons, 4 000 lost their lives in concentration camps and prisons,

300 died in detentions on remand, 176 were shot while attempting to fly to the West, 88 perished on the borders in barbed wires charged by electricity. 280 000 persons were sentenced for political reasons, 80 000 were sent to forced labor camps without adjudication, 244 000 emigrated, 300 000 were persecuted in their work or studies, 281 were dragged away to the Soviet Union, 60 000 men were forced to military service in "labor-technical battalions", 1 500 monks and nuns were sent to internment or prison. In addition, as suggested in the first part of this study, thousands of men may have died prematurely, afflicted by permanent stress and frustration.

Second, the hardship of post-Communist transition appears to be greater and is lasting longer than may have been foreseen even by pessimists. No wonder that in a large part of population nostalgia for Communism is not only persisting but also growing. As an example, in a public survey, accomplished in September 2001 in Slovakia, almost two third (63%) of respondents maintained that the life for people like them had been better before the fall of Communism, and only 13% were of the opposite opinion (Velšic 2001). As time is passing, as prospects of improvement stay remote and the olds and even middle-aged are losing hope to enjoy benefits of a "normal" society in their lifetime, life under Communism is appearing more and more idyllic. As analyzed in the first part of this study, life of an average citizen in the second, paratotalitarian phase of Communism was dull but essentially satisfying the "ordinary" needs of food, shelter, workplace, safety and entertainment. However different may have been policies in countries of "real socialism" – with Kádár's "goulash Communism" in Hungary as one extreme and Ceaucescu's stern police Communism as another extreme – there was no unemployment, basic "social security" was available to all, there were no blatant differences between rich and poor, the equality in poverty may have had a powerful psychological soothing on the "common" people, hence, on the majority. Kornai (1997) uses the term "prematurely born social State" to characterize the social policy in Kádár's Hungary, more grandiose even than in Sweden of that time. The majority of the population may still have not the slightest idea that such a husbandry, which even the richest States of the world cannot afford, could not last for ever, that it was generating a stupendous internal debt, and that the present hardship is part of the payment that can no longer be deferred and shall burden the unfortunate heirs of Communism for decades. The fact that this awareness is lacking and is not being disseminated every day and by all means, seems to be one of the greatest errors – hopefully not a fatal one – of both politicians and intellectuals in all post-Communist countries. The concern of Friedrich Hayek (1944) should be kept in mind that the one thing which democracy could not stand without breaking down is the inevitability

of a substantial decline of the living standard in times of peace, or just only a long lasting economic stagnation. Testing this hypothesis is still going on.

Regarding the aims, Nazism and Communism definitely differed. If the aim of Nazism was annihilation of inferior ethnics and domination of a single race or a single nation, the aims of Communism were creation of a just society, without social inequality, in which everybody can develop freely and fully his/her capabilities. Yet, the means for achieving the respective goals were essentially the same. Despite the solemn refusal of the thesis that the aims justify the means that have been present from time immemorial in discussions on this theme, the asymmetry of indulgence to Communism versus Nazism proves the opposite: Utopia of an ideal, perfect world has a definite attraction even for the most sober individuals and makes many of them indulgent to deeds of proponents and adherents of the utopia. Those who had been possessed by the utopian phantasm may long after personal disillusionment continue to maintain that the Communist practice had only been a "deformation" of a noble idea. As reported by Hejl (1990, p. 84), Eduard Goldstücker, a prominent Czechoslovak Communist intellectual, having had passed through Communist jails and barely evaded execution, was still able to insist in 1968, after becoming an adherent of Dubček's "Socialism with the human face": *"I regard as a manifestation of degeneration the transition from terror against the enemies of revolution to terror that is directed towards the camp of revolution"*.

A principle of civil and legal justice, long discussed because of its ambiguity and complexity, may appear more simple and clear-cut after the bitter lesson of Communism: People should be judged by their deeds with little or no regards to their intentions. In particular, *a posteriori* explications and rationalizations of actors, often quite interesting proofs of self-deception and of attempts at self-dignity, should be dismissed as irrelevant. Owing to the dominance of self-deception in human judgement, God would be the only being with the capacity to understand "true" intentions of an actor. What matters is human justice, not "metaphysical" responsibility. „Human" in two meanings: because the justice has been socially agreed on and institutionalized; and because it does not penalize those who did nothing to others, neither negative nor positive, although they may have had the capacity to help their neighbors, and who just shrewdly followed their own interests. Human, all too human. Letting moral dilemmas unresolved. How far institutions themselves carry the responsibility is a completely different matter and will be considered below.

