



two outsiders conversation

TERRORIST MANIFESTO

DARKO PIVAC

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WHAT IS TERRORIST MANIFESTO?

Behind the title «Terrorist manifesto» is pacifist-philosophical-rebelian contents.

Book was writing in form of dialogue (on model of Platon dialogue) between two Croatian war veteran, one of them is Catholic another one is atheist.

There are veteranian from last European war what was on area of ex Yugoslavia from 1991 to 1995 year between Serbian (mainly Orthodox), Bosnians (mainly Muslims) and Croats (mainly Catholics).

Those nations are ethnically very similar, they are speaking same language and living pretty mixed on area of south-east Europe.

Bloody conflicts between them could be paradigm for all violence between nations, races and religions in any part of the World.

In this book is attempt philosophically but very simply language explain deep reasons of conflict.. On the end of dialogue they are coming to completely new and revolutionary solution of problem with violence between people.

Goal public on your market can be readers of Noam Chomsky.



EUROPE

Ex Yugoslavia



Area of ex Yugoslavia

PREFACE

This is a summary of a years–long conversation made by some marginal people. If you take anything of this too seriously, it is a sure sign that you are even more stupid than they are. “Thus spake Zarathustra and left his cave, glowing and strong, like a morning sun coming out of gloomy mountains.” On that day he was confident that he could seduce even the Mother of God.

Author

This book is dedicated to **MAGNUS & BUNKER** (Roberto Raviola and Luciano Secchi).

OLDER HOOLIGAN A – Oh, I’m so stupid!

OLDER HOOLIGAN B – Come, come!

O.H.A. – There, I had practiced rowing for six full years, sometimes even twice a day, but I have never mastered the rowing technique.

O.H.B. – One might say there is no simpler sport, you take an oar, and just pull, you oaf!

O.H.A. – Yes, it seems banal, simple, but it has to be that I am too stupid even for something like that. More talented guys were more successful with much less effort put into it – it’s frustrating.

In high school I had five periods of maths a week, and at the end of my second year, a teacher said on parting: “If you have understood what the function is, than I taught you much.” I managed somehow to solve the problems, but the function has always remained a mystery to me.

O.H.B. – Well then, if you are not good in sports and maths, you don’t have to be so harsh on yourself and repeat constantly that you are stupid.

O.H.A. – Well, I don’t care much for sports and maths, I can muddle through it, but I have done heap of nonsense in my life. For at least twenty years I am haunted by that Socrates’ sentence: “All I know is that I know nothing”. Today I think I have grasped in some measure its vastness.

O.H.B. – You think, in some measure, what’s the good of such caution and insecurity?

O.H.A. – Maybe the experience of the Balkans has convinced me that the more people are stupid, primitive, the more they are confident in their views. Those who are not empty-headed, are much more careful and have more doubts about their own knowledge. **I***

**Numbers in the text mark the quotation or a poem in the last chapter of the book*

O.H.B. – Now, that’s the catch. Blockheads are certain and determined so they rule the world, while the smart hesitators everlastingly quibble in the local pothouses. You are cursed by the fear of making a fool of yourself, that’s the whole point.

O.H.A. – You are absolutely right when you say that insecurity is not a virtue; I suppose cautiousness is something else.

Secondly, I am not afraid of making a fool of myself, because I know I am a blockhead, and I will die as one; this is the only thing I have absolutely no doubt about.

And thirdly, I would not divide people into stupid and smart ones. I think it is more precise to divide them into more and less stupid. **2**

I consider a man as a necessarily stupid creature.

In utterly simple terms, this could be an illustration of the history of human stupidity:

STONE AGE:



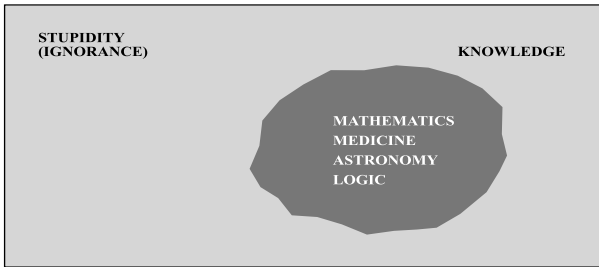
In the Stone Age, from the darkness of ignorance we took away the use of fire, making of primitive arms and tools (knives, spears, bows, arrows, fish-hooks, leather coats...). It seems we grouped ourselves in tribes. All acquired knowledge and experience had been used in occasional wars against other tribes for the sake of territory, hunting ground, etc. At that time it was also common to eat the defeated enemy.

O.H.B. – Yes, yes, hard times, nothing was wasted.

O.H.A. – It happened some ten thousand years ago in Mesopotamia (what is now Iraq), it happened when the village developed into the first town, the first script developed, the first civilization. Afterwards, Egyptian, Chinese, Indian civilizations independently developed. Then there is the famous ancient Greece. **3**

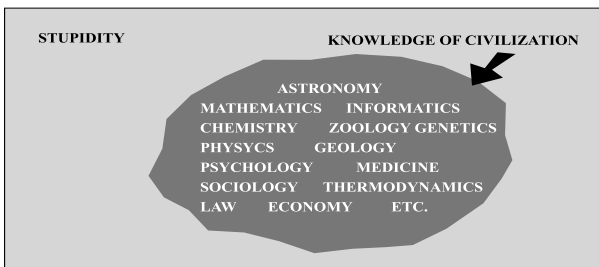
O.H.B. – The famous Balkans.

ANTIQUITY



O.H.A. – The Greeks have probably due to their good geographical position acquired knowledge and experience of the peoples of the old Mediterranean (Europe, Africa and Asia), and in a few bumper centuries they laid the wide foundations of the today's unique world civilization.

TODAY



Now it is the year 2004. The human knowledge has considerably accumulated, and each science has hundreds of divisions; in each segment of science, years of studying what man has already conceived are needed in order to finally reach the unknown, the ignorance (stupidity).

It is sad truth that at a specific time all this accumulated knowledge is used to fuck the members of another tribe up (nuclear missiles, intelligent bombs, war propaganda...).

Socrates thought that the medicine was an ideal pattern of the practical science that once philosophy too should become. When it comes to today's medicine, it is at least ten thousand times more advanced than medicine at Socrates' time, but when you take any philosophy textbook, almost half of it deals with ancient Greeks, and the other half are the others until the present day.

O.H.B. – Maybe the climate was suitable for quibbling in the nature underneath the fig trees?

O.H.A. – Well, Greece is still inhabited by the Greeks, the descendants of those Greeks, and the climate is more or less the same as then, and still, for the last two thousand years they have not come up with anything outstanding. It seems that the answer after all is the climate, but the climate of democracy and freedom that goes along with it. Democracy is maybe their greatest invention.

O.H.B. – It is possible that it is the answer, the devil knows.

O.H.A. – This climate was perceived at the West around 1968, we felt it in eighties. Take the music for example.

The progress of medicine is based on the progress of natural sciences (chemistry, physics, biology...). Natural sciences are making use of numbers, while philosophy uses only words. Numbers are far more precise than words. And one more thing: all nations use the same numbers (Arabic), while languages are different, as well as scripts.

O.H.B. – Ah, His Majesty Mathematics, we used it to calculate the orbits of the electrons around the atomic nucleus, orbits of the planets around the stars, orbits of the galaxy...

O.H.A. – It appears that in the mathematics of philosophy we have not yet defined zero, i.e. man. We have not yet answered to the inscription on the Apollo's temple in Delphi: "Know yourself." 4

O.H.B. – You are implying that man is a zero?

O.H.A. – Come on, don't push it.

Anyway, civilization has accumulated an awful lot of knowledge. Modern people have some knowledge and experience that they share with many others (first of all, language, literacy, primary school, required reading, traffic rules...).

Most of them, however, have certain knowledge and experience that they share with few colleagues (drivers, surgeons, plumbers, programmers, chucker-outs, fishermen, geneticists, lawyers, blasters...).

O.H.B. – And what about the illiterate and unemployed?

O.H.A. – Surrounding always conveys some of its general knowledge to an individual, and the street degree has its weight too. I primarily had in mind, though, formal education that specializes us for an occupation.

A dentist can also be an excellent yachtsman and expert in Greek mythology, but it is not a shame if he does not know a thing about accounting or electrical technology.

A locksmith, in order to be a locksmith, need not know anything about atomic physics and Roman law.

