

CIVIL SOCIETY, JUSTICE AND EDUCATION

A Journey of Transformation through

Localisation to Globalisation to Personalisation

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I always imagined that if I could just understand the big picture I could then very easily understand the small. I spent more time and effort trying to gather as much information about large systems than I ever did about the small. It was as if the small was insignificant, that it just didn't have the power to make things happen towards any kind of change or to keep things the same. Studying the small just did not explain what happened to me and my colleagues teaching in the province of Alberta for the past twenty or so years with all the changes towards a hard-line, under funded, mass-produced, outcomes based, evaluated and inspected 'product', a graduate of public school. The buzz words 'student centered' education still remained as did the 'critical inquiry method' of pedagogy, but with every year lost their power as they were supplanted by ever increasing emphasis on defined outcomes, evaluation and accountability. These very nearly kill any sort of real student centered effort at inquiry based learning as we were forced to teach to the government diploma exam along a very predetermined path.

I developed a generally fool proof program of study that certainly was not very student centered and limited inquiry to a minimum for two reasons: one was that there was very limited time to deviate from the proscribed curriculum to accommodate where student centered, inquiry based learning might go; and two was that I had determined that I would do no harm to the student by exploring alternative ways of learning that may risk their chance of success on the all important government assessment at the end of their public school careers. It worked wonderfully for in a two and a half year span my department suffered no student failures in either stream of Social Studies. I was not happy with this way of teaching and learning, it was not what I had envisioned myself doing as a teacher, but at least the students were getting through and I figured if I could

just give them what they need for the exam I can spend whatever time I did have extra in trying to help them with their questions.

Over time the educational authorities became more aggressive and desirous of school based accountability which was passed from Ministerial offices to school boards, to principals offices and on down to the teacher. We all complained bitterly at the 'war on education' the government was waging and while many looked locally at our own system for answers, I instead looked beyond. There had to be a big powered answer for what I, my colleagues and our students were experiencing. Many of us believed that what were witnessing was the destruction of liberal education being replaced with rigorous standardization, overemphasis on grades that we all knew was counter productive to learning as we all knew it at the time. Someone or something had to be responsible. Was it a global trend? Was it leaders of countries? Or was it chairs of boards of Transnational Corporations? Who had enough power to get contrary to experience policies enacted? Who backed a political leader who would canvas the people for their opinions and then just do what the leader wanted in the first place all the while extolling the great support of the people he experienced in coming to these policies? There had to be some big power at work here, small local powers couldn't possibly be strong enough, and I would waste a lot of time looking for the big power all the while watching our education system become less and less concerned with actual humanity and more and more concerned with accountability.

In an earlier paper I endeavoured to combine numerous models of social change into one complete model in order to form some kind of world system that would explain the wherefores and the whys of human social development. I failed miserably. Like

many other secular ‘searchers’ who do not believe in divine intervention and so seek a truly human explanation, I found myself looking for a single small answer to multiple big questions. While acquiescing to the divine “God, wills it” would certainly have simplified my quest by lumping all the responsibility for deadly misfortunes that happen to people on some ephemeral entity and have spared me much anguish during my attempts to find ‘the’ answer to it all, I find I have fallen into a similar, but secular, trap. I have been blinded looking for small simple answers to great intensely complicated questions. That what I have been attempting to do is not only impossible, as there are far too many constantly changing variables, it is also a pointless endeavor for no single person or group of persons is totally responsible for everything that happens in this world. At the same time in smaller areas of this planet it is entirely possible for a single person or idea to affect changes, but that this cannot be compared to larger or smaller areas as the parameters within which the changes occur are always somewhat different from locale to locale through a myriad of ways: culture, language, geography, history and the like. A single answer would not give a true “picture” of the way the human social world works; not in the ancient past, recent past, yesterday, this moment, or from one place to another, nor would it give a very accurate picture of what to expect of the future.

The human struggle for some kind of fair and honest form of societal government, that would be fair to all, would enhance the group’s present existence and help ensure its future is as old as human history itself. Historical documents continue to show this search beginning with the cuneiform works of the Mesopotamian region circa 4000 years before present, including Hamarabi’s code of laws(Pritchard 1973), or the argument in Persia between conspirators over what form of government to accept whether democracy,

oligarchy or monarchy, in Herodotus's work of 2500 years ago (Herodotus 1982), or the works of Machiavelli, particularly his book "The Prince" posthumously printed in the 1450's where he espoused that a prince must be both loved and feared if he is to rule with any lasting form of conviction and control. The writings of the Enlightenment in Europe by such luminaries as Rousseau, Mill, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Smith led to the writings of the Industrial Revolution of Herbert Spencer, Carlisle, Nietzsche and Marx all asking and searching for the same thing each from their own point of view as seen by them in their own societies, or locales, and presuming that the situation of the human condition is the same in all respects in all places all the time. Coming to terms with the ideas of all these people only served to complicate my picture even further.

