

## 1 - The Philosophy of Sustainable Development

### In the Land of the Prophet

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, September 2013: I'm here working as an English Language teacher for the third time in my life. On the taxi ride to work with two colleagues, we pass the Filipino consulate and as we pull up to pick up a fourth colleague I am shocked to see squatter encampments of Filipinos on both sides of the street, living in cardboard 'homes'. They go about their morning chores. *Slaves*. Technically speaking, in a historical socio-economic analysis, as an economist or a politician might define it, they are bonded-labourers, debt-peons, poor people or some other sanitised technical definition; not actually owned by another human being who would be responsible for housing and feeding them but existing in a state of de facto slavery nonetheless.

Most of them arrived sponsored by Saudi Arabian nationals who, for whatever reason, decided at some point to withhold their documentation, and quite possibly their wages. Others (Muslims) came for the *Hajj* Pilgrimage or to perform *Umrah* and overstayed on their visas hoping to find employment. Still others were employed legally in one capacity and then changed jobs but were unable to change their employment visas. They are now cast adrift, part of a non-legal underclass, unwilling or incapable of returning to their native land and unable to find legal employment. As poor migrant labourers they have little political power and the Filipino consulate's powers are limited, and it walks a delicate diplomatic, political and economic tightrope. It does not wish to rock the boat too much with the Saudi Arabian government; the diplomats have no desire to threaten this important economic lifeline that the Philippine nation has.

There but for the grace of God go I. Or you. My university education and British passport count for much in the land of the Prophet Mohammed. By and large I am treated well and respected by the Saudis I teach and work with, if my parents had been poor uneducated Pakistanis it would be a very different story. The reality of the 'neo-liberal-capitalist-consumerist' paradigm in the twentieth and twenty-first century is that globally hundreds of millions of human beings are de facto slaves. They disproportionately, although not exclusively by any means, have black or brown skin. Sometimes they are exploited by their fellow countrymen, at other times forced as economic migrants to travel abroad to be exploited by foreigners. Effectively they have few, if any, rights; they cannot afford lawyers and finding themselves on the bottom rung of an economic pyramid that they have no choice but to engage with. Essentially, they are chattel; until they are free none of us are free, compromise is simply not possible. The prevailing global paradigm of neo-liberal capitalism is incapable of freeing them - in fact it requires an underclass of poor uneducated workers.

Capitalism is hardly alone in the history of exploitative human socio-economic systems that have been grossly unfair to those on the bottom steps of the economic pyramid, indeed from the time of the first known human civilization, Sumer in modern day Iraq, there have always been slaves. Dehumanisation of one ethnic group of *H. sapiens* by another ethnic group of *H. sapiens* has a very long, shameful and unbroken history. The Roman Empire on citizen / barbarian; Norse Vikings of the Danelaw against local English tribes; Easter Islanders based their racism on the size of earlobes; Colonial (white-European) American against native Americans and black Africans; white European over Black African in King Leopold's Congolese fiefdom; Nazi Germany against Gypsies and Jews; Apartheid South Africa on skin colour; Northern Ireland on Protestant / Catholic; Rwanda on Hutu / Tutsi; Communist and dissident in the Soviet Union; Zionist and Palestinians; Bahrain on Sunni / Shia. This is a sample, there are more. Whenever there has been an 'us and them' there has been discrimination. If we were to shed a tear for every single instance of racial injustice

from every country in the world for the last 6,000 years we would drown in a flood of biblical proportions.

Dehumanisation of 'others' has been used to justify exploitation, genocide, atrocities, sexual abuse and the seizure of land and has enabled elites to coerce their poorer countrymen into carrying out their dirty work. As a general rule, ordinary people do not break down the doors of their neighbour's house, murder the stronger members of the household, rape the physically weaker ones before enslaving and/or killing them, steal all their possessions and take their land. But the lessons of history show us that given particular psychological influences in certain contexts and they will do. This is neither just nor sustainable.