What I am trying to say is that each one of us can have only a little part of civilization knowledge, and for the rest of it we are blockheads. Even if there were a superman who would acquire all the knowledge of our civilization, his stupidity would still be infinite because in the darkness of ignorance

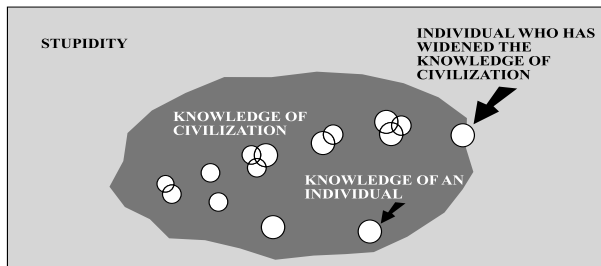
that surrounds the knowledge of civilization there are infinite secrets that are yet to be uncovered.

O.H.B. – You sound logical so far.

O.H.A. – The most that a person can do on Earth is to widen the scope of the knowledge of civilization in some of its aspects. Only rare scientists, thinkers, innovators manage to shine a light with a Prometheus' torch on the darkness of ignorance and to donate it to the human race. **5**

In the history of civilization these were numerous famous and anonymous people, from the inventors of bow and arrow, fishhook, wheel, irrigation system, first alphabets, mathematicians, chemists, Newtons, Galileis, Copernicuses, astronomers, Pasteurs, to the present-day scientists. Civilization always builds upon the already built, new knowledge relies on the existing knowledge and goes on.

For instance: once upon a time a Chinese man discovered the process of papermaking, in the 19th century the Arabs started making it on a mass-scale and used it for bookmaking, and some German man made the first printing machine in mid-15 century.



O.H.B. – It seems to me that you are overrating inventors and scientist. What about artists, theologians, builders, engineers, farmers who were feeding all of that?

O.H.A. – Each new generation inherits what the thousands of generations before had created. Except intact nature, everything else in this world is the work of man – of his hands and mind. All buildings, roads, railways, languages, habits, laws, religions, history with myriad wars, millions of books on all sorts of issues, heap of odds and ends, ingenious and banal, necessary and unnecessary, eternal and outdated, so you find your way around that! These illustrations are an attempt of simplifying all that.

O.H.B. – So you drew all of these illustrations from Socrates' sentence: "I know I don't know anything"?

O.H.A. – Correct. That sentence marks the beginning of philosophy, because when you admit yourself you are stupid, you have a chance to understand something. Socrates is credited with another sentence: "One need to philosophise as long as army leaders don't become ass drivers".

With two simple sentences dated almost 2500 years back, he marked the beginning and the end of philosophy. Because once the army leaders become ass drivers there is no more army business, wars and violence among peoples, religions, races, classes; it means a completely new era of civilization is starting.

O.H.B. – Na svetu postoji jedno carstvo

U njemu caruje drugarstvo

U njemu je sve lepo, u njemu je sve nežno

U njemu se svet raduje.¹

O.H.A. – I know very well this is a utopia, however, I know that if we don't solve this Socrates' rebus, all of us will go to hell. All of us: and black, and white, and slant-eyed, and rich, and hungry, and Nobel winners and the illiterate.

¹ Verses from a song that was part of a children's TV programme, broadcasted in ex-Yugoslavia. "In the world there is one kingdom /in it reigns comradeship /In it everything is beautiful, in it everything is gentle/ In it the world is happy.

O.H.B. – Fortunately, you are here to solve that rebus.

O.H.A. – Well, my friend, I can try, it does not cost me anything.

O.H.B. – Yes, yes, all one needs to do is to solve few trifles such as intolerance among nations, religions, races, and differences between the rich and poor and that's it.

O.H.A. – I'm telling you, I can try.

O.H.B. – If I know you at all, you will attempt to solve it without mentioning God.

O.H.A. – God is some perfect, omniscient and omnipotent creature and I would leave Him well alone. As far as I know, prophets haven't dropped by for quite a while, and priests are after all only human. Priests consider themselves as servants of the omniscient creature here on Earth, and as such, take guard that they themselves are omniscient, and doing so, they become very similar to a pathetic human subspecies called politicians. **6**

However, we are aware that both priests and politicians are only human, and being human, they can only be more or less stupid, definitely not omniscient.

O.H.B. – Well, well, just look at you, the old Commie! Just look at the story you've told me just to lend point that priests can be only more or less stupid. What a sucker I am! You tell me Socrates this, Socrates that, and Marx is screaming inside you. And yet, well done! There are few such left.

O.H.A. – Marx is just one of those who have tried to solve the rebus. Socrates is, however, my favourite, maybe for his simplicity.

O.H.B. – Come, come, we know each other little longer.

O.H.A. – What do you think about this Socrates' sentence?

You are from Athens, from the city most great and glorious for its wisdom and power. Aren't you ashamed of raking in money, as well as glory and honour while at the same time not

caring about wisdom and truth: don't you want your soul to become the best?"

O.H.B. – I have to admit I'm impressed. I haven't heard it so far; it sounds like Holy Writ.

O.H.A. – Except Socrates showed up in history a bit before Jesus and before Mohamed. Isn't that sentence the true essence of being a real Christian, a real Muslim? A man becoming more human, better, more perfect, approaching the ideal of God as much as possible. Isn't this the central idea of all great religions? 7

O.H.B. – As far as I know, Socrates was sentenced to death and simply due to disrespecting the state gods and corrupting the youth.

O.H.A. – Indicative indictment. Even today he wouldn't have much better luck in some countries. For me, he is a real beacon of wisdom from the far-away antiquity. It is not known whether he was literate at all; he is said to have despised writing down on account of weakening the memory. What we know about him is basically through his disciple Plato. Athens at that time was as big as the present-day Split (240.000 inhabitants, 80.000 of which are slaves). Public transport, of course, was non-existing, but it took you an hour of walk to cross the Athens from one end to the other. People then lived much more intimately than in nowadays towns. A square was truly a square – a place of meeting people, and this is where Socrates reigned.

He is not really depicted as Mr. Handsome: short, paunchy, with protruding eyes, a beard, bald, he was bare-footed in summer and in winter with always the same, modest mantle over the shoulders. He took part in some Athenian battles and he seems to have been a good soldier.

His main preoccupation was meeting fellow-townsmen and making conversation with them. He had no problem approaching anyone, young, old, aristocrats, craftsmen, priests, far-

mers, politicians, soldiers...Talking to them, he made them confess their ignorance, their delusions.

O.H.B. – He made them confess their ignorance?

O.H.A. – That’s right. He noticed that people, for example, if they became appreciated as craftsmen, each of them started considering themselves as the wisest in other most important areas too. He noticed that this arrogance threw a shadow on the wisdom they already possessed.

O.H.B. – Isn’t it the same today? As soon as someone becomes successful at something, be it sports, business, music, politics or fashion, he immediately thinks he is another know-it-all, that he knows much about everything, starts giving advice on every corner.

O.H.A. – It’s enough for a person to move just a bit from the bottom of the social hierarchy and to become, let’s say, a warehouse manager, staff sergeant, foreman, head waiter and so on, and his or her haughtiness immediately increases. Of course, the less a person is stupid, the more careful he would be as regards things he knows little about.

O.H.B. – Recently, the local successful businessman said for the papers that at the root of the word rich was word God. A few days afterwards, just under the sign for his store KERUM, appeared the graffiti poor.²

O.H.A. – A case in point. I personally find this guy nice, but this philosophising was just his big mouth. He got what he deserved. Anyway, Socrates had wandered through Athens for years and warning people of their stupidity. People liked him because of his straightforwardness and wittiness, however, it seems he ran afoul of some powerful people, mostly politicians.

O.H.B. – Well, rare are those who can take it lying down that they are stupid, especially if they are rich and powerful, because they think being rich and powerful is proof enough of not being

² Untranslatable pun. Croatian word for “rich” is “bogat”, for “God” is “Bog” and for “poor” is “ubog”. (D.Š.)

stupid. They forget that human being is necessarily a stupid creature, and they start thinking they are something more. **8**

O.H.A. – And so the bigwigs accused Socrates against disrespecting the state gods and corrupting the youth. He defended himself calmly and proudly, and the trial was completely democratic. The jury consisted of 500 members. After Socrates' defense, 280 jurors found him guilty, while 220 of them found him not guilty. Then he said his closing speech and if he had repented, the jury would probably have found him not guilty. However, Socrates was too proud to do such a thing. Moreover, in his closing he further provoked the jury by saying not only that he was not guilty but also that he had deserved to eat for free in the state canteen. Only Olympic winners were entitled to this right.

O.H.B. – Hah, he was arrogant, he wanted to gluttonise for free at state expense in the Olympic canteen.

O.H.A. – Yes, that's true, he was arrogant, but this is the year 2004 and we are talking about Socrates as some dude from our generation, and the then best wrestlers or disk-throwers are completely irrelevant for us. Anyway, after such closing, 360 jurors asked for death sentence, and only 140 of them demanded acquittal. This is how came to an end the life of the least stupid, in my opinion, Homo sapiens of all times. The democratic majority wanted his death and he submitted gracefully. Not long after that the Athenians realized what they had done, so they banished the prosecutors, and put up statues in his honour at the squares of Athens, but screw it, Vahid!