So what was the elusive 'it' that I was so stubbornly searching for? Was I searching for the 'entity' that seemingly controls everything in society and is cyclical, somehow self promoting and perhaps also self-propagating. Was 'it' those who are a part of the 'Commanding Heights' (capitalists or socialists) of the economy, the corporate barons that collude and collaborate against the consumer public for their own ever growing fortunes as outlined in Dobbin's book "The Myth Of the Good Corporate Citizen? Or was it the political 'backroom' people, managers of our 'elected' elite", that use both Machiavellian audacity and subtleties to promote and expand their view of the world as described by Kissinger in his book "Diplomacy. Perhaps 'it' is conspiratorial characters, political, economic and old nobility, annually conniving by invitation only in darkened smoke filled rooms as to how they wish the world to turn as at Bilderberg or World Economic Forum meetings?

‘It’ seemed to come from far away and yet is evident everywhere around us, in everything we watch on television, hear on radio, see in the stores and read in the papers. ‘It’ affects us all, it makes us believe that politics is something only exercised every few years at the ballot booth, buy things we don’t need nor really want, exploit and marginalise those from far away, or hidden right next door, and tells us what to think and when. ‘It’ seems to be a single entity that I sense, that I struggle with and sometimes fight with, and try and figure out how ‘it’ has affected my life and how it affects the lives of many of my students by totally disengaging them politically, making them economically hyperactive and socially superficial. The whole society, locally, nationally and internationally smelled of a greater “social agenda” at work. And I felt it was a dark force, not at all benevolent.

I imagined this “social agenda” affecting how education in my country, my province and ultimately my classroom of students would be viewed and actualized by all associated with it. It was a huge power with many principles, in which I partly believed but never wholly, and as my career as teacher wore on I became more and more disillusioned with them and it. I began to fall out of step with the organization within which I laboured and with both anger and determination I continued to explore what was happening to my society and particularly to my students. I believed my philosophy of and beliefs in education and inter-personal relationships were being summarily dismissed as no longer appropriate. I felt this not only in my career but also in my life outside of my classroom.

I read widely searching for clues and answers to developing and ongoing questions. I then struggled to connect the dots, as it were, and tried to create the ultimate

system and to find the ultimately responsible culprit (if it was an individual or group) and the definitive answer to what happened and why (if it was just an idea) to not only my time and locality in history but also in any time period in human history. There were times I thought I had it. Exciting times where all sorts of human ideas and actions could be explained, but they never were fully adaptable to all aspects of human society and thought in different periods of time. They were then far too specific for all times and too general for any one time. I had entered the zone of Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle. The more I try to find one, say the general theory, the more approximate becomes the other and it becomes an impossibility as there are just too many variables and every time I look and learn there are more variables. This for me has been an exasperating personal problem. Please indulge me as I continue this line of thought with the following explanation.

In sub atomic particle physics it would seem plausible that one could devise a means to simultaneously determine a particle's position and speed for any given moment in time. With all the powerful minds involved, Neils Bohr and Albert Einstein to name but two, it seemed that this would be possible, however Werner K. Heisenberg mathematically proved that indeed, counter-intuitively, one could not practically, nor theoretically, show this assumption to be true. The following thought experiment might help to illustrate this point. Suppose that we are driving down the highway on a clear day with no traffic and the dashed lines are just out your driver window. Sitting in the passenger seat, I ask you to give me your speed in five seconds. On my mark you would look at your speedometer and give me the value that you observe, simple. Still sitting beside you in the passenger seat, I ask you to pick a dash in the distance and tell me the

