

Prologue (Foreword)ⁱ

*The purpose of a prologue cannot be the summarisation of the contents of a book, so that the hasty reader can be assisted by being freed (released, relieved) from (of) the efforts and exertions of critical study. Help ought to rather be provided to the diligent, studious reader in a dual form: by giving him the mark (brand) of the work within the overall opus of the author, and by providing the reader with additional (pieces of) information about the more general standpoint and method through which the topics under examination are approached. As to the first point, I can, fortunately, be very brief. The texts which this volume collects constitute an extension and deepening of thoughts formulated (propounded, articulated) in my works *The Decline of Bourgeois Culture (Civilisation)*; *Planetary Politics after the Cold War*; *Pleasure, power, utopia* (see esp. the chapter: “*Utopia and historical action*”) and *Theory of War* (see esp. the chapter: “*Hot war after the Cold War*”). I am afraid that without knowledge of these analysesⁱⁱ, to which I also refer, the comprehension of the texts below will remain fragmentary, disjointed, even if they have been written in such a way so as to constitute autonomous, self-contained wholes. However, nothing is so self-contained so as not to be able to be incorporated within a framework which is even broader, to be illuminated through even broader correlations and contexts.*

And as to the second point, there is no need for me to expand, because everything that follows contains positions, theses and clues, hints (implications) sufficient for the author's standpoint and method to be reconstructed. And here, nevertheless, incorporation in a more general context or framework can help. In every epoch (era), the ideology of the victor is made – for the vanquished (defeated) – the interpretation of reality, that is, the vanquished side's defeat is marked, stamped and sealed with the acceptance of the victor's perspective. Thus, e.g. those who yesterday still ranted and raved about the “national-liberationist struggle of the Vietnamese people”, lit candles in honour and worship of Che Guevara's icon and did not want to hear a word about “blind anti-communism”, today, instead of condemning imperialism, go berserk and fulminate against “every kind of nationalism”, and embrace and adopt the victor's slogans as the interpretation of reality: universalism through the united world market and “human rights”. They do not ask themselves neither who will bindingly interpret on each and every respective occasion what these “rights” will mean and signify in regard to a specific (concrete) time and place, nor whether and to what extent “nationalism” is justified when someone of a small stature wants to resist the voracious, gluttonous and rapacious dispositions of someone of a great stature. In this manner, whilst ethicising incessantly, in reality they align themselves with the right and justice of the more powerful and stronger. But if the vanquished and defeated, accepting belatedly the victor's ideology, frequently becomes the most laughable, ridiculous and slimy bearer(s) of such an ideology, the said vanquished is/are certainly not the original inspirer and founder of this victor's ideology. The “Left”, having transformed into the tail, i.e. final, last, posterior, hindmost part, or the spongy accessory, i.e. pathetic, worthless, servile flatterer and bootlicker of Americanism, no longer draws from what was most alive, vital in the Marxist tradition, that is, the pitiless de-mythologisation of liberal ideologem(e)s, but is fed and nourished by a social theory which in part reflects, and in part covers up in an

idealising manner, the real relations of power (power relations) inside Western mass democracy. Since the latter (i.e. Western mass democracy) has various aspects and various ideological needs, the predominant in the West social theory appears in various tendencies too: theories about “justice” or about “communicative action” satisfy the more general moralistic (and sanctimonious) demands for the legitimisation of Western regimes; theories about the “system”, emerging from the intellectual(-spiritual) world of cybernetics and propping themselves up on such cybernetics’ conceptuality, are adjoined (attached) to the administrative and technical side of mass democracy, whereas the realities, but also the dreams and fantasies of the “free market” are echoed in theories of a universalistic inspiration, wherein the whole of society is constituted in accordance with the ideational (and ideal) model of the market. Despite the contrasts and oppositions between them, which move at a level of secondary importance as far as practice is concerned, even if the same theoreticians, for obvious reasons, accentuate such contrasts, all these theories, as products and legitimisations of the same society, expressly or tacitly share and favour or sympathise with the [[same]] basic perceptions, namely, they float equally between the related poles of atomism and of universalism by passing through the “free market” (even if with light “social-democratic” restrictions and limitations on such a “free market”).

The ideological character of these social theories is proved, in addition, by the following fact: none of them has been used until today as the conceptual, at least, context or framework of a serious analysis of the present and the future of our planetary world. They synopsis in terms of theory our planetary world’s ideational (ideal) self-understanding from the Western point of view, and even though, from time to time, they ascertain that between this self-understanding and today’s reality, there exists some sort of distance, nonetheless, they profess that the core and large sections of today’s reality contain clear propensities and