O.H.B. – What Vahid now?

O.H.A. – Why, you don't know the story of Vahid?

Mujo³ teaches his son Vahid to swim and throws him into the sea.

Use your legs, Vahid! Legs, Vahid!

Use your hands, Vahid! Hands, Vahid!

³ Mujo – Hypocoristic, popular name for Mohamed, used as the most often character in jokes.

Ah, screw it, Vahid.

O.H.B. – Ah, screw it, that’s not the only case that we democratically prosecute the best among us. They simply stick out from the silent mob, provoke, irritate, speak the truth about us, the truth which is not always pleasant, they say things most people don’t want to hear, they enrage the bigwigs and end up as they do. Jesus too had the democratic possibility not to be crucified, but his people by the great majority of votes chose Barabus, and Pontius calmly washed his hands.

O.H.A. – I had always thought that the Romans are guilty for the death of Jesus, until I read the New Testament. When, surprise, Romans had been in power, but nor did they arrest him, nor sentenced him but only executed him and at the insistence of his fellow-people who had been egged-on by the Jewish priests.

O.H.B. – You see how easy you make a mistake when you draw conclusions about things you know little of.

Jesus showed up among his people with words: “I AM THE TRUTH”, and there had for centuries been priests (erudite, Pharisees) who thought they were the only ones who knew what the truth was. A strong competition appeared which started to attract people to its side. Jesus threatened their subsistence, took away their bread, and that’s why the Jewish priests acted so energetically and cruelly.

They protected their occupation, the reason of their existence.

O.H.A. – They would have maybe forgiven him the truth, but no way they would forgive taking away their clients.

Few years ago Jesus dropped by at my place and, as with every other dear guest who is in my town for the first time, I showed him the more beautiful side of Split. I took him to see Vidilica, Sustipan⁴ and of course the bell tower of St. Domnius⁵.

O.H.B. – Wait, wait, wait. You are saying that you took Jesus to see St. Domnius?

O.H.A. – Well, I mean, in a figurative manner.

O.H.B. – Yeah, yeah, yeah, in a figurative manner. I can tell you that you've really gone ballistic. In Bosnia they would say – you caught cold.

O.H.A. – I was explaining to Jesus how this Cathedral had once been a mausoleum of the last Roman emperor who prosecuted the Christians. It became Cathedral in the seventh century, the bell tower was erected in the twelfth century, and it was renovated in the early twentieth. Thus it perfectly fit in the surrounding of the Palace and the town; I have never seen more beautiful bell tower, neither with my own eyes nor on pictures. Maybe I am being subjective after all?

For years here was a parish priest, Father Ivan Cvitković. He was a man of wide knowledge and outstanding spirit; he had always been in good mood. One could really learn a lot from him.

You can't meet too often a person who learns German so that he could read Rilke in the original. Today's priest is predictable and boring like state newspapers. When I think of late Father Ivan, I get depressed.

O.H.B. – Sorry for interrupting you, but did you, by chance, in passing, while you were climbing up the bell tower, noticed some white mice in the corners? Maybe you didn't pay heed to it.

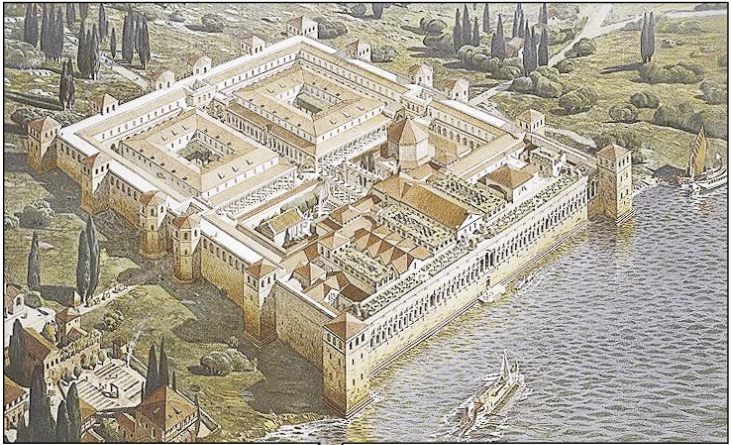
O.H.A. – Thanks for your concern, but I would kindly ask you not to throw your white mice at me.

It was a sunny day; the bell tower commands view of the port, sea, the islands, and Marjan. I pointed at the big building with scaffolding and explained to Jesus that it was the Bishop's palace. After the World War Two, it was nationalized by the communists and became the seat of the city library, Faculty

⁴ Localities of Split

⁵ Saint Domnius or local name Saint Duje; patron saint of Split.

295 - 305 A.D.



Palace of the Roman Emperor Diocletian (3rd century A.D.) Around which the Croatian City of Split emerged



Today City of Split with remains of Diocletian Palace

Marjan Hill

Riva, Split - quayside, sea promenade

Bell tower of St. Domnius with Cathedral in center of Roman palace

TODAY



of Medicine and Art Academy, and the bishopric was given another, smaller building.

The palace has been empty for years, and when it is finally restored, it is going to become the seat of the Split–Makarska archbishop.

The man who compared the military policemen accused of killing and torturing of the civilians in the military prison Lora with you, Jesus. He said that they had been, the same as you, wrongly accused.

They call them Croatian knights, although we all know it is not really knight–like to torture people far behind the stage. They were acquitted of the charge in a painful trial, although all of us in this town know that there were all sorts of things in Lora. As we all know that there are all sorts of things in the American military base Guantanamo, where they keep the captured the Taliban (mostly illiterate Afghan farmers). However, we know that the American military policemen will never face trial. So the American archbishops will not compare them with you, oh Jesus.

That part below is Split–quayside, Riva, the most beautiful part of this town. I have never seen so many people at the Riva before; maybe there are really some hundred thousand of them; bishops are in the first rows, there are many priests and nuns; they stand together with the people. This is a support gathering for the Croatian general Mirko Norac. He was accused of being guilty for the death of fifty Serb civilians in Gospić⁶ in 1991, and it was proved that he killed a woman with his own hands. This mob demands his release from prison. If I were asked, I would let him go. There was war going on, he was only twenty–two; if only he uttered a word of repentance, of regret.

Jesus, all along the Riva there is no word of remorse today. They like to say for themselves that they have hearts free

⁶ Gospić – a town in Croatia, in part called Lika, the capital of Ličko–senjska county. Severely destroyed during the war.

from hatred. Is remorse necessary? And forgiveness? And justice? And truth? And what's next, my brother?

Of course I didn't get any answer; I think he had a serious face.

O.H.B. – You go to such lengths, you get lost, and I cannot and do not want to follow you. I just know that if these people had not taken guns in 1991, the Serbs would have wiped the floor with us. From my own experience I know very well that the war is not a game of cricket.

If there is such thing as just war, there is no such thing as innocent armies.

O.H.A. – My friend, I agree with you completely. War is war. To repent would mean to admit one's mistake, one's stupidity, it would mean, I guess, the beginning of healing.

O.H.B. – And what about the repentance of the other side?

O.H.A. – The Serbs are even sicker than we are, and the Albanians are sick, the Greeks are sick, and the Austrians and the whole Europe is sick, the whole world is sick. The only difference is that at the Balkans this sickness came to the surface, while in peacetime this sickness is veiled.

O.H.B. – So what do you suggest, then, doctor?

O.H.A. – In The Hague a field hospital was set for the Balkans infection (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia).

For the first time in the history of civilization, all parties of the war conflict are being tried in court. The hierarchical system of commanding is put on trial, from the very perpetrator to the president of the country. The majority of the accused are the Serbs, then Croats, and there are some Bosnians.

I think they are trying to be objective.

O.H.B. – Objectivity is a characteristic of God. **9**

O.H.A. – I agree. However, from the purely practical reasons, the role of the arbiter on Earth is assigned to Homo sapiens, for example in football.

The court proceedings in The Hague are a great precedent that has major implications.

According to The Hague Tribunal criteria, the great majority of the bronze horsemen and busts that adorn the central squares of all European capitals are nothing else but the war criminals.

According to the Hague Tribunal criteria, a whole bunch of knights, kings, emperors, conquistadors, dukes, winners, marshals, princes, national notables, heroes, conquerors, generals, admirals... who look daggers at us from the history textbooks, and who are the greatest names and pride of their nations, would be sentenced to a long term at hard labour.

10

The poets, scientists, researchers, and writers are far less rarely shaped in bronze and stone, and they mostly occupy the side streets and squares.

O.H.B. – You want nothing less than change the postcards of the European towns and cities and turn the history readers upside down.