precise moment we come upon it. That too, would be fairly simple. Then I ask you to choose a dashed line in the distance *and* to tell me the precise speed that we are traveling at the precise moment you observe we come upon it. As we approach you increasingly realize a growing dilemma. If you look at the dashed line you cannot see the speedometer, conversely looking at the speedometer you cannot know the precise moment you come upon the dashed line. You can do one precisely and the other only approximately, but not both events simultaneously nor precisely, this is Heisenberg's Indeterminacy (or more commonly "Uncertainty") Principle (Motz and Weaver 1989; Hoffmann 1959). Einstein was not happy with this line of thought and discovery and supposedly exclaimed, "God does not play dice!" To which Bohr, a friend and supporter of Heisenberg, replied, "Albert! Stop telling God what to do!" (Trefil 1992) Even in the great effort to explain the physical universe in a single Grand Unified Theory, it has to this point proven impossible. This situation becomes even more problematic if we take into account Einstein's Relativity Theory and I was instead on the side of the road, rather than in the car, giving you the same instructions and compare your 'indeterminate' observations from the car to mine on the side of the road. They would not be the same because your 'reality', or point of view, is very different than mine.

Of course, I have dramatically understated the complexity of the principles and mathematics involved, but I think this explanation suffices to illustrate the idea that the more one knows, or comes to know, the more elusive the definitive knowledge and I am finding this is as true in theoretical particle physics as it is in trying to discover the definitive mechanisms of human society, the "Grand Unified Theory" of human existence. I now find myself in a personally very disconcerting position; whereas I have

found it so easy to accept ‘uncertainty’ and ‘relativity’, that is increasing complexity in the sciences, I seem blind to it also possibly being in effect in the human ‘social’ world, because the thought that we are intelligent thinking and reflective entities (not inanimate as in particle physics), and we know so very much, we should be able to anticipate and react to any situation and ‘correct’ it, after all we created society we should be able to fix it. In the social sciences I try to simplify, even over-simplify, the extremely complex dynamic that is human relationships, to make sense of it, to make it able to be duplicated and an easily recognizable pattern. Nothing should be either uncertain or relative; instead the answer should be definitive. This is a very enlightened, scientific, mechanistic, deterministic, jingoistic, western and Protestant point of view, and entirely wrong. I should have known better, but

Similarly, I appreciate the application of Chaos and Game theory to the social world, but have not fully comprehended the implications. What is slowly dawning on me is the apparent view that not only is the Uncertainty Principle and Relativity theory applicable to human social existence, with Chaos and Game theory actually used to predict and determine some seemingly ‘random’ outcomes because Chaos isn’t as chaotic as one would expect and is in itself a form of organization(Gleick 1987), but that the domain of human social existence is far more complicated, convoluted, unpredictable, and in some cases frustratingly unknowable. The sum of the parts do not equal the whole, neither can the whole be fathomed by understanding the parts.

It is an odd, counter-intuitive and therefore very upsetting result that the more one learns the more complicated and uncertain things become. My search for the mechanism, or mechanisms, of human social existence has become an ever more complicated and

multifaceted endeavor. From Davies' 'J' curve to explain revolutions through 'needs satisfaction'(Davies 1962); Bronowski's "Ascent of Man" explaining the development of human thought through time(Bronowski 1973); to Wallerstein's Systems Theory of world economic systems as a means of explaining human social structure particularly from the time of the Industrial Revolution to the present(Wallerstein 2005); and Jared Diamond's suggestion of how the history of humanity has progressed through geography, biology and technology, as shown in the title of his book, "Guns' Germs and Steel", as well as that of Ronald Wright and his book "A Short History of Progress"(Wright 2004). These and many other works like them have led me to try again and again to create system after system to explain the workings of the world(van Doorn 2005). And in the end none worked as a stand alone theory, each one that I studied came from a particular point of view, was applied to a particular set or subset of society and worked only in that narrow way and there was no single method by which I could make them all fit together into one complete all encompassing theory.

What I had hoped would be a powerful simple answer to the question of human society has instead become mind-boggling in its complexity. There is no single 'it' in human society, there are multitudinous 'its', each with its own reality based on time, space, circumstance and point of view. Heisenberg was indeed right and not just in particle physics. How I ever expected to find what I was looking for from such a narrow vantage point as I had is somewhat laughable now, even if somewhat sad.