The forbearance with respect to Communism and its representatives may soon be accentuated by a new aspect – the appreciation of the insight that is being provided by contemporary science and that constitutes the leitmotif of the present study: Just as humans

are "slaves" of their genes, they are also "enslaved" by memes and institutions. Ross (1977) pointed out that human observers as "intuitive psychologists" commonly commit a "fundamental attribution error": they tend to overestimate personality traits and underestimate the situation in the causing of behavior. In contemporary terms, memes and institutions enforce behavior from which there is no evasion. Genetic outfit, contingencies of imprinting and of conditioning and situality fully determine how an individual thinks and behaves, so that it is, in the last resort, the social system that carries the responsibility for what has happened and what is happening. From such a statement someone may infer that once the memes and institutions that had been at the origin of attempts at accomplishing utopia are being exchanged for those that carry embodied experience of humankind and evolutionary wisdom, the slave chains miraculously break down and everything returns to normality.

What the present study intents is to show that the last inference is false. Memes and institutions are being implanted into a society because of their producing specific contingencies of imprinting and conditioning. Seventy years of Communism in the Soviet Union and forty five years in countries of Central and Eastern Europe was a time long enough for imprinting and conditioning several generations in a specific manner. (The totalitarian Nazi system lasted only twelve years!) Taking this conclusion into account, events in the post-Communist countries, twelve years after the fall of Communism, reappear in a new light.

If we accept the first part of the statement that memes and institutions enforce upon humans a behavior that would not occur under other circumstances, the question arises: Who of the people is ever guilty for what happened? Or are all people innocent and the entire guilt can be attributed to the memes and the institutions? Then, at least, those people remain guilty who had invented the memes and the institutions. They themselves may however argue, with substance, that their ideas had been different and that the memes and institutions went their own independent way. A year after the defeat of Nazism the philosopher Karl Jaspers (1946) wrote a booklet in which he dealt with the problem of guilt. The problem of guilt and responsibility is naturally frequent in most of the recent books analyzing Communism, but a work analogous to that of Jaspers in its acuity and perspicuity may have not yet appeared in the post-Communist countries.

Jaspers distinguished four notions of guilt: criminal, political, moral and metaphysical one. In his opinion, criminal and moral guilt, and the responsibility for it, is an exclusive matter of individuals. It is personal conscience before which an individual confesses his/her moral guilt. Political responsibility, however, concerns all Germans – every citizen is responsible for the State, minimally by casting vote in elections. Political guilt is, accordingly,

a collective guilt. Metaphysical guilt is a particular category: it ensues from lack of absolute solidarity of human with human. An individual will not sacrifice one's own life if it helps nobody – yet, this constitutes his/her metaphysical guilt. According to Jaspers, God is the authority before which the individuals carry responsibility for metaphysical guilt. Jaspers has highly appreciated the Nürnberg trial. For the first time in human history, not only individuals but also organizations had been tried and sentenced. The organizations proven to be guilty were adjudged as criminal and were interdicted. According to Jaspers, full comprehension of one's guilt, individual as well as collective, is prerequisite for renewal of individuals and society.

In the case of Communism, the problem of the guilt of an organization *versus* the guilt of the individual has a specific dimension. The Communist party transferred explicitly its responsibility to their individual members. For instance, the Statute of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (1971) stipulated that *"the member of the Party is liable (…) to be an active fighter for fulfilling the Party resolutions. It is not sufficient for a Party member to approve of resolutions of the Party; he/she is obliged to fight for their realization. (…) Dissimulation of a Communist before the Party and deceiving the Party (…) are incompatible with continuation of the Party membership."* It should be reminded that about ten percent of the total population of the country (and, hence, one fifth of the adults) were members of the Party. After the fall of Communism many former Party members contend that they have never read the Statute. But does the ignorance of the incurring liabilities automatically exonerate an actor?