O.H.A. – I don't want anything, I am just stating the logical consequences of the trial in The Hague. The other major implication is that the present president of the United States and the British prime minister should join Milošević⁷. In the contrary, the international court has no sense at all and it's just an expensive, unnecessary show.

O.H.B. – I think that no one else besides us is interested in these trials in The Hague. The international law should be same for all, for big and for small nations, however, it is not, but what can one do?

⁷ Former Serbian leader, now prosecuted in the Hague Tribunal for war crimes.

O.H.A. – If we are not equal before the international law, and if its being implemented on a selective basis, then the law ceases to be the expression of justice and becomes the means of violence.

O.H.B. – Well, now you’re starting to be boring. You whine like a fool. Well, hello!! The world we live in is not fair, not just.

The big eat the small. The Russians kill the Chechens, the Yankees wouldn’t dream of apologizing to the Vietnamese for killing two million of them.

Repentance, admitting being stupid – not bloody likely!

It’s a dog–eat–dog law, and it is the only law in nature, and the same goes for people, for companies, and for states.

O.H.A. – Of course. I know there is some big wise lesson to be drawn from this massacre at the Balkans that ended not so long ago, the lesson for all, for the 21st century, and that’s why I keep coming back to that damn war.

I feel we had passed something that awaits the others. The Yankees today scream they are at danger all over the world. Do you remember the late eighties when the media in Belgrade kept stirring up with the story of the endangered Serbians until this stirring up reached the point of explosion?

We have already seen this all – déjà vu.

As to the dog–eat–dog law, in 1995, when we became military superior, we liberated almost one fourth of the country in five days. Although not many will openly admit it, we all know that after the liberation of Krajina⁸, there were plundering and arson going on for a couple of months, and some civilians were killed too, mostly old people. **II**

O.H.B. – We did the same they did to us in 1991 – revenge. At the end of the World War Two, the Allies unnecessarily killed off an awful lot of Germans and Japanese, and nobody dreamed of

⁸ Krajina – the self–declared “State of Serbian Krajina” within Croatia from 1991 to 1995, liberated by the Croatian army in 1995.

apologizing for what they did, and let alone to appear in court.

O.H.A. – When we became superior, we acted as terrible as they did. And what then makes us so different from the Serbs?

The myth of the Serbian heroism and Croatian culture became irretrievable.

O.H.B. – I am never going to admit that we are the same as Serbs. They are the chief culprits for this war, they attacked us, and not vice versa; the war was waged in Croatia, and not in Serbia. I don't want to talk about this anymore; I'll be damn if I do it!

What do you think, how many Serbs would say that they are not better than Albanians, Muslims, than us?

O.H.A. – Serbian narcissism is their problem and I wouldn't talk about it now. Allow me just to give you two examples. I've seen all the towns in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina that were the victims of ravages of war, but nothing bears comparison with Vukovar⁹. Places which sometimes were the blocks of buildings and houses are now the site of wood; the nature has taken its toll. The trees and thicket have covered the ruins; the leftovers of the walls of the houses which had been the home of people until 1991 now look as if they originate from the Middle Ages.

In 83 days of rage and helplessness, the third most powerful military force in Europe managed to destroy that town as once Chartaga had been destroyed, the town they called the Serbian Vukovar.

O.H.B. – They even called Sarajevo the Serbian Sarajevo; they used to call lots of things Serbian.

O.H.A. – Do you agree that Vukovar is not Serbian, but the town in the Republic of Croatia, which had 84 189 citizens (district) according to the 1991 census, out of which:

43.8% Croats

37.4% Serbs

18.8% Yugoslavs, Hungarians and others?

O.H.B. – I couldn't agree more.

O.H.A. – Do you think that all those who kept calling Vukovar the Serbian town on TV, radio and in newspapers, are just the same responsible for the crime that was committed there?

O.H.B. – So help me Zeus, yes!

O.H.A. – Do you agree that all the citizens of Serbia who just stood by silently and did not oppose that kind of rhetoric also share the blame for this crime?

O.H.B. – I think you are completely right.

O.H.A. – I am so glad we fully agree. Let's take Mostar¹⁰ as an example, the only town in the interior that had been massively visited by tourists before the war. And they had plenty to see. In my opinion, Mostar is the most destroyed of all towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sarajevo had been encircled by Serbs for four years, but the outskirts of the town were destroyed the most, while the old Muslim part remained almost intact. In Mostar, this old Muslim centre together with the famous bridge was completely destroyed, and it was we the Croats who destroyed it.

Do you remember the times when the Croatian media used the term Croatian Mostar?

O.H.B. – I remember it well. It was somewhere around 1993.

O.H.A. – Do you agree that Mostar is not Croatian, but town in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina which had 126 067 citizens (district) according to 1991 census, out of which:

33.8% Croats

34.8% Muslims

19.0% Serbs

¹⁰ Mostar – a city in Bosnia and Herzegovina, destroyed in the conflicts of Croats and Bosnian Muslims, still divided into two parts.

12.4% Yugoslavs and others?

O.H.B. – Yes.

O.H.A. – Do you think that all those in media who kept calling it Croatian Mostar are also responsible for its destruction?

O.H.B. – So help me Allah, yes.

O.H.A. – Do you think that all of us, the citizens of Croatia who just stood by silently, lived our little lives, and did not lift a finger to oppose this media rhetoric, also share the blame for that crime?

O.H.B. – I think we do.

O.H.A. – Don't you feel, based on these two examples, that there is a similarity between Serbs and Croats?

O.H.B. – You bastard! You put it in a way that I cannot deny it.

O.H.A. – A German guy, who was a driver for the International Red Cross in 1993, told me that what shattered him the most in Bosnia was the situation when he had prayed in Međugorje¹¹ for peace, and at the same time, a few kilometres away the Catholic guns had been firing at the Muslim part of Mostar. Disproportion of weaponry was enormous – in the eastern part of Mostar you couldn't find a single unbroken window, while two streets away, in the western part of the town, the shops and coffee bars were open, and people were driving expensive cars.

O.H.B. – There you go again with your attacks on the Church.

O.H.A. – Goodness gracious! Who did they pray to for peace? Did they pray to Praljak, Boban, Šušak, Tuđman¹² and their morbid ambition that the Croats have one big town in Bosnia and Herzegovina only for themselves? Who are they, gods?

O.H.B. – I claim that you cannot compare the evil that the Serbs did with what we did.

¹¹ Međugorje – world famous Catholic shrine in Herzegovina, near Mostar.

¹² Croatian war leaders during Croatian–Muslim conflict.

O.H.A. – I completely agree with you on this. I was in Tuzla¹³ in 1995 when eight thousand women came from Srebrenica¹⁴. Eight thousand women maddened from pain. They knew they would never again see their sons, husbands, brothers and grandfathers. Serbs killed all men from 12 on.

You know I had spent the whole last year of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina as an interpreter for the International Red Cross. I met various people, got to know them, talked with them. My impression is that the people from Herzegovinians are taller, bonier, like the rocky country that surrounds them, and their language is somehow stiffer, and all – Croats, Muslims and Serbs – share these characteristics.

Bosnians are in some way shorter, like their mountains. Their accent is different from the Herzegovinians', but no way you can distinguish the Bosnian Serb, from the Bosnian Muslim or Bosnian Croat by the manner of their speech.

Even their names are often indiscriminate. The only thing that differentiates them is the religion.

The only thing you can then conclude is that all this is one people, and that they are, if not the same, then at least very kindred tribes that accepted different religions by twist of historical circumstances.

O.H.B. – As far as I know, the Austro–Hungarian census in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not have the category of nationality, but it enrolled the Catholics, Muslims, Orthodox Serbs, Jews, and one of the reasons was that at that time it was practically inconceivable that someone is an atheist.

O.H.A. – After the war, the first thing in Bosnia to be reconstructed were not factories and schools, but mosques and churches (reading–rooms for only one book). Today they look as the only winners in that dirty war, with their new facades and copper

¹³ A city in northern Bosnia, mostly populated by Muslims.

¹⁴ Srebrenica – a place of biggest war crime in the former Yugoslavia, where Serbian forces massacred 8.000 Muslims in 1995.

roofs. And they are; they simply catch one's eye in all those ruins, misery, confusion and corruption.

I have another true story from Bosnia.

O.H.B. – Oh, for God's sake, please stop it, it's a difficult material.