I have struggled in this fashion for years, growing ever more frustrated that I could not satisfactorily come to any definitive conclusion for my students and myself. It has in fact made the practical aspects of my teaching more difficult to do, my

explanations more complicated, indefinite and messy. The senior high students don't like it either as they have been thoroughly schooled to expect simple clarity in all subjects, everything is predictable and controllable. Standardized testing and grade accountability propagate this by forcing educators to teach only those things that can be concretely examined in tests, and, of course, our educational authorities measuring the results force this requirement upon us. Oddly enough what begins to appear after a few years, or generations, of testing and teaching this way, is the students' skepticism of the value of anything else, that is either intrinsic or of delayed gratification, is extraordinary even if we practice inquiry based learning and individualised instruction, or personalised learning, particularly from an outcomes based perspective. If it is outside their box of willingness to understand, or *their* perceived need to know from what they have already learned, it is difficult to make them believe that anything other than the gospel of the textbook and final exam could possibly exist. Their standard response is, "Do we need to know this for the test?"

So, for me the maddening search for the elusive 'it', the global view of everything, has had two values: 1) it would help me to help the students to understand the workings of the world in a 'grand unified theory' that would explain everything, and 2) would help me to understand who or what is responsible for the way society is created, operated, controlled and manipulated for the benefit of a few at the very great expense of the many and thereby explain what was happening to my profession and my students. And so here was the rub, as a result of all my reading and research and in my own personal experience there is no single (secular that is) explanation for why the world has developed and is developing as it has and is. There are so many factors involved, most

serendipitous, some lucky and many unlucky and certainly often circumstantial that it is both the environment and opportunity of the moment that will determine if anything is 'successful' or not. This was for me a confounding thought. Chaos was indeed at play and outcomes could be approximated closely by game theory.

Everything, actions and reactions, in human history have been within the concept of 'social space'. Human society is equally as complicated to comprehend as the physics of intergalactic 'outer space' of the fantastically large and the 'inner space' of the sub-atomically small. If we consider the 'outer space' of human society as globalization, that is the relationship between people from a global context, it can be viewed that in as much as we say we can understand the greater aspect of the dynamics of large society interactions, global economics, global communications, global politics there is no way we can predict how it will grow, not grow or even shrink and disappear, based solely on what we can see in the global context. As with the expanding universe, the question arises can it expand indefinitely? Physicists say no, and daily it seems that that is also true of this idea of globalization on earth as sustainability in terms of the environment, resources and economies within a finite system is rapidly becoming of great concern.

The reasons for conflict over large 'social space' is complex and very similar to what conflict is on the very small, or "inner space", like neighbors of a small community squabbling over where the fence goes, bad neighbors who don't care about others or who just don't think what the majority believes is important. And while global social space can appear like the myriad inner social spaces that make it up, it is not exactly the same. The sum of the parts does not equal the whole. And while the whole can reflect on the parts it is not necessary that they mimic it exactly, nor do they. It seems to me that all

conflict is about contested social space between people as all things of any kind of importance to any two people become to some degree contested depending on history, culture, belief system, politics, economics and basic personal desire.

There have been numerous periods in history where large powers, have maintained some degree of what was at that time considered nearly global peace (or Pax in Latin) and relative calm between periods of unrest and calamity. These Pax's, nominally beginning with the Pax Romana during the last century BC to 200 AD, controlled vast areas where peace was maintained, admittedly by violence, yet cultures were shared, ideas exchanged and compounded upon and wealth grew in the entire region not just in the controlling state. Pax Mongolica(Waugh 2000) and Pax Britannia have done the same thing. War was bad for business especially over great distances, but one must not forget that a Pax does not equal hegemony as a Pax generally contains multiple cultures peacefully living together and encourages exchange of all things that would enhance commerce and trade.

For example the Mongols of Ghengis Khan and his heirs ruled the largest land empire in history and in the process created a general peace in their lands that hadn't been seen for 500 years or more that lasted for nearly a thousand in some areas. This Pax Mongolia encouraged trade from both west to east and east to west, was openly flexible in having all religions freely practiced, knowledge passed freely in all directions with the trade routes and were largely responsible for the collection of the vast knowledge base that Marco Polo and his people found on their journeys from backward Europe(Weatherford 2004). In a 'Pax' era economy is more important than politics and renders it controllable as wealth usually makes people forget about politics at best and

less involved at worst. A 'Pax' falls into decay and decline when its economy begins to fail through many factors, perhaps environmental decline, disease or loss of respect of leadership, and as a result they lose political control and it breaks apart into small political entities who then enter into war with one another over contested areas of resources, people and territory. Hegemonies, however, discourage difference and desire to control politics before the economy and therefore are far more violent as they are then required to control everything that may challenge its authority. The effort to create hegemony is very destabilizing to the world social fabric, politically and economically. The first fifty years of the 20th century were just such a time.