### **The Tao of Planetary Boundaries**

The word *Tao* (sometimes written as *Dao*) comes from the Chinese language and is often rendered in English as, *the way* or *right/virtuous conduct* or *the process of nature by which all things change and which is to be followed for a life of harmony* or *the art or skill of doing something in harmony with the essential nature of the thing*, and is related to both the natural world and human life. It is fundamentally concerned with balance and cannot be adequately explained in words but must be understood in an intuitive and experiential manner rather than in a purely intellectual way. It is often represented by the Yin/Yang symbol in which two opposites exist together with each containing the seed of the other. To live in balance in the biosphere, i.e. not to be endangering any of the critical life support systems, is to live in balance with the Tao of Gaia. This is not to exist in stasis but a dynamic that places all humans in an appropriate relationship with themselves, each other, flora and fauna, and the planet.

In a finite closed system, in this case Planet Earth (Gaia), there is a finite carrying capacity to support a finite human population in balance with flora and fauna within nine planetary boundaries (these appear in appendix two) that have been identified. Exactly what this population level of humans might be would depend massively on their patterns of consumption which, in essence, is a fairly straightforward equation.

### **Population X average consumption = Total consumption**

Of course, it is much more complicated than the above equation suggests because different economic classes, societies and groups consume differently, sustainably and unsustainably in varying degrees, but for the sake of simplicity the equation has some functionality and validity. If total consumption is above the carrying capacity of the closed system, in this case the Earth, total consumption must either move below the carrying capacity or the environment will degrade or collapse. There are literally no other possible outcomes. In its simplest form consuming above the carrying capacity of a system is the very definition of unsustainable.

Therefore, any system which seeks to be sustainable in the long-term must be consuming finite resources below replacement levels, generating minimal amounts of greenhouse gases, or indeed reducing them, while simultaneously generating pollution below both the carrying capacity of the local environment and the planet. This clearly suggests that both population level of humans and their consumptions patterns are of critical importance in calculating whether any given system is sustainable in the long-term. With all or almost all energy generated from renewables and a C2C system of resource use human populations might be sustainable at current levels or perhaps even higher, but current patterns of consumption at today's human population level are unsustainable in the long-term. The inevitable conclusion is that we must either replace the current socio-economic system either prior to its collapse or pick up the pieces we have after it collapses, but the idea that we can

continue advancing in a linear manner with the current system indefinitely is delusional. This is not an ideological stance, but one based on science and evidence.

### The Strange Case of the Pareto Distribution

If you have never heard of the Pareto Distribution don't be surprised, it won't be winning any popularity contests any time soon. The implications of the Pareto Distribution for postcapitalism are profound, as it seems to throw up some extremely intractable problems. In a lecture on the Pareto distribution Professor Jordan B Peterson has this to say,

...if you look at creative production in any domain, it doesn't matter; artistic domain, food production, novels written, novels sold, money generated, number of companies generated, number of goals scored in hockey, number of paintings painted, number of compositions written. Anything like that where the fundamental underlying measure is human productivity, what you find is a very tiny percentage of people produce almost all the output. It's called a Pareto distribution...It's a square root law, so here's the law fundamentally. If you look at the number of people who are producing in a given domain, the square root of the people produce half the product. So, if you have ten employees three of them do half the work but if you have ten thousand employees one hundred of them do half the work. Right! It's a very vicious statistic. <sup>i</sup>

This certainly implies that whatever field/profession an individual enters, unless it is an incredibly small field, they are (extremely) unlikely to make it to anywhere near the top. Clearly this suggests, amongst other things, that Non-State Forms (NSFs) have a comparative advantage over states as they involve much smaller groups of workers allowing for large efficiency gains. More pertinently to us Professor Peterson goes on to say,

Pareto distributions govern, for example, the distribution of money, which is why 1% of the people in the general population have the overwhelming amount of money and 1/10 of that 1% has almost all of that...and you think that's a terrible thing, and perhaps it is, but what you have to understand is that, that law governs the distribution of creative production across all creative domains, right? It's something like a natural law...it's a deeply built feature of systems of creative production and *no one really knows what to do about it* (my emphasis), because the danger is all the resources get funnelled to a tiny minority of people at the top and a huge section of the population stack up at zero. <sup>ii</sup>

Human history from the rise of Sumer does seem to suggest that Dr Peterson is correct. A tiny fraction of the population live like kings and a substantial minority at the bottom are destitute, literally without a pot to piss in. Dr Peterson further observes,

But to blame that on the oppressive nature of a given system is to radically underestimate the complexity of the problem. *No one actually knows how to effectively shovel the resources from the minority that controls almost everything to the majority that has almost nothing in any consistent way* (my emphasis) because as you shovel money down it tends to move right back up and it's a big problem. <sup>iii</sup>