Why, after the fall of Communism, no lawsuits have taken place analogous to that of Nürnberg? In Poland and Hungary, such a trial was impossible for an obvious reason: the transition from Communism to democracy was a result of negotiations between Communist and non-Communist politicians. Conformability, but surely also intelligence, of the Communist leaders enabled them to grasp that, witnessing the decrepitude of Communism, they had no other choice but collaborate at the restitution of democracy. A different option, at least theoretically, may have been feasible in Czechoslovakia, where the Party officials had been mostly dull, corrupted and scared by watching the spontaneous tumbling down of the Communist edifice. The Czechoslovak transition may have been imprinted by a singular event, an absurd one – fitting the country who gave birth to Franz Kafka and Jaroslav Hašek: In the incipient stage of the transition, less than two months after the beginning of the end of Communism, the prominent dissident Václav Havel was elected President of Czechoslovakia – by the deputies of the Communist parliament! Elected unanimously by those who had

shortly before consented with his imprisonment. After such an act it became no longer possible to declare the Communist party for criminal and to forbid it. Neither a trial analogous to the Nürnberg one has been implemented in Russia, even though it had been a dream of many Russian intellectuals both at home and in emigration (*e. g.* Boukovski 1965; Solzhenicyn 1999). President Boris Yeltsin, who attempted to decree ban of the Communist Party could hardly decree, at the same time, a trial with the Party leaders: he himself had been previously a prominent member of the Party "Nomeklatura".

Indulgence may not even be an appropriate description of the present state of affairs. It might be more aptly characterized as an **effort at accelerated forgetting**. A number of people who had lived, and had survived, under Communism may be haunted by apprehension, largely unconscious, that they themselves had contributed, more o-r less, to the persistence of the Communist regime and to its character. Unconscious may also be a feeling of shame, particularly in face of young generation, who may show little understanding for either infatuation or servitude and cowardice. Many people in the countries that had not afflicted by Communism may also experience certain uneasiness in having been blind or shortsighted in their attitudes toward Communism. Oblivion would be the easiest and quickest manner of how to settle one's account with the past. In addition, the dazzling dynamics of our time forces the individual to incessantly accommodate to novel conditions and thus is assailing his/her established values. The individual life may no longer consist in maintaining constant values but rather in continually altering them. Traditional forms of transcendence are disappearing and the very concept of metaphysical guilt is fading away. This, however, may remind the corrosion of values in the late stage of Communism. It should be kept in mind as a warning that the confusion and decay of individual values under Communism was one the reasons of instability of the entire social edifice.

9. A backlash: Marxism with a negative sign

In accord with the universal rule of dynamic systems, the sudden change provoked by the fall of Communism has entailed an overshoot in the opposite direction. In post-Communist countries, many professors of Marxist economy rapidly turned into extreme liberal economists. No longer plan but market should have become a panacea for all kinds of economic shortcomings. Market should have automatically rectified human behavior: the creed into a moralizing capacity of market has become almost a new credo of economic

reformers. Particularly the young generation, as a reaction to the rigid Marxism of their predecessors, easily indulges in a new delusion in a form of naive and dilettante liberalism. But such a creed is but a continuation of the Marxist assertion that the basis, which are human relations in the economic process, determines the "superstructure", represented by human thoughts, by culture, by morals. The proponents of such simplified views obviously no longer refer to Marx, but to Adam Smith and Friedrich Hayek. In fact, they distort Smith's idea of the "invisible hand" of market and Hayek's idea of "spontaneous order". They ignore the fact that Adam Smith had been professor of moral philosophy and combined a moral philosophy with his economic theory.

Extreme individualism is another part of such overreaction to the Marxist past. Young people may be accentuating it, in opposition to the collectivism of some among the old who experience nostalgia for Communism. In fact, however, the analysis of Communism has rendered support to the contention that humans are hypersocial animals. This has become also manifest in the post-Communist era: not only in the explosion of nationalism but also in various forms of brotherhoods, including non-traditional political parties and all kinds of mafia.

As a reaction on the omnipresence and hypertrophy of power a new naive idea is spreading out according to which a State should be just a self-service facility maintained by taxes paid by a sovereign individual for guaranteeing his/her safety and creating conditions for his/her full "self-realization". All "services" furnished by the State are considered to be merchandise and if the State is incapable to provide them in a satisfactory manner there is no reason to give it one's support and instead of the State another provider may be chosen. It is a considerably more radical view of the State that had been that of Hobbes or other proponents of social contract theories of the State.

