

Corporate Globalization versus The Civil Commons by which People's Lives are Sustained

PART VI

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Global Research, February 11, 2012

11 February 2012

Theme: [History](#)

EVOLVED CIVIL COMMONS VERSUS CORPORATE GLOBALIZATION:

A PERFORMANCE EVALUATION ACROSS UNIVERSAL LIFE GOODS

by

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The facts of daily life in developed society have been so painstakingly and historically constructed across generations to enable universal access to the life goods of evolved humanity that we need systematic understanding of how provision of every ultimate life good is under attack by private money-sequence forces.

Beyond the civil commons bases of safe and reliable energy flows into homes to perform the functions required for individual creation, food, warmth, and sleep, beyond the evolving body of public rules and regulations to ensure the safety of foods, water supplies and building structures, and beyond the publicly built and kept pathways and routes of people's lives in every life-value domain, still more layers of civil commons to enable us to live and flourish as human. The public education that has taught people how to read, compute and research, the public libraries and resources all can access without price, the civil water mains and sewer pipes built and maintained to provide all with drinking and cleaning sources to overcome filth and disease, the universal public healthcare without which countless lives are bankrupted or destroyed, the universal pensions for old age, unemployment-income insurance, disability allowances and supports, the civil interventions available in countless forms to prevent harms to person, property and home, the public information resources and consumer protection requirements, the publicly constructed and serviced dry-and-wet waste cycles for all dwellings, the countless standing government offices to respond to needs of every kind, the new shareware and creative commons of the Internet – where do the civil commons stop? What domain of our lives is not deprived or threatened *without* them? What human benefit of culture and civilisation do we enjoy that they do not enable in a continuous way?

The uncovering of the civil commons by which people's lives are continuously sustained and enabled on every level day in and day out is the lost common ground of our lives. It is

simultaneously the substance of social justice not yet recognised in received theory and doctrine. Yet *which is not under attack* by defunding, underfunding, deregulation and for-profit privatization as private wealth has risen for the apical money-sequencers to a level where a few hundred control more private wealth than 95% of the world? After public grade school education was stripped in Africa to pay foreign money-sequence debts to public health systems, and income security for the unemployed, civil services, pensions and higher research in the industrialised world slashed or privatised for profit afterwards, there seems no end to the reversal of humanity's social evolution itself.

As civil commons are continually axed by defunding, attrition and casualisation of their work, and as rich corporations and high-end incomes receive continual tax reductions – the ever pressing financial pincers – the despoiling of social and ecological life support systems piece by piece is prevented only by resistance at every node of the private money-sequence invasion. Even when the most beloved and recognised civil commons formations – like Canada's public healthcare system – cannot be cut without loss of the next election, the global disorder is not penetrated in its system-wide inner logic by public or academic understanding. Like Plato's cave-dwellers held by their chains of conditioning to see only dancing shadows projected onto the wall before them from an unseen source, we do not see the regulating forms behind the show of ever-changing appearances. Thus the civil commons substructure of human society is underfunded, privatised in bits and wholes, opened to foreign corporate takeover, tax-starved and stripped back at every level from one decade to the next across the world disorder without connection of the dots.

Re-Setting to the Common Life-Ground of Our Existence

We need to re-set conception to the common grounds of our existence to know our ultimate bearings. It is only from these bearings that reclamation of the bases for a human life and society can life-coherently proceed as universal across cultural and other differences.

The defining principle of all universal human life necessities and goods is (1) that without which the life capacity of anyone is reduced (2) by the degree of the good's necessity, (3) to the extent of its deprivation when (4) the means are available to provide it. This is also the exact line and measure of economic in/competence *and* social in/justice at the same time. Economic and moral rationality are not opposed as they long have been in the ruling disorder. They are re-integrated in life-coherent framework to apply across domains.

The universal goods which are provided or deprived are, in turn, goods which have:

- (i) *intrinsic value* so far as they are felt and conscious to human being (e.g., the air, waters and fellow beings felt as values in themselves);
- (ii) *instrumental* or *ultimate* value without which human life is reduced or destroyed by degrees;
- (iii) mark *injustice* or *diseconomy* to the degree of the systemic life loss without them; and
- (iv) mark *social justice* and *economic advance* at once to the measure of the *protection and enabling of their provision through time* by
- (v) *society's system of benefits and burdens progressively ensuring their provision.*

Economic Advance and Social Justice Both Decided by Universal Provision of Life Goods

Once real economic advance and social justice are defined with principled life coordinates, not opposed without life coordinates of either, we awake from their false and life-blind division.

We are able to understand how either is in fact won or lost in the world: for example, by potable and waste water cycles, scientific literacy levels, life-coherent technological advance, and life security gains or losses – all validated or invalidated by the enabling advance or disabling reversal of citizens' life capacities through generational time. It is *real economic development* from the standpoint of production and distribution of otherwise scarce goods through generational time. It is *social justice* from the standpoint of realisation of rights to the universal goods of a human life formerly wanting or deprived.