It's not only that it's a big problem but at first sight it appears to be an intractable problem. If you are born poor in any country in the world your options are extremely limited, and they probably always will be. Of course, social mobility does exist, a very small number of poor people will become rich, or more likely moderately well off, but usually an individual's access to education and opportunities is largely dictated by the family they are born into. According to Oxfam's 2014 report, *Working for the Few: Political capture and economic inequality*,

**Almost half of the world's wealth is now owned by one percent of the population.**

**The wealth of the one percent richest people in the world amounts to \$110 trillion.**

**That's 65 times the total wealth of the bottom half of the world's population.**

**The bottom half of the world's population owns the same as the richest 85 people in the world**

**Seven out of ten people live in countries where economic inequality has increased in the last 30 years.**

**The richest one percent increased their share of income in 24 out of 26 countries for which we have data between 1980 and 2012.**

**In the US, the wealthiest one percent captured 95 percent of post-financial crisis growth since 2009, while the bottom 90 percent became poorer.<sup>iv</sup>**

They go on to say, "This massive concentration of economic resources in the hands of fewer people presents a significant threat to inclusive political and economic systems. Instead of moving forward together, people are increasingly separated by economic and political power, inevitably heightening social tensions and increasing the risk of societal breakdown".<sup>v</sup> This is the situation that currently exists under the current global capitalist paradigm. However, the Pareto distribution suggests that whatever system is in place; capitalism, communism, feudalism, whatever, that it doesn't really matter as the issue is far deeper than any of these systems. How then can we possibly solve this apparently intractable problem?

Firstly, it may be that the evidence is faulty in some way and that Professor Peterson is wrong, and, in fact, on the issue of wealth distribution it appears that it is worse than the Pareto distribution would predict. The square root of 7.5 billion is approximately 90,000 and the square root of that is 300, and the square root of that is approximately 17, which is close to the supposed richest 8 who in 2017 owned as much as the poorest 50%.<sup>vi</sup> A triple square root law or even a quadruple square root law when applied to the distribution of money amongst all of Earth's 7.5 billion human inhabitants. What does it mean? Either the law has broken down or the accounting of all capital, both visible and hidden assets, is faulty in the commonly repeated figures, perhaps at a certain tipping point of inequality and/or population size, it becomes a double square root, triple square root or quadruple square root law. Or perhaps when populations are split into blocks they more closely resemble a Pareto distribution. At the very least it suggests that more research is needed to investigate the issue. In any case, the system we have at the moment has created a staggering amount of inequality.

A possible hypothesis might contend that once corruption in the political and business sector reaches a certain point it artificially pushes the Pareto distribution several standard deviations from the one square root and the law bends out of shape or breaks completely. 90% of the population get poorer whilst the richest 0.01% or 0.0001% of the population get mind-bogglingly wealthier. Computers in far off locations such as Panama, the Cayman Island or Luxembourg rack up ever larger numbers whilst simultaneously wars rage and poverty becomes more common, but something has to give at some point. When plundering and poisoning passes the carrying capacity of the Earth it can only, inevitably, break down; at which point it will be replaced by whichever groups/systems can take advantage of the chaos; a descent into a new round of feudalism or postcapitalist systems.

How can this natural human law (assuming that it is indeed a natural human law) be tackled in terms of wealth and money distribution? One part of the solution is to change the very nature of currency, another is to harness the peace dividend and a third is to change the value systems of humans. Fiat currency loaned into existence must come to an end, moreover, an Unconditional Basic Income (UBI) must be paid to all citizens of states as the norm. Smart design as part of an RBE will also be part of this solution. Thus, when no individual human goes hungry or homeless the inequality at the far ends of the Pareto Distribution will simply narrow and become less important, although some level of inequality will always exist.