O.H.A. – Just this one. It is the year 1992, spring. I was a Croatian soldier somewhere in eastern Herzegovina. We were fighting against Serbs, and in my company there were a dozen Muslim volunteers from Bosnia who were taken by surprise by war while they worked in Split. We were on our way to liberate Dubrovnik, and to reach Dubrovnik you had to enter Bosnia and Herzegovina. To make the long story short: we were returning from one damn hill. There were some twenty of us. Denis got killed, the five were wounded, two of which twice in a few hours. We were carrying the last and the heaviest wounded man. The ambulance car took him, and the rest of us got in our van. A nineteen-year old lunatic at the wheel, macadam road, in the open for the Chetniks to shoot us, and he knows he has to step on the gas. He is happy; you can see he's enjoying. On the one side of the road is hill, on the other abyss, and in front of us the Chetniks. We survived that ride too, and reached the village. There was a church in the middle of the village, and on the church roof a hole from the aircraft missile. There was a priest standing in front of the church, and a few of us lied down there on the floor. I was pouring some juice down my throat; I didn't drink a glass for almost two days. I couldn't get enough of it; I was dying of thirst the next day too. And the priest felt a great inspiration; he started explaining how it once was, how in the old days only Croats lived there, and then some of them changed religion for some tax and became Serbs. I was staring at him, drinking something, and he couldn't stop talking. He said that the Šešeljs were from that part of the country, and that they were mostly Croats, and that some of them, not so long ago, had switched to Orthodoxy, and that the famous Vojislav¹⁵ had descended from them.

¹⁵ Vojislav Šešelj – leader of Serbian extremists, now prosecuted in The Hague.

O.H.B. – Of course, Vojislav was not on his native soil at that time.

O.H.A. – Ah, never mind that idiot now. And so the priest talks and talks, and he is happy and proud because his time has come, we are his army. (The Chetniks had been in the village for more than six months.) As far as I remember, the church was only hit with rockets, while the parish office was completely ripped off and ruined. The priest continued to talk for a long while, and I couldn't find strength to tell him: "Are you saying that the Croats have fucked us up like this, are you saying that because of the Croats I have been saying goodbye to life almost all day, are you saying that?". I didn't have strength to tell him: "Shut up, priest, one lad is left on the hill, shut up, priest, this was a nasty day, leave politics alone, it's not the time, it's not the place, shut up, priest, for the love of God." I couldn't find strength to tell him a single word.

O.H.B. – Yeah... I can see you've studied Bosnia well.

O.H.A. – It wasn't my intention, but it turned out that way. I have never felt like stranger in that country, and when I would tell them I'm from Split, it would be a bonus in the eyes of the Muslims and in the eyes of Serbs. It's strange.

To pick up where we left. If Clinton had not unsheathed sabres in 1995 and said "Enough", maybe we would have still been chasing each other in the Bosnian gorges.

O.H.B. – Do you think that the Americans ended up this war with their use of force?

O.H.A. – I think they played an extremely positive role in this region.

O.H.B. – Do you think that Slobodan Milošević is the major culprit for the Balkans war?

O.H.A. – Undoubtedly. Although he is not the only guilty person, but he is definitely the major culprit for the war.

O.H.B. – But isn't it a bit strange for a communist leader to have studied at Harvard?

O.H.A. – I know what you're hinting at: CIA, conspiracies, secret agents and the like. I am aware that there are thousands of bureaucrats who are well paid to deal with that crap. I wouldn't underestimate them, but I wouldn't either get involved with their underground of conspiracy. This seems like shifting the blame to others.

I am more fond of the idea that there is no such thing as inevitable war; if war breaks out, that's because human wisdom has failed.

O.H.B. – You're probably alluding to the well-known silence of the intellectuals, people of literature, academics, wise men, the great number of which just kept their tail between their legs and started kissing ass of the new bigwigs.

O.H.A. – Every time I hear a word intellectual it at once turns my stomach, and if someone by chance calls me one, I flinch as if he cursed my mother.

O.H.B. – Are you calling me an intellectual?! You son of a bitch!

O.H.A. – Something like that. Now let me explain why.

As early as pre-war days, my first association to the word intellectual was Slaven Letica¹⁶. We are also some far relatives.

O.H.B. – The same foul blood.

O.H.A. – Of course, at that time Mister Slaven was a member of the League of Communists, professor at the Faculty, he wrote columns in weekly magazines, he often appeared on TV, wrote books, he was invited to round tables, he had liberal views for a communist, he represented civil options – in a word, real intellectual. Before becoming an intellectual, he was a member of the group that plundered the pictures from an old church in Podgora¹⁷. National militia arrested them and managed to return the majority of pictures, but some of them were however sold, allegedly in Italy. Today when I enter that

¹⁶ Croatian politician, famous for his change of political attitudes.

¹⁷ Tourist resort in Croatia, near Split.

church and see the empty frames of the pictures of the Way of the Cross, I can't help but recall our honourable member of the Parliament.

O.H.B. – Come on, please, what are you doing in a church?

O.H.A. – Well, I drop by sometimes. You know, weddings and the like. Robbery of a church is a nasty thing, but I don't hold it so against him. Let's blame it on the foolishness of youth. But the one thing I cannot forgive is 250.000 dead, hundreds of thousands of disabled, millions of displaced.

In the former country he had access to all media; he could have tried and do something to prevent this tragedy or at least to reduce it.

He was in position to do something, but he did absolutely nothing. He just tried to get onto a meal ticket in these new circumstances and immediately found himself in the first set of counsellors to the president Tudman.

O.H.B. – You expect a common flea to be a lion. According to you, he had to storm at clouds, and to prevent what was inevitable.

O.H.A. – Let me repeat – a war breaks out because the human wisdom has failed, and people who have enough balls to call themselves intellectuals i.e. wise guys, have to have balls to take the responsibility for what goes on around them.

Do you think that his conscience bothers him for the evil that happened?

O.H.B. – For God's sake, what conscience?! In Serbia you have academies of science with such people.

O.H.A. – I completely agree with you on that, my friend. Screw 'em all!

Anyway, our PhD Letica had distanced from the president Tudman on time when the latter started losing popularity. His muzzle is always wet and registers even the slightest change of wind. Even today he publishes books, they often invite him

to various wise stands, he was a presidential candidate and did fine, he is the president of Croatian Tennis Association, a member of parliament and is again presidential candidate.

O.H.B. – Intelligence is the ability to deal with new situations, and as we can see, comrade Slaven excellently deals with all situations, and according to this definition, he is extremely intelligent.

O.H.A. – He is definitely less stupid than those who vote for him. But where is the character, man?

O.H.B. – For goodness sake, what character, what honour?! They are not bothered with these dilemmas. He is just a specimen of the Balkan politician.

O.H.A. – We are old enough to have memory of how it was during communism, and here we are, we know how it is in democracy. In those times one party turned our stomach, today dozens of them do.

O.H.B. – People with no balls and honour are fighting all the time for a piece of power.

O.H.A. – Every four years we have the right to vote and to elect those who turn our stomach the least. They are all detestable. I guess even the most stupid have realized that. **12**

O.H.B. – I can see you don't like the parliamentary democracy. Maybe you prefer the dictatorship of the proletariat?

O.H.A. – I'm telling you that in those times one party turned my stomach, and today dozens of them. Only the youth of the party makes my stomach turn more than the party itself. The young that want to become old as soon as possible.

O.H.B. – Parliamentary democracy as we know it today is not perfect, but so far nothing better has been invented.

O.H.A. – Democracy is the invention of the ancient Athens, and in translation it means the rule of the people. Of course, the slaves did not have the right to vote. It was not until the French

Revolution that all the citizens got the right to vote, but it took another hundred years for the women to get the same right.

O.H.B. – As civilization has developed, so has democracy.

O.H.A. – Hem, let's suppose it was like that. I am of opinion that today's parliamentary democracy is completely out-of-date.

Democracy boils down to the fact that every four years we throw some papers in some boxes.

That's how we elect our presidents (politicians) who will rule over us in our name. The next four years we are never consulted by anyone, as if had any choice.

Don't you think it's primitive that in the era of computers, mobile phones, Internet, satellites... we keep throwing papers in some boxes?

O.H.B. – I think it's a good question.

O.H.A. – For the first time in the history of civilization the technology has reached the point at which democracy, i.e. the rule of people is really possible.

The people don't need their representatives (politicians) anymore to decide for them.

Each person of age could get a mobile phone or some kind of card by which he or she could directly decide, and not through his or her mediator (politician).

O.H.B. – I don't know is it possible to put that into practice. Take our Parliament for example. They are trying to implement electronic voting and it's been a year now and they haven't managed to implement the system.

O.H.A. – This is just another proof of their incompetence. How do millions of citizens use ATMs every day and how are the default interests on their accounts being calculated with precision?

O.H.B. – Damn default interests, they them rascals, bloodsuckers, they took all the money.

O.H.A. – And what did you think, that they came here to share money with the people?