tendencies which are capable of leading us sooner or later to the point which the ideational (ideal) self-understanding (of the West) shows. As much as benefits the self-serving (self-interested, self-seeking), the naive propagandise (or: All that benefits the selfish, the naive propagandise). However, the selfish do not only have the legitimising needs, which the naive satisfy; they have practical needs, they must therefore, in contrast to their intellectuals, act continuously in specific, concrete situations, wherein enormous economic and strategic interests are at stake. When e.g. the American Pentagon draws up its plans, which already reach deep inside the 21st century, they do not of course call upon either Rawls, or Habermas, or moral (ethical) philosophers to listen to and follow their (pieces of) advice. In the carving out and the exercising of politics, the nebulae are dissolved and the jokes stop, and tangible data and visible trends are weighed up. Universalistic ideologies do not portend the real transition to a universalism of equivalent groups and individuals. Because, theoretically, universalistic ideologies apply to everyone, in practice however, they are bindingly interpreted by the powerful (strong and mighty) and they open for the powerful the doors to whatever interventions the powerful judge as expedient wherever. Whatever “proletarian internationalism” was for Russian communists yesterday, “human rights” are for Americans today. And in the 21st century, as always in the past, whichever Power is in a position to bindingly define for the rest, the content and practical application of the dominant concepts (read: ideologem(e)s), will determine History.

The analyses of this volume aim at a radical dilation between ideology and reality. They do not seek to approach today’s planetary developments from within Western ideologies, but conversely, they seek to comprehend these ideologies from within the planetary conjuncture and the forces which form such a planetary conjuncture. Whoever does not want to be the mouthpiece of the powerful ought not accept the image which the powerful projects and

imposes in regard to himself or itself. Many, especially “leftists”, have the impression that they (continue to) reject the “system” only because they invoke the ideology of the “system” in order to censure and decry, in regard to certain points, its reality. But in that manner, whatever is rejected subjectively, is simply contradicted objectively: because the ideology of the “system” is equally a part of its reality as much as its perceived black spots (dark side)ⁱⁱⁱ.

Fortunately, classical political, sociological and historical analysis, from Thucydides until today, supplies us with abundant and adequate tools to see things more profoundly and more soberly. Such analysis teaches us above all to centre our attention on the specific, concrete texture of active individuals and collective subjects, and to look at such texture in its historicalness (historicity).

A blatantly obvious, and of course not chance or coincidental, feature of the social theories to which we referred above, is the putting aside and elimination of the historical dimension and the historical way of looking at things. The at times concealed, and at other times exhibited and demonstrated intention of this elimination is to feed the impression, and the hope, that today’s social-political situation in the West constitutes an established, consolidated and fixed conquest of humanity which not only is not able to be overturned in the space of its formation, but in a foreseeable period of time will spread to and throughout the entire planet. But in history, neither permanent conquests, nor linear developments as the simple extensions and prolongations of today’s conjunctures, exist. The dissemination (dispersion, diffusion, spreading) of Western mass democracy on a world scale not only will not beget everywhere faithful copies, but will change Western mass democracy itself in the metropolitan countries, sparking off and igniting in parallel the acutest struggles of distribution. If the 20th century meant the falsification of the communistic utopia, the 21st century will be characterised by the collapse of the liberal utopia. Which specific, concrete events will constitute the great

propensities during the 21st century, which, as I believe, will be the most shocking and most tragic in human History, we cannot know. One thing, nevertheless, is certain: History has not finished, nobody of those living today is going to die knowing that History will finish. The only thing we can do is to describe its driving forces, within the given short-term or long-term conjuncture. And this description is not the work of the ideologue and the moralist-ethicist; it demands eyes trained in viewing and looking into the historicalness and historicity of phenomena.

ENDNOTES

All endnotes are by the translator, and **have nothing whatsoever to do with P.K..**

ⁱ The German translation of P.K.'s Greek was not consulted for the translation of the foreword, given that it was not done by P.K., and the Greek is P.K.'s text.

ⁱⁱ *The Decline of Bourgeois Culture (Civilisation)* has not yet been translated into English (I might translate it after I complete *The Political and Man*, "God willing", c. 2023); *Planetary Politics after the Cold War; Pleasure, power, utopia* (incl. the chapter: "Utopia and historical action") have been translated and are online, whilst there are notes available in regard to *Theory of War* (incl. the chapter: "Hot war after the Cold War").

ⁱⁱⁱ I.e. the so-called “leftist opponents” of the status quo are not even offering, let alone acting in regard to, any real, tangible, concrete resistance to the status quo, but simply are subsumed within the ideological and real-world dominance of those who are most powerful. On the other hand, P.K. is not saying that someone should do x, y or z, rather he is highlighting the actual relations of power and supposed “resistance” to them in the form of a broad outline of the current state of affairs in the West. Nor is P.K. saying that “things would be better if only...”. That’s not his task or “job”. P.K.’s task is total or “full-spectrum” dominance in theory – i.e. to not be defeated and defeatable in the (scientific, non-normative) description and explanation of human affairs. The “what is to be done?” part of life is for the power-hungry in both the production of ideology, and ultimately far more crucially, in the exercising and wielding of real-world, successful, dominant forms of power.