A prototype of such a conceptual overshoot may be criticism by which the views of George Soros on insufficiencies of global capitalism (Soros 1997, 1998) have been received by some leading politicians (*e. g.* the father of the Czechoslovak economic reform Václav Klaus) and by some young intellectuals in post-Communist countries. There is hardly anybody whom should be given ear with more respect than George Soros. Born in Hungary, he had experienced at first hand both Nazi and Communist rule in the country. After emigration into England and the USA he seemed to have well comprehended mechanisms of functioning of capitalism and used his insight to become a remarkably successful financier: he made a fortune in financial markets. In his writings he criticizes the phenomenon that he calls "*market fundamentalism*" – the conviction that market is hitherto the best social arrangement

that automatically ensures optimal functioning of society and need no control. In his analysis Soros shows that global economy needs global society and corresponding political structures. He stresses inevitability of a common spiritual groundwork, in particular of ethical norms. In his opinion, monetary values and business transactions do not provide a satisfactory basis for social cohesion. At the beginning, there is a false belief that public interest is best served when everyone pursues his/her own interests independently of others. If the notion of common concern disappears society disintegrates. In our time, belief in principles has been replaced by a cult of success. Society is losing its anchorage.

According to the harsh judgment of Václav Klaus (1997), Soros's writing suffers from a "*hopeless conceptual chaos*". For Klaus is "*unimaginable*" that a society of free individuals, based on a free competition and free exchange of goods could carry any substantial antagonism between interests of individuals and those of the society. Similar depreciation has been voiced by a number of young reviewers of Soros's critical book.

It appears appropriate to apply at this kind of arguments a neologism, paralleling the innovative term of "market fundamentalism" of Soros: **paraliberalism**. Paraliberalism is a specific brand of post-Communist liberalism, the overshoot of almost militantly enthusiastic amateurs. It is Marxism with the negative sign. It carries an ineffaceable Marxist imprint: a belief in formative dominance of economy in human affairs.

Just as paraliberalism is an overshoot in thinking about economy, exorcising Marxism from philosophy has also been followed by overshoots. Quite remarkable are return to traditional religion and adoption of the doctrine of postmodernism. **Rebirth of religiosity** may be most conspicuous in Russia. Religion is filling void after loss of values, however illusory ones, provides certitude in conditions of excessive uncertainty, offers non-material values in the situation of material scarcity and penury. It relieves by promise of justice after death. Yet, there is something to be suspected in the regeneration of religiosity. As have been already mentioned, some present prominent politicians who had been, just twelve years ago, militant Communists, declare themselves to be devoted Catholics.

Only with suspicion may be received the declared religiosity of Russian scientists presented at the conference "Faith and knowledge: Science and technology and the frontier of two centuries" that had been organized under the auspices of both the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Orthodox Church (Levin 1998). It is hard to escape the uneasiness of "déjà vue": habitual conformity with the view of political establishment, especially on the part of leading functionaries. If in the Communist era representatives of the Academy of Sciences had been eager to publicly declare their adherence to Marxism, their successors are now

confessing their beliefs in God. The president of the Academy proclaimed at the conference: *„Science is not in conflict with religion, and religion is also based on rationality, it's a kind of rationality. A process of convergence is now taking place between science and religion; they interact in building the human-oriented values of our culture."* It has been pointed out that more than 40 per cent of scientists now openly call themselves believers. Formerly all were considered to be atheists. This seems to corroborate the conclusion that easy replacement of one worldview for another indicates that neither the former one had been genuine. What they have in common and what continues to exist as the unchanged stereotype of behavior and of thought may be ontological pragmatism.

Ontological pragmatists have received an excellent means for rationalization and sanctioning of their attitudes. It may even restore their internal feeling of dignity. The means is **philosophical postmodernism**. In human history, there may never and nowhere have been so many professional philosophers as they had thrived in the Communist countries. They all had been obliged to declare themselves Marxists. Not only there had been Chairs of Marxist-Leninist Philosophy at universities and corresponding institutes at academies of sciences, there had also been professional Marxists teaching Marxism at high schools and others charged to provide Marxist schooling for all inhabitants. Quantitative data may not yet be available, but it may not be too far-fetched to assume that the number of professional philosophers-Marxists, along with full-time propagandists in the Party, trade-unions and the army, had not been much different from the number of priests in democratic countries. After Communism passed away, the number of professional philosophers has gone down drastically and only few of them may avow to be Marxists. On the other hand, it may be guessed that most of the survivors have become adherents of some brand of postmodernism.