Technology has widely been used for the control over citizens. In no time they will implant chips into our foreheads, paste bar codes on our buttocks, just to control us more closely. No one mentions the use of modern technology for the purpose of democracy and we still keep throwing in folded pieces of paper into some boxes as we used to do 200 years ago.

I'm telling you, you can tell where the West is going by the amount in which technology is going to be used for the control over people and for the democracy.

Unfortunately, as things are now, the world is approaching the darkest Orwell's foreboding.

O.H.B. – I must admit I like this idea with democratic mobile phones, but someone could easily manipulate with the results.

O.H.A. – These are all trivial technical problems. For the first time it is technically possible to implement the true democracy in an easy and cheap way. The problem is nobody wants to explain this. In that case politicians become superfluous, people do not need mediators anymore, and the occupation of a politician finally ends up in a dustbin of history. When we managed to get rid of politicians, we are not so far away from turning the army leaders into ass drivers.

O.H.B. – Easy, easy, you easily get carried away. There are people who hold the actual power in their hands, many of them are in the shadow and this democratisation of democracy would not suit them. Besides, I feel that this kind of power leads into anarchy.

O.H.A. – Apart from Athens, which patented democracy, there was another city-state on the Balkans that practiced an interesting version of democracy, and that was our Republic of Dubrovnik. Dubrovnik was the medieval republic. The power was in the hands of noblemen, landed aristocracy, which was

normal for that time. They chose the Rector of Dubrovnik among themselves, but the most important thing is that this Rector had only one-month mandate.

So to say, he had barely entered the Rector's court, piled his papers on the desk, and it was another Rector's turn to rule. The rectors changed every now and then, and someone from outside could see this as anarchy, but the fact is that the Republic, under the flag of *libertas*, flourished for centuries, in terms of economy, science and arts.

O.H.B. – The old Dubrovnik people knew well what a dangerous drug the power is so they did not allow anyone to rule too long. If it had been the Dubrovnik way, there would have never appeared either Hitler, or Milošević, or Sadam, and Goodness knows no Tito, no Bush.

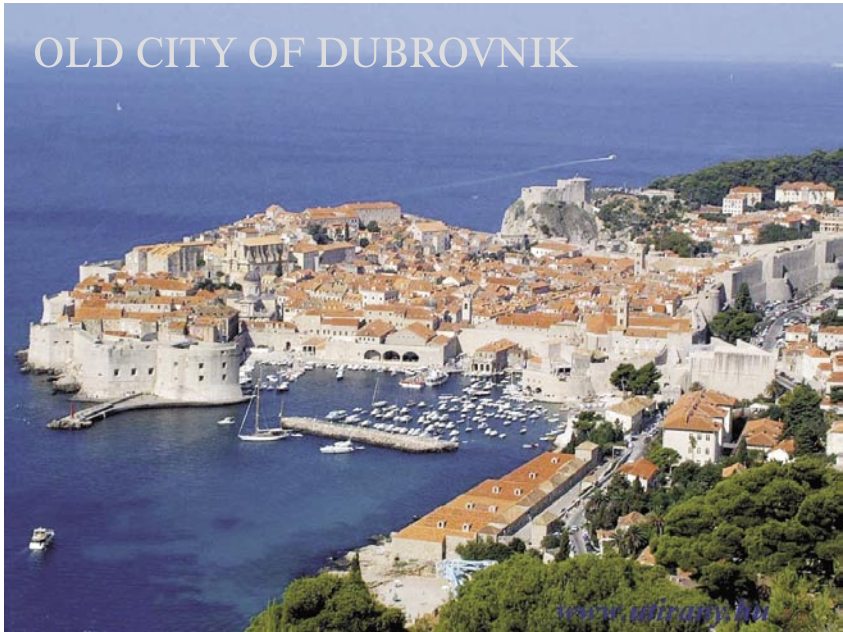
O.H.A. – What a historical irony! The Republic was conquered and abolished by Napoleon, the offspring of the French Revolution, which brought the democracy to the world in the basically the same form as we know it today, in which there are no privileged classes (noblemen, clergy).

Hollywood made a movie trilogy based on the Tolkien's novel *The Lord of the Rings*. The ring is an emblem for power (authority). Everyone is eager to get the ring, but when they finally get to possess it, they immediately become deformed. The only ones to hold a ring and remain normal are the innocent children.

In the end they throw the ring in the hatch of the volcano, where it first came from.

O.H.B. – Tolkien described it brilliantly. I personally knew some nice and kind people who were so deformed by the power that I was not able to recognize them; they were not the same people anymore.

O.H.A. – They forget they are only human, and so necessarily stupid; they start thinking they are something more.



Croatian City of Dubrovnik
Center of Dubrovnik Republic who exist from 14th to 19th century



By returning the ring to the place of its origin, **13** Tolkien was maybe thinking of giving the power back to the people. As comrade Lennon would say, “Power to the people”.

I’m telling you, civilization has reached the point where true democracy is possible. Even in the poorest and the most populated countries of the world the majority of people have mobile phones, the Indians and the Chinese.

O.H.B. – The prices of these devices are such that they are affordable to the majority of people on the planet. The prices of impulses are another matter.

O.H.A. – You don’t need to be an expert in economy to conclude that the price of the impulse consists of the costs of the state concession, enormous marketing costs and fat profit that mostly goes to the country which are wealthy anyway. Of course, the price of the impulse also includes the bribes that the local politicians accept from the operators (mainly multinational companies).

The end user pays all this, while the actual price of the impulse is so low that it could be toll-free for everyone.

O.H.B. – Comrade Lenin, if I understood you correctly, there is a change of plan: this time we are not attacking the Winter palace, but we first get into the post office.

O.H.A. – Comrade Trotsky, this time we will be smarter, we will not invade anything, we will not break into post offices, we will not conquer the castles, nor break the shop-windows. We have inherited some kind of democracy from the past generations, and it is completely in democratic terms to seek some more democracy. We supposedly live in democracy, and the working people spend most of their lifetimes in some companies in which there is not a d of democracy. The companies are ruled by the owners, directors, board of directors... in a completely dictatorship way, and some of these companies are more powerful than some states.

What democracy are we talking about?

O.H.B. – I have always thought you are a Commie, but it seems you are something worse – you are an anarchist.

O.H.A. – If anarchy means total democracy, then I am an anarchist.

O.H.B. – Hierarchy is necessary; there has to be some kind of order in a society.

Not anyone can be the captain of the ship, especially during storm. A captain is a man who has knowledge and experience, he always gets the first and the last word; here democracy is non-existent.

Captain has the absolute power and responsibility, and I think it's right.

O.H.A. – You chose a good example. Sailing has its strict rules. I think it's quite fair. Each captain when he first embarked was nobody. He was at the bottom of the hierarchy at least a year, below sailors, steersmen, and greasers. It took many years of navigation and taken exams to go up the ladder, starting from the third, second and first mate and finally reaching the honour of being a captain, not skipping even one steps in the ship hierarchy.

Unfortunately, such strict rules are not applied on land. Before the war all of us were roughly equally rich or, if you like, equally poor. The communist élite that ruled did not so drastically stand apart from most of the people after all.

Then came the democracy, immediately followed by the war, and at the same time privatisation. We emerged from the war with a new élite, which partly consists of the former communist élite and partly of the new champions of privatisation, criminal and of the new parties.

O.H.B. – Such were the times; the one who was more alert, capable, faster and cunning became rich. Today the class differences are far more drastic.

O.H.A. – You said capable, alert, and here you have a point. The new élite sends their children to expensive private schools. In Zagreb there are private secondary schools in which boys come in suits once a week, and girls are dressed as businesswomen. The children of our élite are learning to become our masters, they will never be nobody on the ship, they skip the steps on the hierarchy and become the captains without knowing the hardships of sailors and years of navigation. That's why they are bad captains and have no authority among the crew. Fromm differentiated between rational and irrational authority. Rank, title, uniform, occupation, place in the social hierarchy are outward signs of irrational authority. Rational authority is the one you respect and honour for its human qualities, knowledge, experience... Although the system is regulated in a way that it rarely happens, there is a possibility that the rational and irrational authority overlap.

O.H.B. – You respect only that commander who goes before you in the minefield.

O.H.A. – Exactly. Excellent example.

O.H.B. – Society has always been divided into élite and mass, the maps have been divided, now it's over.

O.H.A. – But we were fortunate or unfortunate enough to see with our own eyes in what brutal circumstances the élite arises. Do you think it's just that some people emerged from the war as rich, while the majority of people became poor?

O.H.B. – Of course it's not just, but we asked for the capitalism and we've got it with all its good and bad sides.

O.H.A. – Wrong! We asked for democracy, and democracy is the rule of the majority, and if the majority decides to return the companies to the people, the élite should yield.