### **The Failures of the political Left and Right**

While coherent arguments exist that capitalism during *Les Trente Glorieuses* (the post war years 1945-75) has been the most effective system for raising huge numbers of people out of poverty and improving living standards, it is also true that gross wealth inequality is the norm with capitalist systems. Moreover, with the introduction of the neo-liberal economic capitalist experiment starting in 1973 in Chile after Pinochet's CIA-backed military coup and increasingly gaining traction in the 1980s in the UK and USA, inequality and all its associated negative economic externalities have increased in an unprecedented manner with the wealthiest 0.01% increasing their wealth by a staggering amount; this free-market neo-liberal capitalist leopard cannot change its spots. Mass poverty and homelessness, with all their associated negative consequences, are *inevitable* in the advanced capitalist-consumerist system, but to accept this as unavoidable and a reasonable price to pay for any system of human organisation is a poor value decision. As Nelson Mandela once observed, "Like slavery and apartheid...poverty is not natural. It is man-made and can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings".<sup>vii</sup>

To follow a value system that implicitly accepts as inevitable and reasonable that a significant minority of fellow *H. sapiens* are malnourished, hungry and without shelter, dumped on the garbage heap of life, whilst the technology and resources exist to house and feed them is to live but a shadow of a life. And let no one be in any doubt that their implicit acceptance is not a value judgement. We must start from the basic premise that the system exists to serve the people and not, as is so often the case with the materialist-reductionist ideologies of capitalism and communism, the people serving the system. In the post-capitalist paradigms which are to come, homelessness and poverty cannot be acceptable externalities in any way, shape or form.

The environmental movement, liberals and left-wingers of all shades missed their opportunity to provide an effective plausible alternative to capitalism, connect with ordinary people and build a radical, competent and effective movement for sustained change. Nordhaus and Shellenberger articulated this particularly well in their excellent book *Break Through! From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility* when they said,

Environmental leaders and philanthropists ...treat prosperity as either a distraction from their primary focus of solving the problems of pollution and bad development or as an ancillary concern to be jury-rigged on the existing environmental framework of limiting human intrusions on nature. But improving living standards for humans can never be a fundamental aspect of environmentalism-only a weakly grafted appendage. That's because environmental thinkers and leaders understand material prosperity as the *cause of but not the solution to* (original emphasis) pollution and degradation.<sup>viii</sup>

The traditional message from mainstream environmentalists had been to consume less, re-use and recycle rather than to consume more consciously and intelligently. The idea that the system itself could be replaced was often considered a radical notion not to be discussed in polite company. This has been a failure on several very important levels. Firstly, it has never engaged, nor could it possibly have ever engaged, the ordinary working person on the street whose priority is to pay the next bill and provide for their family. Environmental concerns usually register low, if at all, for those individuals struggling to live and provide for their dependents living paycheque to paycheque. Secondly it implicitly accepts the materialist-reductionist mind-set; it is linear thinking firmly rooted within the box. Thirdly it is not an inspiring rallying cry. Not the strong foundation on which to build a radical, viable and workable alternative to neo-liberal capitalism; it lacks chilli, garlic and coriander.

Let us also be in no doubt that Stalinist Soviet Communism, Maoist Chinese Communism and the feudal-Communist nightmare of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge, in any way represent viable alternatives to capitalism; indeed, they make western capitalism look positively benign in comparison. Psychopathic leaders embedded within inefficient and/or pathological bureaucracies have led to some of humanity's most dystopian nightmares and that's saying something. Although it is likely that a few of the tools and concepts of communism might be useful to humans in the future, as an overarching system it is largely oppressive, dysfunctional, psychopathic and not conducive to long-term sustainability. Let's draw lessons from communism's failures and move on.

But capitalism of one variety or another is the prevailing system of socio-economic organisation in the vast majority of the countries in the world today and so that is where this section aims its primary critique. In conversation with comedian and political commentator Jimmy Dore, film maker Peter Joseph makes these observations of capitalism,

Here's the paradox of our market economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have a system based on scarcity, which justifies our political nonsense. We can't have health care for the American public but we can go bomb a country with trillions of dollars into infinity. The contradiction is immense.

But then what do we do? We promote infinite consumption. 'Go out and buy everything, keep buying and consuming' because that fuels jobs and GDP and everything that denotes survival. So we have this backwards system that is completely antithetical to sustainability and in many ways antithetical to any kind of group harmony and social justice. <sup>ix</sup>