Whichever behavior of those listed above in the dilemma of the Communist scientists a philosopher under Communism may have opted for, the postmodern doctrine may be for him/her a release from the trap, an alleviation if not a liberation: Attempting at a universal knowledge of the world that would be shared by all humans is nonsense – a nonsense because it is impossible in principle: truth has no universal validity, it exists only within a specific "*meganarration*". Meganarrations are equivalent interpretations of the world; science, pseudoscience, religions alike; science has no privileged positions among the other meganarrations. The same applies to system of values, morals, cultures. This kind of moral relativism (and, paradoxically, of moral fundamentalism with a single meganarration) may function as a comfortable excuse for the past servitude to the Marxist memes (and their masters) and as an ideology backing all types of post-Communist behavior.

But not only the former adherents of Marxism (believers and make-believers alike) have become apostles of postmodernism in the post-Communist era. Postmodernism attracts those who have been refusing Communism as a manifestation of arrogance of European rationalism and who interpret the failure of Communism as the failure of rationalism itself. The most prominent representative of such views is a former dissident and, after the fall of Communism, a leading world politician, President of the Czechoslovak, and later Czech, Republic, Václav Havel. He may also serve as a paradigmatic lesson of the consequences ensuing from the confusion of the roles of politician (chieftain) and intellectual (shaman) in society and from the attempt to unite the two roles in a single person. The book of John Keane (1999) provides valuable informations and insight for outsiders. As Keane put it in an interview (Čulík 1999): "*Power, wherever it is exercised, whether in the bedroom or on the battlefield or in the Party caucus, is always in need of the public control. In this respect, I try in this book to reconnect the life of Václav Havel with the classical Greek problem of hubris.*"

Havel's views on Communism and on the period after Communism may be found in a nutshell in his speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos (Havel 1992): "*The fall of Communism can be regarded as a sign that modern thought – based on the premise that the world is objectively knowable, and that the knowledge so obtained can be absolutely generalized – has come to a final crisis. (…) I think the end of Communism is a serious warning to all mankind. It is a signal that the era of arrogant, absolutist reason is drawing to a close, and that it is high time to draw conclusions from that fact. Communism was not defeated by military force, but by life, by the human spirit, by conscience, by the resistance of Being and man to manipulation. (…) We all know that our civilization is in danger. (…) The large paradox at the moment is that man – a great collector of information – is well aware of all this, yet absolutely incapable of dealing with the danger. (…) We cannot do because we cannot step beyond our own shadow. We are trying to deal with what we have unleashed by employing the same means we used to unleash in the first place. We are looking for new scientific recipes, new ideologies, new control systems, new institutions. (…) We are looking for an objective way out of the crisis of objectivism. (…) What is needed is something different, something larger. Man's attitude to the world must radically changed. It is my profound conviction that we have to release from the sphere of privates which such forces as a natural, unique and unrepeatable experience of the world, an elementary sense of justice, the ability to see things as other do, a sense of transcendental responsibility, archetypal wisdom, good taste, courage, compassion, and faith in the importance of particular measures that do not aspire to be a universal key to salvation. Such forces must be rehabilitated. Things*

must once more be given a chance to present themselves as they are, to be perceived in their individuality."

Such a talk could be disregarded as so many similar texts of intellectuals, or subjected to a Sokalian scorn of postmodernists' grandiloquence (Sokal and Bricmont 1997), were it not a statement of a leading statesman. Also Havel's political reflections could be dismissed if they had had no consequences for his political practice. In Davos, Havel declared: *"It is my impression that sooner or later politics will be faced with the task of finding a new, post-modern face. (…) Soul, individual spirituality, first-hand personal insight into things, the courage to be himself and go the way his conscience points, humility in the face of the mysterious order of Being, confidence in its natural direction and, above all, trust in his own subjectivity as his principle link with the subjectivity of the world – these, in my view, are the qualities that politicians of the future should cultivate."* The consequences? The failure of Havel to maintain Masaryk's Czechoslovakia and his unintended contribution to its disintegration, accumulating faux-pas in internal politics of the Czech Republic, controversial comments and activities in international politics, such as the Kosovo problem.