O.H.B. – Wrong! The Western democracy has one sacred thing and it's neither the Church, nor Jesus, nor the Mother of God, Mohamed or Buddha. This sacred thing is called private

property; it is the inviolable sacred thing. Almost every priest will tell you the same.

O.H.A. – Yeah, you’re right. The sacred private property is inviolable even if the democratic majority stood behind that request. In any case that would be violence, and that is not the right way. Still, there is one more way – persuasion. You know that story when Jesus was approached by a rich man who asked him what else he had to do in order to deserve the eternal life because he respected all the God’s commandments since his youth. And Jesus replied: “Go sell whatsoever you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have the treasure in heaven.”

O.H.B. – Just look at him, a crazy man. The rich man, of course, did not follow Jesus’ instructions. Jesus then concluded it is difficult for the rich man to enter the Kingdom of God and that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. Thus, if Jesus could not persuade the rich man to share his wealth with the people, then I really don’t see a way for anyone else to do it.

O.H.A. – So, our tycoons have no chance to enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

O.H.B. – But they have the Empire of Earth.

O.H.A. – Well, I wouldn’t agree with you. A man can be rich in experience, knowledge, good will, time...

O.H.B. – My–my, you’re talking about spiritual wealth.

O.H.A. – I don’t know how to name it, but it seems there is some kind of élite that is far more difficult to enter than among those we usually call the élite. The late Father Ivan Cvitanović was one of the richest men I have ever met. I remember his cheerful expression; this cheerfulness is the richness you can neither fake nor buy. **14** Modesty is definitely one of the qualities of this élite.

Tin Ujević¹⁸ bequeathed us the crystal cube of cheerfulness, didn’t he?

¹⁸ Croatian writer, poet, humanist and bohemian (1891 – 1955).

O.H.B. – These are the people that spread good vibes around them.

O.H.A. – Something like that. Anyway, the terms rich–poor are very, very relative. Today the Balkans man in the street has longer and better lifespan than Egyptian pharaohs, and yet most of them think they are poor. In 1820 in Paris there were only ten private houses that had bathroom. Of course, their owners were fantastically rich. Today you’ll have a hard job to find someone in Split that does not have a bathroom, but no one thinks he is rich because of that.

Some ten years ago only very wealthy people had mobile phones; today it is normal for every secondary school pupil to have it. Few days ago, a businessman complained to me that he still had to drive a seven–year old limo. While saying these words, his eyes were filled with misery and sorrow as if he had no money even to buy shoes; he really looked pathetic. You see how richness is a relative category.

O.H.B. – Delusiveness of richness, come on, please, all this is the comfort for the losers. The world is ruled by the lords of the rings who possess the real power and wealth; we all dance to their tune. Democracy is just a smoke screen for the naïve ones.

O.H.A. – When I hear the word democracy I often come to think of Jesus’ words: “Whoever would be great among you must be your slave.” It seems this should be the basis of democracy. These words and commandment to love thy enemy are the two most important aspects of the whole New Testament.

O.H.B. – You infidel, here you go again.

O.H.A. – I was impressed by these two sentences; someone else will be impressed by something completely different. I can only imagine how the fishermen of Galilee received the news that there wanders some guy who turns water into wine.

O.H.B. – You blasphemer!

O.H.A. – What do you think, how many would follow him if he had turned wine into water? Huh?

And what kind of wine was it? What was the percent of alcohol in it? Would it cause headache tomorrow morning?

O.H.B. – What kind of questions are those?

O.H.A. – Alcoholic ones. Well, let's say the wine was superb. I'm interested in one more thing and it's the following: do the local chemists, who make wine from all kinds of ingredients except wine, go directly to hell or sit to the God's right as his favourites, because after all they are colleagues in some way?

O.H.B. – Well, now you've pushed it too far. If we were by some chance in Saudi Arabia and you ridicule Mohamed in such a way...

O.H.A. – I know, I would be sentenced to hard labour for life, and before that I would be stoned. However, Allah is big, so luckily we are not in Saudi Arabia, but in a free, democratic Catholic jamahiriya.

O.H.B. – I feel strongly about your taking from the Christianity what pleases you, and jeering at everything else.

O.H.A. – Of course I take what pleases me, what I like; that's what I did with all the books and ideas. **15**

Why should I take all? It's not the way it goes, even if I wanted to.

When it comes to the New Testament, I would put Jesus and Jacob (Jacob is supposedly Jesus' brother) on one side, and saint Paul, the author of a significant part of the New Testament, on the completely other side.

I was specially delighted by Jacob: simple, concrete, class-conscious. He is utterly clear in placing the proper action before the proper belief, while in Saul-Paul's case it's the opposite. So, whether you want to or not, you have to choose just one of them. **16**

O.H.B. – Here he comes with the class-consciousness and the Bible.

O.H.A. – My friend, you don't see the world with the same eyes if you were born in 100 x 100 m palace like Winston Churchill for instance or if you were born in a low-rise of the Liverpool workers' ghetto. **17** I think it's completely normal and that we agree on this. Jesus was a carpenter, his father too, so he was not from the lowest class, which at that time was made of slaves. He was from the middle class, and this very class is the class that gave the largest number of rebels and revolutionaries in the history, as well as prophets.

Our Saul–Paul, on the other hand, belonged to the aristocratic circles of the Jewish society. He had very good education, and two thousand years ago being literate was a rare thing. For God's sake, that was a big thing even in the time of our grandfathers.

And he was a Roman citizen – it's like having US passport today. While he was still a Pharisee, Saul was persecuting the first Christians, and then on his way to Damask Jesus appeared before him, and Saul saw the real truth, changed his name to Paul and became a devoted Christian. This story reminds me of some of our communists who had been persecuting nationalists for years, and then suddenly they saw the real truth, became the great Croats and joined HDZ¹⁹.

O.H.B. – You are not allowing a possibility for a man to change, to become better, to become enlightened. Besides, Saint Paul was very much so persecuted for preaching the Gospel.

O.H.A. – You are right, why couldn't a person become better, although these ours communists–Catholics are much more unsavoury than Saint Paul.

The one thing I cannot stomach with Saint Paul is his stand: if you are born as a slave, be a good slave, and that's that. **18**

¹⁹ Croatian Democratic Union, ruling party in Croatia from 1990 to 2000, and from 2003 till now; established as nationalist movement, but after Tudman's death transformed into moderate right-wing party.

When I hear something like that, I go crazy. Well, my Paul, you tell that to your sheep, I claim nobody was born to be a slave; we were born to walk freely and proudly under the stars!

O.H.B. – Hey, why are you so infuriated? Calm down, what’s wrong with you?

O.H.A. – I feel love–sickness every time I hear that. Be a good slave, yeah right! Come on, Paul, to hell with that. And his attitude towards women is, to put it mildly, conservative. **19**

O.H.B. – Well, that’s how it was at that time, but if it hadn’t been for Saint Peter and Saint Paul and their preaching the Gospel, maybe the legend on Jesus would have fallen in oblivion.

O.H.A. – Well, hats off to that. Saint Paul was a perfect travelling salesman, we might say the spiritual father of all travelling salesmen; he was without rival. My favourite parts are when he bargains for travelling costs with the Corinthians. The guy obviously fights for money, and all this is a part of the Holy Writ. **20**

I take my hat off to him. What an appearance, what a story, what a style! Genius, you can’t argue about that. To talk much and to say little. Skilful use of phrases. **21**

Even Saint Peter says at the end of his Second Epistle that there is something incomprehensible at Saint Paul. **22**

O.H.B. – I can see you are quite at home in the New Testament.

O.H.A. – I went to find out straight from the horse’s mouth what kind of wisdom they have been selling for almost last two thousand years. What can I do, I live in a country where this last Pope comes every now and then, and from Saint Peter to John Paul II only one pope visited these parts (twelfth century), and even that would not have happened if the storm hadn’t thrown him on these shores, which have always been thought of as wild, foul and dangerous for any even a little bit decent European.

O.H.B. – We are a bit wild today; how did we then behave at those times.

O.H.A. – If we hadn't been wild, there wouldn't have been us anymore. Anyway, what was I saying? Ah, yes, there are no such lousy attitudes of Jesus' as regards slavery. Jesus was completely on the side of those who were at the very bottom of social hierarchy. His turning the tables of the money-changers in the temple of Jerusalem is a violent act towards the world as it is and towards its false morality.

There is no way you can disregard this rebellious class issue in case of Jesus. I am of the opinion that Saint Paul considerably diluted this with his aristocratic perception of the world.

O.H.B. – Jesus died at the crucifix for all the people, the rich and the poor, and for all races and nations.

O.H.A. – Socrates drank hemlock for all the people, for those more and for those less stupid.