Thus, it is the very philosophy and design of capitalism which is at fault and unsustainable in the long term. *Capitalism as If the World Matters* by Jonathon Porritt is a seminal work which makes an invaluable contribution to the long history of works on human socio-economic organisation. Essentially it is a vision of an optimum capitalist system and it would be the saviour of capitalism if we could somehow disregard the, routinely overlooked, negative

externalities of capitalism. Indeed, we must move away from the very psychology and ideology that allows the destruction of the biosphere we live on to be regarded as an ‘externality’ –but more on that later. Lord May the President of the Royal Society in reviewing the work states, “...if capitalism cannot be bent towards sustainability – towards being part of the solution – then I believe there *is* no solution” and this has been the prevailing view of mainstream economists and development professionals of the post-Soviet era. <sup>x</sup> However, the central thesis of the book itself, namely that capitalism can be made to be sustainable and is indeed the only system capable of delivering sustainability, is fundamentally flawed. Porritt states,

This means working with the grain of markets and free choice not against it. It means embracing capitalism as the only overarching system capable of achieving any kind of reconciliation between ecological sustainability, on the one hand, and the pursuit of prosperity, on the other...Logically whether we like it or not, sustainability is therefore going to have to be delivered within that all-encompassing capitalist framework. We don't have time to wait for any big picture ideological successor.<sup>xi</sup>

Dead wrong. Not only can capitalism not reconcile ecological sustainability and the pursuit of prosperity and personal wellbeing, but capitalism is inherently unsustainable, or in other words, sustainable capitalism is an oxymoron. While it is true that capitalism has had many successes since the industrial revolution and many of its tools are both useful and functional, massive global population increases since the Second World War and changing consumption patterns have led to an almost exponentially greater demand on natural resources that cannot be sustained in the medium-long term with the present paradigm. Moreover, since the global financial crisis of 2008 wealth inequality has increased faster and yet the overall psychology and philosophy of economists and politicians has largely, although not exclusively, remained unchanged despite the glaring problems of this economic ideology. It is no longer fit for purpose.

Capitalism is a many faceted gem, in its more balanced forms it is remarkably efficient but when out of balance, as it is today, it's a dysfunctional schizophrenic hydra. It offers up a fine tasting menu, but it has a limited lifespan in its current incarnation. Capitalism spans many brands and some brands are less dysfunctional than others and offer up more functional tools to examine. For example, the ‘socialist-flavoured-capitalism’ in Scandinavia, Holland, France and Germany, have undoubtedly helped foster some of the most egalitarian societies that have existed since the industrial revolution. There are lessons to be drawn from these successes for despite its many limitations capitalism has given us some extremely functional tools for human organisation. Conversely, ‘mafia-capitalism’ in Russia, ‘Communist-Party-capitalism’ in China, ‘winner-takes-all capitalism’ (or ‘oligarch-capitalism’ if you prefer) of the USA and the peculiar unique brand of British ‘*laissez-faire*-capitalism’ have despoiled the environment and created some of the most successful arms-makers to have lived in human history.

The link between capitalism and the military-industrial-complex, although often hidden, is strong. The arms trade is responsible for untold suffering and is closely linked to the trade in abusive narcotics, particularly heroin and cocaine, and is ultimately corrupt. Look in an economic textbook and you will find scant discussion of these issues, and yet pure capitalism without endemic corruption, drug trafficking or the arms trade is fantasy capitalism. Like Eggs Benedict without the eggs, Beef Wellington minus the beef, lobster thermidor lacking lobster or *Coq au Vin sans coq*, it simply does not exist. This does not

require some long convoluted and complex conspiracy theory, rather a simple understanding of the logic of capitalism: -

**Maximize profits at the expense of everything else**

**Concentrate the profits in as few hands as is feasible**

**Offset negative externalities to others by whatever means necessary**

With this logic as your driving force, de rigueur for narcissistic psychopaths/sociopaths, special loans and trade ‘agreements’, coups, assassinations, proxy wars and genocide simply become tools to be used when necessary and covered up or kept quiet about when quality journalists come sniffing about. It is not hard to find examples; Guatemala 1954; Vietnam – The Ten Thousand Day War; Chile 1973; Afghanistan various times; Democratic Republic of Congo - ongoing. Syria. Yemen. Libya. Somalia. South Sudan. Indeed John Perkins, a self-confessed former economic hitman (a man in a position to know), sets out the blueprints used in some detail in his work, *Confessions of an Economic Hitman*,

...the core tools we Economic Hitmen (EHMs) used in my day: false economics that included distorted financial analysis, inflated projections, and rigged accounting books; secrecy, deception, threats, bribes and extortion; false promises that we never intended to honour; and enslavement through debt and fear. These same tools are used today.