Havel's negative attitudes toward modern science have been dismissed by a number of American scientists. His harshest critic may have been Gerald Holton (2000). In his Lewis Branscomb Lecture he has interpreted Havel's statement that „*science kills God and takes place on the vacant throne*" as equating science with Anti-Christ and seeing in it a return to the early Church Fathers who banished curiosity as a sin since it might lead to skepticism. In one of his books (Holton 1996) he has cited Hitler's words, *"We stand at the end of the Age of Reason (…), a new era of the magical explanation of the world is rising, and explanation based on will rather than knowledge"* and has pointed out that Hitler's words are almost duplicated in some speeches of Václav Havel.

Citizens' loyalty has not allowed Czech scientists to express a similar criticism and it has also largely prevented Czech intellectuals to express publicly their embarrassment and dismay. Among intellectuals of other post-Communist countries the Slovenian intellectual Slavoj Žižek (1999) may have been the most acute in his analysis: *"Havel seems now to be blind to the fact that his own opposition to Communism was rendered possible by the utopian dimension generated and sustained by Communist regimes. So we get the tragi-comic indignity which is his recent essay in New York Review of Books on „Kosovo and the end of the nation-state". (…) Havel further invokes the „higher law" when he claims that „human rights, human freedoms…and human dignity have their deepest roots somewhere outside the perceptible world…while the state is a human creation, human beings are the creation of*

God". He seems to be saying that NATO forces were allowed to violate international law because they acted as direct instruments of the „higher law" of God – a clear-cut case of religious fundamentalism." "There is no escape from the conclusion that his [Havel's] *life has descended from sublime to the ridiculous.*" Žižek has closed his perspicacious analysis by a rigorous verdict: "*The ultimate lesson of Havel's tragedy is thus a cruel, but inexorable one: the direct ethical foundation of politics sooner or later turns into its own comic caricature, adopting the very cynicism it originally opposed.*"

Paraliberalism and postmodernism are not specific to post-Communist societies. The post-Communist backlash afflicted people in all countries. Social experimentation has been restrained. Globalization of economy may diminish differences between countries and enforce a single model, dangerously reducing polymorphism of styles. However, the lesson to be drawn from Communism is an opposite one: Social experimentation at small, controllable scales is desirable, and humankind should make every effort not only to maintain, but to enlarge polymorphism of political, social and cultural institutions. It seems that the burden of Communism – both with its positive and negative signs – lies heavy not only on the post-Communist countries, but on the world as a whole.

Discussion

The question of normality, which has been asked in this study, can be answered with no ambiguity: Communism was an abnormal social system. Abnormal culturally: It smashed up traditional institutions, evolutionary products of European (but also Confucian etc.) culture with embodied knowledge that they had been accumulating for centuries. By this act, it initiated decay of society and regress of people back to the level of primitive groups of hunters and gatherers in the savanna. There was no comparable regress of technology. Modern technology supplied Communist politicians and intellectuals with means that had not been available to chieftains and shamans in the savanna: means of mass violence and terror and of mass indoctrination. Instead of establishing new institutions by rational design, as had been intended in the project of the Communist utopia, spontaneous dynamics of the system gave rise to institutions that, in their irrationality, had no precedent in history.

As has been implied by analysis presented in the first part of this study, less abnormal was Communism with respect to human nature. No wonder: the fundamentals of human

nature had been shaped by evolution to fit up the individual for life in groups under conditions of the savanna. Yet, clashes of the human individual with the irrational Communist institutions made his/her behavior and actions inconsistent and essentially irrational. Such behavior was being post-stabilized by conditioning. It will take many years and several generations, long after the abnormal institutions will have been completely replaced by the traditional ones, to efface behavior that had been reinforced under the abnormal conditions.

It may appear disappointing to conclude that the main lesson to be drawn from the complex analysis of Communism is a simple one: humankind has to prevent birth and survival of institutions that would make such irrationality possible. Hannah Arendt (1966) was right, but only half: there was banality of evil behind Nazism; and just so behind Communism. Banality of evil, as far as human individuals are concerned. What she may have not focused at, has been evil of institutions. The evil of totalitarian institutions **was not banal**. Indeed, it had monstrous, inhuman proportions; it was – to use a religious term – infernal. The experience of Communism may lend a convincing "experimental" support to the hypothesis that memes, and their aggregates, institutions, are largely independent of human intentions and control, being self-sustaining, self-reinforcing and self-organizing. Under particular circumstances, an edifice may arise spontaneously that would blindly and mercilessly crush human individuals, until eventually would it itself tumble down under the weight of its disfigured shape.