In more modern times, post World War 2, much of the interaction, or contest, within society has been between the polarized competing interests of the market and government. Old "civic minded" corporations, once an especially incorporated and time limited group of business representatives of society allied together in the interests of society, were given the powers of the individual whose sole purpose was the improvement of the bottom line. Governments who once controlled the market through anti-trust legislation and whose role was to monitor and control society for the citizens, soon lose this to those very market forces they tried to regulate. What business failed to look after within society (for they no longer had reason to) and government also failed to look after for lack of political will and power and fell into the hands of other organizations created by individual citizens who wanted to address situations and injustices they felt were left unattended and unjust. These "civil society" institutions had sprung up earlier when the excesses of the Industrial Revolution became evident. They disappeared for a time until the latter part of the 20th Century. According to the London

School of Economics Centre for Civil Society the earlier popular term ‘Civil Society’ fell out of use until relatively recently. It fell out of use, as, “For a long time, social scientists believed that we lived in a two-sector world There was the market or the economy on the one hand, and the state or government on the other. (LSECCS Feb 20, 2006)” And so it was for many years. Not until a decade after the Second World War did we start to see resurgence in the idea of civil society as organizations sprang up to fill voids and needs left aside by government and market organizations. The London School of Economics Centre for Civil Society defines civil society as:

Civil society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women’s organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trades unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy group.

Here, all organizations except government and market organizations are included and they all formed to deal with perceived needs left behind by those two dominant parts of social space. But if the collective of shared interests, purposes and values are different from group to group because of geography, history and culture, do we then not get

‘nationalities’ of values and characters? Could ‘civil societies’ then be new ‘proto nations’ as they coalesce and grow during this era of Pax Americana?

On a national scale these special interest ‘civil societies’ appeared in the form of political groups, foundations, unions, and churches lobbying government and protesting big business on issues such as the environment, labour/management issues and social injustices through all manners and means of protest, violent and peaceful, individually and en masse, legally and illegally.

This was also true internationally through non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) trying to solve issues like starvation, disease and sustainable and appropriate development in less developed countries that larger market organizations, like the IMF and World Bank since the Bretton Woods agreements of the early 1940’s, had created through one sided trade practices, unfair punitive loans and political interference and indifference. Through the globalisation of multi-national corporations and the market ideals, which supports them, globalization has also come to NGO’s. At the same time large and small civil society organizations (CSO’s) have been created to focus on injustices that individual groups perceive as important to them. So, it would seem that for every policy that a corporation or a government, or an international agency has done an opposing CSO has developed because, of course, no policy will benefit everyone equally and some certainly greatly benefit a few at the expense of the many who are powerless and disenfranchised. The following is a short list of examples some local and some global; build a controversial dam and the CSO ‘Friends of the Oldman’ appears, with whaling came the anti-whaling group ‘Greenpeace’, with unlawful arrest and torture came “Amnesty International”, starving children - Save The Children, shrinking animal

habitat – World Wildlife Fund, corporate abuses – CorpWatch ... and on and on and on ... hundreds if not thousands of policies and counter policies, organizations and counter organizations. It can also be said that with some CSO's, say the pro capitalist 'World Economic Forum', opposing CSO's have been created, like the pro socialist CSO 'World Social Forum'. In this light globalisation has most certainly also come to CSO's and it could be argued that they were there first! It is my contention that today's common definition of a "civil society organization" is much too narrow. They are not just spaces from where critics challenge the injustices created by the establishment and their policies, for if we use the London School of Economics Centre for Civil Society definition once again where, "Civil Society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values.(LSECCS Feb 20, 2006)", but if the collective of 'shared interests, purposes and values' are different from group to group because of geography, history and culture, do we then not get 'nationalities' of values and characters? Or the development of economic organisations such as the Corporation in much the same way as some CSO's have come to be incorporated? Could 'civil societies' today then be new 'proto nations' as they coalesce and grow as needed during this present era of Pax Americana in much the same way as interested parties with common history, language and culture coalesced against a larger oppressive entity, ultimately fighting against it and freeing themselves from that injustice to form their own civil society in their own 'national' interest (I am speaking here, of course, of the American revolution against the Pax Britannica)? Of course today the 'national' interest in civil society, in terms of geography, history and culture is by and large complete, there is not much more room to run, but there is tremendous space today for civil society in the

arena of thought and practice, so that in a sense we are seeing the development of global, or trans-national 'nations' of thought and the struggle for control of that with organizations such as the pro capitalist World Economic Forum and the pro socialist World Social Forum. Opposing points of view are everywhere, injustices wide ranging and solutions often difficult with the toughest using force to get their policies known, promoted and executed.