When I studied at university in the 1990s this was the stuff of conspiracy theories but in this case it was true. Perkins describes his work in Panama, Indonesia and other countries in some detail in his book. It is a rigged game pure and simple. He goes on to say,

Now as then, many elements are present in each “hit,” although that likely is evident only to someone willing to delve deeply into the story behind the story. Now, as then, the glue that holds all of this together is *the belief that any means are justified to achieve the desired ends* (my emphasis). A major change is that this EHM system, today, is also at work in the United States and other economically developed countries.

Those at the top of the capitalist economic pyramid are quite prepared to use any means necessary to enslave other nations with debt. No longer satisfied with sucking money and enslaving other nations it has now turned its attention to its own citizens. The logic and actions of those directing the system are those of an addict, pure and simple. The amount of money they can extract is never enough and they always need more. Furthermore, the national surveillance state is a logical and natural development of this. He goes on to say,

It is everywhere. And there are many more variations on each of these tools. There are hundreds of thousands more EHMs spread around the world. They have created a truly global empire. They are working in the open as well as in the shadows. This system has become so widely and deeply entrenched that *it is a normal way of doing business* (my emphasis) and therefore not alarming to most people.<sup>xii</sup>

Morality does not enter into the equation, it’s just business. “It’s just business”. *It’s. Just. Business.*

## **What Constitutes a Sustainable Paradigm?**

Philosopher and Humanist Luc Ferry once observed, "I know that this term, Sustainable Development is obligatory but I find it also absurd or rather so vague that it says nothing".<sup>xiii</sup> So let us dispel this vagueness and ask the questions; How can sustainability be defined? What is its purpose? Who is it for? What does it say about the human condition? And how can it guide us? The purpose of Sustainable Development must be to deliver a framework whereby every human has ready access to all basic necessities – clean air, water, food, sanitation, sustainable housing, health care and energy –most, or all, of Maslow's hierarchy of needs first two step– whilst simultaneously remaining below the carrying capacity of the natural environment both locally and globally.

Additionally, it must provide bodily and mental freedom as well as delivering quality educational opportunities to develop a broad range of skills. Moreover, it must seek to raise the consciousness of *all humans* so that negative emotional and mental-health issues are a fraction of current levels. It must also optimise opportunities for quality work, leisure time and for activities which lead to the flow-state. Simultaneously individuals must seek out what it is that makes their heart sing and put that to service, not just for themselves but to their family and/or society at large; each individual must do their duty and carry a burden. Humans must evolve so that we might step into the cosmos and (hypothetically) greet our extra-terrestrial brothers and sisters as a peace-loving race.

A truly sustainable system is not a linear progression through the history of socio-economics with the odd tweak here and there, it is a paradigm change of philosophy, education, psychology, values, organisation and technology; nothing else will suffice. *The Tao of Sustainable Development* proposes that a paradigm change of socio-economic political philosophy is necessary to deliver long term environmental sustainability *and* social justice. Furthermore, it proposes that there are five minimum characteristics to achieve sustainable societies. These five characteristics are;

### **Sustainable Agriculture and Animal Husbandry**

### **Cyclical Resource Use and Advanced Technology**

### **Individual and Collective Psychological Freedom**

### **Effective and Egalitarian States and Non-State Forms**

### **Holistic and Research Based Education Systems**

These five parts are all explored in detail in part two of this work, which is a starting point and not a finishing line. By necessity (we are, after all, discussing future possibilities) certain factors must be discussed in general rather than in specific terms whilst others, such as the optimum population size for a NSF can be discussed in much more specific detail. The primary aim of this work is to reframe the debate around Sustainability, to facilitate a questioning of the assumptions that we have about human organisation and investigate alternatives to the prevailing global economic paradigm of neo-liberal capitalism; to look at the world with new eyes. Secondly it is to empower individuals and groups with a simultaneously realistic and glorious vision of the human future. Thirdly it is to suggest some possible starting actions to bring about the transformations required for our thriving human future.

A permaculture system of agriculture and ethical and sustainable animal husbandry are absolutely necessary to produce enough food for over 7 billion people without degrading the soil and wider ecology on which it depends. Advanced technology explicitly includes;

clean green renewable-energy, effective waste-management systems and sustainable housing with a low or zero environmental impact. Whilst humans would continue to manipulate our environment, as we have done since at least the end of the Younger Dryas approximately 11,600 years ago, the manner in which we do so would be fundamentally different; based on scientific knowledge/research, long-term thinking and respect for the Earth. A scientific understanding of carrying capacity of the environment and cradle to cradle (C2C) resource usage would be an intrinsic part of the system. Moreover, wise-intelligent use of advanced technology in the Sustainable paradigm absolutely and unconditionally rejects the arms trade.