How to preclude the rise of such institutions and their establishing? They apparently need to be eradicated in their incipient stage, when they are still no more than theoretical projects. This statement is not prescriptive, normative, but stipulative (Kováč 2002b). In the formulation that follows it is almost a tautology. If democracy, with its principles of tolerance and polymorphism, is to last, it should not admit promulgation of doctrines that reject tolerance and polymorphism. Yet, it is in democracy that such doctrines are thriving as particularly vital parasites. The following case of Czechoslovak history may serve forever as a warning paradigm:

When in the Parliament of democratic Czechoslovakia in 1929 the deputy Zemínová had protested against the speech of the Communist deputy Klement Gottwald, in which he was declaiming that Communists wage war against the State and that they deliberately violate the laws, he replied with arrogance (see a transcription of the speech, Gottwald 1954): "... *we harass you and will harass you until we hurl you down. Our revolutionary headquarters is Moscow. And we frequent Moscow in order to learn how to ring your neck. And you know that Bolsheviks are masters of it.*" Such verbal scandals notwithstanding, Communist Party

continued to be a legal party in Czechoslovakia. In 1948, after the Second World War, the Party organized a coup d´Etat and usurped political power. Klement Gottwald became President. Two years later, in 1950, the menace of Gottwald came true: the Party staged a sham trial with Zemínová and other democratic politicians. Zemínová was forced to plead guilty and was sentenced to twenty years of imprisonment. Another woman in the trial, Zemínová's political colleague Milada Horáková was sentenced to capital punishment, and hung (Radotinský 1990). This execution was among the first in the long series of executions of political adversaries and should remain a **permanent universal symbol of the Communist Party** anywhere. One would expect that the first legal act of the democratic Parliament after the fall of Communism would have been the declaration of the Communist Party for criminal organization and its interdiction. As has been pointed out, this has not been the case in any post-Communist country. The Communist Party has retained its legal status in the resurrected democracy. Erecting legal and institutional barriers against spreading doctrines that had proven their criminal nature in the past should obviously be one of the obligations of democratic politicians.

Different is the obligation of democratic intellectuals. Particularly those belonging to the category of scientists and humanists (Kováč 2002b). Human groups do not possess an analogy of the immune system. On the contrary, human mythophilia makes them prone for catching and fostering memes of Indisputable Truth. Intellectuals should incessantly supply the meme pool with that brand of memes that would compete with and displace the memes of myths and utopias. This is an urgent task as new totalitarian myths are looming and threatening the world. Regarding this obligation, analysis and discrediting ideologies that gave birth to the totalitarian systems of the 20th century continues to be a function of intellectuals. No less important, however, is to fill the ensuing spiritual void with alternatives. It has been pointed out that evolutionary rationalism and evolutionary humanism appear to be logical substitutions of the Communist ideology.

In addition to external threats, democracy may be challenged by the dazzling rate of internal changes provoked by **evolving technology**. This may have already reached the threshold of the capacity of humans to accommodate. Even more serious is the fact that evolutionary institutions of society seem no longer be able of keeping pace with the demands of ever accelerating technological progression. The rate of constructing and modifying institutions by the evolutionary manner of uncorrelated variations and selection may be too low and no longer adequate. This may be true for a majority of institutions, market, morals, schooling, international political organizations. In order to speed up the process of

institutional reconstruction, complementation with premeditated rational interventions may be needed. Yet, the Communist experience has been a warning of how dangerous and irrational premeditated institutions, even if designed with good intentions, may become. Since the fall of Communism, human knowledge of Nature has increased admirably, but the ignorance of society, and hence of the very principles of how the institutions arise and function, has remained stupendously large. The gap between natural and cultural sciences may have got wider (Kováč 2002a).

This is a unique, precarious stage of human evolution. Will humanity progress quickly enough in its knowledge of human nature and of society to be able to master its own institutions? This may be the fatal question of the 21st century.

Acknowledgements

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