At this point it is worth reviewing the fate and trends of the universal human life necessities and goods under corporate-market rule for private profit and commodification, and the sole known protection of them by public regulation and investment in their provision – that is, by civil commons formations. It is here that we can tell the clear lines of the undeclared war of private corporate invasion and occupation of humanity's life grounds. The absurdity of claims of “development”, “win-win wealth creation” and “capacity building” are thereby exposed.

Analysis thus moves underneath rhetoric to actual universal human life necessities and goods which are provided or deprived, efficiently allocated or debased and wasted by a putative economic system. The real lines of economic development and social justice are thus no longer lost in the life-blind money-value metric or propagandist doctrine.

Atmospheric Goods

(1) The natural *atmospheric goods* of breathable air, open space and light are not conserved nor protected by the corporate-rights system, but systemically depredated insofar as (i) the air is polluted by its commodities' production and uses (e.g., ever more motor vehicles for profit with no limit on their numbers or ration of their use on land, air or water); (ii) open space is cumulatively occupied by these corporate-person uses and commodities disabling people's lives (e.g., by pervading fumes and motor-spike decibels and subsonic propagations); and (iii) the light of the sun has been made toxic by corporate-commodity effluents having cumulatively destroyed the ozone layer for protecting the earth from infra-red solar radiations.

On the other hand, where public regulatory interventions have been prevailed, there are air-pollution abatement measures, open-space protections, and sun-radiation buffers (by ozone-layer protocol, the sole life standard in transnational business treaties). Corporate-person provision of the universal atmospheric goods of breathable air, open space and natural light is, in all, totalizing in despoliation *without* public authority regulating every phase of its cycles. As with provision *or* deprivation of all the universal life goods of (1) to (7), economic advance and social justice, or their violation follow, along with higher or lower human rights and obligations.

Bodily Goods

(2) The *bodily goods* of clean water, nourishing food and waste disposal have been increasingly depredated by reigning corporate rights and commodity cycles insofar as: (i) the fresh waters of aquifers, lakes and rivers are polluted and drawn down by corporate-person activities of manifold kinds from factory farming, toxic discharges across industries and commodity extraction, with untreated public sewage itself led by these open-waste methods and by corporate blocking of taxes required to resolve the problem; (ii) the world's foods and beverages are increasingly sugar-salt-and-oil laden, chemically adulterated, and genetically contaminated to serve money-sequence functions of mass sale, masking of age and quality, and care-cost reduction, thereby leading multi-disease causation and depleting loss of seed stocks, vitamin yield, forest covers, and organic immune resistance; and (iii) massive waste methods increase by non-selective forest and fish factory looting, throwaway products and packaging, and non-recycling of waste products.

Conversely, economic provision and social justice together advance insofar as each and all of these depredatory trends in life goods security and provision are exactly reversed through generational time by regulating life standards and norms (e.g., by institutionalization in now exclusively corporate-rights treaties of trade and investment, as now with steel standards and ozone-depleting substances).

Home and Habitat Goods

(3) The *home and habitat goods* of shelter from the elements and noxious animals and insects with means to freely function are improved in countless expendable conveniences, but under the ruling corporate system: (i) a home is dependent on private money stocks or debt-servitude to private banks at compound-interest charges exceeding principal and, simultaneously, tied to private-developer profits so that increasing numbers of families are home-insecure or homeless; (ii) corporate-person 'development' is pervasively sited on shrinking farmlands to exploit their already historically developed life capital of cleared, graded and drained lands for what maximizes its external money gains; and (iii) protection from noxious animals and insects is by profitable commodities of instant poisons, solvents and other kill-mechanisms which are hazardous to life forms in general and blinker out life-coherent methods of public resolution.

Conversely, economic provision and social justice advance together insofar as housing is by public non-profit provision (as for post-1945 war veterans), land speculation is made unprofitable by transaction tax-back of the unearned gains, cross-border regulation of life-toxic agents as now in ad hoc manner in the developed world.

Environmental Integrity

(4). The *built and natural environmental goods of surrounding elements and contours contributing to the whole* are what form all pleasant human surroundings across cultures.

This enviroing life good too requires public coordination and control which private developers and financiers have displaced: (i) by massive ungreen urban sprawl 'development' around from one town and city and beauty space to the next across borders if not over-ruled by externally enforced regulations (e.g., as with old European towns or public parks); (ii) by buildings determined only by corporate-person profit for unit sold and not for their contributing place in the whole unless regulated by such public standards; (iii) leased public lands and resources to be torn apart and polluted by corporate-person loot-mining of forests and minerals, military attack or practice areas by high-profit weapons, and

private commodity noise machines multiplying in number. As with all other coherent provision of universal life goods, every one of these disorders is preventable and has been prevented by public life standards with which all must comply to have access to them for productive purpose or personal enjoyment.