War, sexual violence, domestic abuse, poverty, debt, slavery, homelessness, unemployment, illiteracy and lack of education must become pieces to view in the museum of human organisation. This must be achieved whilst living in balance with the natural environment and any pollution produced as a negative externality of productive economic activity must be below the local carrying capacity in every locale around the planet. A tall order indeed, but if this is not our aim what can we expect for the future of the human race? Subcomandante Marcos of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) articulates what this might mean thus,

In our dreams we have seen another world, an honest world, a world decidedly fairer than the one in which we now live. We saw that in this world there was no need for armies; peace, justice and liberty were so common that no one talked about them as far-off concepts, but as things such as bread, birds, air, water, like book and voice.<sup>xiv</sup>

To achieve this a new covenant must exist between state and individuals based on compassion and wisdom and not oppression and deception. Furthermore, these relationships must be based on reciprocity with agreed sets of rights and responsibilities for individuals and states. For those who wish to utilise the many benefits of the effective and egalitarianish state; fair laws, protection from violence, sustainable housing, food, water and energy, wide range of work and leisure options, would accept an independent judiciary and just police with a legal monopoly on violence. Rights and responsibilities of citizens walking hand in hand with the rights and responsibilities of the state. Moreover, states would accept that those who wish to live in small autonomous communities, Non-State Forms (NSFs), should be allowed to do so.

States recognising the rights of well-informed mentally balanced adult humans and their families, if they have one, to live outside of the state and experiment with NSFs would be the norm. Effective NSFs must exist for those individuals who wish to forgo the benefits of a state and live together with a minimum of formal rules and no police force with a monopoly on sanctioned violence. Non-state forms, by necessity, would be much smaller than states and therefore in all likelihood account for a substantially smaller part of the planet's human population. Individuals might choose to temporarily live in a NSF for whatever reasons and return to live in a state at some later point in life.

Psychological freedom, whilst difficult to articulate adequately in words, is perhaps, the single most important of the five factors and it owes as much, if not more, to feelings and emotion than logic. We must change the metaphors through which we interpret the world most particularly with regard to socio-economic organisation and our relationship with the natural world. Societies and individuals would address and seek healing for negative psychological patterns of behaviour, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), mental illness and emotional trauma in all its grim myriad forms. Furthermore, humanity must recognise the destructive potential of those individuals who demonstrate psychopathic traits and channel their skills and abilities into constructive pastimes. Moreover, those activities (including but

not limited to; sports; music; fine arts; meditation) that foster a flow state would become central activities which replace intra-state and inter-state war and domestic violence.

Sustainable Development is thus, in certain respects, synonymous with a quest for Utopia, defined here as *Technologically Advanced Sustainable Optimum Systems of Human Organisation*, and although we may never achieve this, we can still use it as a target to aim for. Why should humans settle for a corrupt, inefficient, discriminatory and grossly-hierarchical system even if it is marginally or somewhat better than the other corrupt, inefficient, discriminatory and grossly-hierarchical systems on offer? Winston Churchill once observed “It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government - except all the others that have been tried.”<sup>xv</sup> But surely there must come a time when we Humans draw a line in the sand and say, “*Less bad is simply not good enough*”.



i <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcEWRyKsgwE>

ii Ibid

iii Ibid

iv [https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/bp-working-for-few-political-capture-economic-inequality-200114-en\\_3.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/bp-working-for-few-political-capture-economic-inequality-200114-en_3.pdf) P. 2-3

v Ibid P. 3

vi <https://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2017-01-16/just-8-men-own-same-wealth-half-world>

vii <http://www.unfoundation.org/blog/nelson-mandela-quotes-we-love.html>

viii  
Nordhaus and Shellenberger P. 37

ix <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOyASsRvuws>

x *Capitalism as is the World Matters* – back cover

xi Ibid P.19 and P 84

xii Perkins P.249-59

xiii <https://sustainabilityseminar.wordpress.com/2013/06/14/not-sustainable-development/>

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