All issues come begging for justice. The problem is easy, contentious issues rampant and emotion laden, the solution near impossible. Who's injustice do we speak of, the corporation prevented from making more money for its shareholders due to new restrictive regulations or the people who would have jobs and money if the big business were indeed allowed to operate as it wishes leaving us with the destroyed environment but inexpensive clothes to wear? Or, more personally, in the case of the educational policies of the duly elected, and by a large majority I might add, Conservative government in Alberta for the past 15 years Harrison and Kachur's book "Contested Classrooms: Education, Globalisation and Democracy in Alberta" demonstrates the struggle in the opposing points of view of education within my chosen vocation rousing emotion in me of both elation in the fight and despair at my inability to seemingly make a difference as my view, and those of my colleagues were definitely not with the majority and their representatives. Regardless of the argument of how skillful the information manipulation of the government was, the teachers as a group were still not heard and at this point it seems that all that may remain is for us to say "we told you so" once the 'tipping point' (Gladwell 2002) swings back to our beliefs in education or changes

completely. As O'Hara assesses in her article "The challenge for education in uncertain times."

We are living in a period when foundational givens of thought are on the move and when the cosmology that has framed experience in Western societies is unraveling. This is creating a shift in our understanding of reality so fundamental that it undermines many of the bedrock assumptions on which Western consciousness is based(O'Hara 2005).

Where this will eventually take us is an unknown. Many books about comparative education exist all demonstrating views and actions of other educators and policy makers as they all struggle with their ideas of what education can and should be. But does one size fit all? Not in the slightest, so much depends on so many differing factors that in no place can a single policy be effective in all other places. If there is anything I have learned in all my reading that would be the salient fact.

Justice and injustice, on large and small scale from the local to the national and the global arenas make 'justice', too, globalised. The struggle for increased democracy as a means for the voice of justice, and injustice, as one does not exist without the other, with today's instant powerful communication with any place on the planet people can be called to notice and action, the contested space of practically anything becomes instantly global. Even the very nature of 'citizenship' is contested as evidenced by Mike Bottery's article that dares to imagine a state of being larger than the state itself that has to date defined what 'citizenship' is(Bottery 2003). Is the old notion of national citizenship still valid? Is there such a thing as global citizenship, or civil society

citizenship and are there new and potentially violent contested spaces being created on the horizon within the blizzard of contested spaces in our presently only superficially connected global society? What will transpire when all people have access to the electronic World Wide Web? Will it remain the vehicle to free expression or is it already contested space? Will it be the alarm bell for a call to arms against the oppressor?

So, is this then what can only be hoped for? That in this chaotic environment of contested social spaces, civil societies (including governments, NGOs, corporations and any other organization that promotes its sense of just purpose) and their search for their particular justice whether through dictatorship or democracy, for large groups or small, for local or global, for every action there is a reaction, not necessarily equal and opposite either, and that globalised culture, citizenship, market and government all may some day with all its multitudinous jostling factions contesting every corner of social space for some form of social, economic, cultural, familial, gender, environmental justice become the global “civil society”?

I no longer need to search for an encompassing solution to the riddle of what constitutes the agents of change in total human history. I have what I need for the moment in the multiple explanations of economic, political, social change over time. What makes it appear as if history is constantly repeating itself, lending credence to the tired cliché, “Those who do not learn from the mistakes of history are doomed to repeat them” is that the large picture of what all people want, voice and justice in a decent life, has yet to be achieved among all people. We continue to want different things at different times as we struggle for what we need and want, so far at the expense of what other’s need and want, and as certain ideas and people who arise at the right time in the

right place motivate these needs wants into emotions of action for both good and bad.

The struggle continues as it has from the days of Herodotus as to what form of government shall we have to safeguard our most basic wants and needs. What will I teach my students? That change is good, that there is no single way to neither explain nor deal with all the problems that exist in today's complicated world. But that we must be adaptable, flexible and open to new ideas towards the solution to problems, and above all compassionate and understanding towards other's. There it is ... just one more 'contested social space'. It remains for me to decide how I will attend to this in my own life and in my teaching – I have much more to do.

van Doorn

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