Life-Protective Goods of Security and Healthcare

(5) The *life-protective goods of civil life security and healthcare when ill* are the mark of civilized humanity in all places and times, but are undermined by corporate-person rule insofar as: (i) the private money-sequence system it presides over redistributes public wealth and worker wages to its own global growth in ever greater extremes, thereby depriving increasing majorities of income and life security of all kinds; (ii) ever more public wealth expended on 'national security' by armed forces and high-profit armaments in fact directed to killing and terrorizing civilians and children in over 90 percent of casualties and deaths over decades, while simultaneously depriving massively publicly provided resources for life security for all; (iii) the mass sale of addictive and life-disabling junk drinks and foods and injection of toxins and carcinogens into commodity cleaners, consumables and personal care products which afflict countless people with diseases, whose cause by these products is unresearched or undisclosed; and (iv) the privatization for profit of health-restoring goods so that what does not serve corporate money sequences is ruled out, including public health plans and their extensions.

Yet again, every one of these disorders of economic provision and social justice are reversible by civil commons agency and known methods – for principal examples, public healthcare systems far superior in costs and outcomes, and diminishing expenditures on armed-force violence as 'national security' which in fact terrorizes and deprives citizens across the world .

Cultural Life Goods

(6) The universal human life goods of language, music, art, and play which constitute *culture* in all its diverse human forms are debased or eliminated insofar as corporate money-sequence growth selects for funding and reproduction of only those forms which directly or indirectly produce and mass-market commodities for corporate profit. Whatever does not serve this ulterior goal is not funded or, if integral to people's lives, distorted into a form that does (e.g., public education tailored to the demands of corporate rule). Thus culture becomes commodified to sell corporate brands, communication is reduced to what promotes sales by instant images and sound bites, and public cultural policies are determined by corporate modes (e.g., publicly financed spectacle sites in place of community play and performance areas). The cultural form is decided as "good" or "bad", in turn, by private money-value returns – that is, how much is paid for product or reproduction (high art), or how well it sells corporate commodities (commercial art). In general, culture becomes funded or defunded as it returns higher or lower money value to private parties. Students, for example, are required to "invest" in their higher education by debt contracts with private banks to pay for "the higher returns" of their learning – the money sequence of value imposed on and regulating education itself.

Every one of these trends of systemic depredation of human culture in all forms correlates with rapid corporate-profit growth into them with no cultural form made more life-enabling in any life value domain of human thought, felt being and action by the invasion.

The Good of Human Vocation

(7) The good of human vocation is the ultimate life good for human beings in community insofar as it *enables and obliges people to contribute to the provision of universal life goods consistent with each's enjoyment of them*. This is the innermost moral logic of real economy and social justice ruled out by the opposite demands of pecuniary self-maximization with other human beings as mere resources for more money for ever fewer at the top. The logic of human economic incentive and provision as well as human rights and obligations follows from understanding the nature of the universal human life goods themselves.

To enjoy the atmospheric goods of nature obliges one to not degrade but preserve them. To benefit from the bodily goods of clean water, nourishing food and waste disposal requires that each contribute to their provision by sustaining taxation and participation. In the same way, the universal human goods of home and pleasant environment, civil safety and care when ill, and enjoyment of cultural goods are realized in terms of the same *life-value code* of human vocation, economic function and social justice in mutually coherent unity across differences.

At the highest level of abstraction, *the vocation of each individual is to do what s/he can that is of life-value to others and of life-interest to self. For none to shirk the duty of giving back in to what enables the humanity of each is the obligation in return for these goods and rights – the human ordering of both economic provision and social justice*.

These are the real bases of self-respect and substantive individual freedom. Every person has something unique to offer, and social organisation is only good so far as the life capacities of individual and society, right and obligation, are bonded in mutual progression and *not* dehumanizing to both. The value of work for others, in turn, is defined by its contribution to the provision of the universal goods each and all require to live as human.

The autonomous artist is not an exception. S/he is an exemplification of this life-value ontology of vocation, productive function and social justice – giving self to the art to communicate to the world in original creation. One can be a clean-up worker, or an academic, or both in life-time given, or any other number of life-time contributions to the provision of humanity's ultimate life goods. Mothers count as much as farmers who count as much as heads of state in this *human ecology of vocation*.

The commensurable unit of obligation is *hours worked for provision of the life goods needed across generational time*. In brutal contrast, as the surrounding world makes clear, the private for-profit corporate commodity system results in more permanently unemployed, more downgraded jobs, more extended laid-off periods, less sustaining incomes, more squeezed-out work, more eliminated life benefits, ever fewer with work pensions and – most deeply – rapidly dwindling life vocations for the next generations.

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