Well, I agree with you that Jesus came for all the people, although you cannot deny that the poor were his favourite. A propos of that Jesus came for all the people. Of course, you are familiar with the phrase “God and the Croats”. Do you think it's equally stupid as “God and the Serbs” or “God and the Mexicans”?

O.H.B. – You're right.

O.H.A. – Local priests and politicians not only tolerated this stupidity but also encouraged it because it served their job. Although gods are by definition internationals. **23**

All stupid nations think God is right on their side; French people think God is specially benevolent towards them, the Americans think the same, of course, the Iranians, Japanese, Italians, Pakistani...

This is the old illness of all nations, which becomes very acute in times of crisis and wars.

That's why I loathe all the religions when I see them wallowing in the mud of nationalism.

Because at the well of all these religions there were nevertheless some great people who were great exactly because they went beyond the limitations of their tribes, and because they addressed all the people, all the mankind. **24**

I cannot find anything divine about that. The first commandment in Christianity is: "I am the Lord your God (...) You shall have no other gods before Me." The Muslim version is: "Allah is the only god, and Mohamed is his prophet."

In the first sentence of these religions, God distances himself from his competition. For God's sake, how can something perfect and omnipotent have competition at all? How stupid, how human-like, how god damn human! Gods? – No way!

O.H.B. – That's your opinion and I disagree with you.

O.H.A. – My opinion also is that the founders of all great religions, and Jesus and Mohamed, and Buddha and Confucius, were all just men who stood out from their surrounding and their time. Their teaching and perception of the world was too new, too different. Confucius is known as a philosopher whose teaching created a new religion. It's a marvel that the same did not happen with Socrates.

O.H.B. – There, you are one of his believers.

O.H.A. – He was one of the people in the history of civilization that I really esteem – I esteem Jesus too, but not because he is the Son of God, but because he was a man, and precisely because of that. **25** And then the priests come, those men who know best about the ideas and life of that great man, and then make their profession out of that.

O.H.B. – I must disagree with you. Jesus was a man, but also the Son of God.

O.H.A. – We are at variance on this issue. You have your belief and I respect it. Proper living is more important than the proper

belief; it's more important what kind of person you are. However, I know there is one thing you're going to agree with me. Marx had his priests too who lived of that occupation. In school we had a subject called Marxism. You remember the party commissars who taught us dialectical Marxism. This teaching was irrevocable and universal.

O.H.B. – And where are these priests today? They disappeared without trace. They evaporated as if they never existed. They were so self-confident in their knowledge they explained the whole world with.

O.H.A. – All this wisdom is contained in books, and, as Krleža²⁰ says, books are in the first place “documents of time” in which they came about. The time discards many things, and many of these wisdoms are topical even nowadays. Famous Aristotle, the founder of many sciences, zoology and medicine among others, observed a frog and came to a conclusion that it feeds on air. He considered the human brain as a useless grey lump, the function of which may well be to cool the blood. One should know all religions and philosophies and take the best parts from them that have passed the test of time. When it comes to Marx, my greatest objection to him is that he didn't write his capital work *Capital* in the normal book format, instead he wrote it on 2000 pages.

O.H.B. – He just did not know how to do it differently, that was his way, so who likes it may do what he pleases...

O.H.A. – His style was nasty. After his death, the priests showed up to simplify his teaching and served it that way to the ordinary people. Here is an example of Marx's style:

Religious poverty is, in one, the expression of real poverty, and in another, a protest against real poverty. Religion is the sigh of a heavy laden creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the opium of

²⁰ One of the most important and famous Croatian writers (1893–1981), politically influential, left-oriented, nevertheless in conflict with the communists, but tolerated by them.

the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions. The criticism of religion is therefore in embryo the criticism of that vale of tears of which religion is the halo.

Marx's as well as the ordinary priests usually took from this paragraph that part which says – "the religion is the opium of the people" and so simplified and trivialized this text. Maybe he wrote the wrong thing when he wrote that part with the heart, soul, liver and kidneys, and according to me, the most important part is the following: "To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions." This is a block of the text for which at least I wasn't smart enough to read it and understand it right away; I had to go back to it many times.

O.H.B. – Are you saying that he had vague style like Saint Paul?

O.H.A. – I don't think the two of them belong to the same league. Saint Paul passed on someone else's, i.e. Jesus' ideas, and Marx devised his own. Saint Paul was a priest (the one who passes on someone's teaching). **26**

Very often these philosophers, wise men have a difficult style, so the majority of people have an aversion to these books (Hegel, Sartre, ...). Here I resort to Descartes who says that everything that can be said can be said clearly. **27**

O.H.B. – Now you are emphasizing the clearness and simplicity, and just a moment ago you were angry with the party priests who simplified Marx. You are being contradictory, aren't you?

O.H.A. – You are right. You've got me in my own stupidity.

O.H.B. – Now you resemble a Marx's priest.

O.H.A. – Marx lived in the nineteenth century. Hats off to him and Buddha, Socrates and Jesus, Seneca and Mohamed, Hegel and Kant, but we are in the twenty-first century and, if for

nothing else, than because of that you cannot take them for granted.

Now I'll try to simplify Marx's theory that the capital exploits labour, i.e. that the dead labour exploits the living work, because, according to Marx, capital is reified, accumulated, i.e. dead work.

A young married couple lives as subtenants. Let's say they are employed. They give from a third to a half of their income for the rent. They have no capital, only their work. Apartment is capital, i.e. accumulated dead work of some past generations. The owner of the apartment can be a private entity, company, bank, state, ...

It's obvious that the dead work, i.e. capital exploits, sucks the living work. Do you think it's fair?

O.H.B. – Of course it's not fair, but it's just that simple and I don't see a way to change this. There is the apartment market, so let those who can to rent, let, buy and sell.

O.H.A. – Not only it is not fair, but this relation between the living and the dead work greatly reminds me of vampirism.

Now look at the example how the rich countries allow loans (i.e. capital, i.e. dead work) to less rich countries. Now instead of renting an apartment we have interests that the poor have to pay to the rich. To be precise, élite from the rich countries (because even in rich countries there are enormous class differences) allow loans to élite from the poor countries from which this élite has most benefit, one way or another (the state structures, politicians' companies, corruption...). So, the élite derives the greatest benefit, and the people through its living work pay the loans, together with interests. **28**

O.H.B. – Vampirism is the general law of the world economy. But please don't think that this little man, who is now a tenant and whose blood sucks the capital, would behave anything better than the present owner of the capital if he one day got the hold

of the capital. And don't think that the poor countries that are indebted would behave differently if they were in the opposite situation.

O.H.A. – You are completely right. The one who does not have the capital would like to have it and would act the same way as the one who holds it at the moment. I have no illusions regarding that.

Marx knew well that the pure envy of those who do not have is the prime mover of a revolution. **29**

He thought that the dictatorship of the proletariat would gradually lead to well-being for everyone. Life practice has shown that the new élite (members of the Party) took over the power it did not want to share with the people. The economy of the communist countries was inferior as compared to democratic countries, and we all know how it ended up.

O.H.B. – In my eyes Russia seems even more miserable than under communism. Enormous differences between a handful of the very rich and a mass of the poor; unemployment, famine, crime, corruption, chaos. One may well raise a question: What good has democracy brought about for the little man?

O.H.A. – Here, you're mentioning the little man for the second time; I guess you're referring to those who climbed up high in the corporation system – directors, bosses, politicians... For me, the great people are mostly some artists, visionaries, losers who gave the world more than they took.

O.H.B. – I agree with you. Local great men are very often geeks who became successful precisely because they are geeks. Think of politicians, for instance.

You claim that the really great men are those who gave the world more than they took.

Aren't then those great men also those little workers who, according to Marx's theory, give more through their work

than they get from the capitalists through the wages, and the difference is kept by the capital in the form of profit?

O.H.A. – My friend, every time I walk through our city, our Palace that we call Palace of Diocletian, and when I see those stone blocks each weighing several tons, I cannot but remember the hard work of Roman slaves who cut those stone blocks on Brač²¹, loaded them on ships, rowed from Brač to the bay of Split; they even brought some blocks from Egypt and only then built them in the emperor's palace. And all this without machines, electricity, hydraulics; all done by human strength and with some primitive tools and help. I cannot but remember the effort of thousands of nameless slaves, craftsmen and engineers. The Bishop's Palace too was erected from the sweat of Dalmatian rebels, *puntari*. All the palaces of the world were built by the labour of slaves, serfs, workers. All this is reified former work, the capital squeezed out from the trouble of people. The thousands toiled so that only one person could enjoy, so that our first fellow-townsmen Diocletian could plant the cabbage in the hanging gardens of his weekend cottage. It's not fair, but that's how it was, and even today it's not much different.

O.H.B. – How could a town that developed from the house for relaxation be normal in the first place?

O.H.A. – No way it could be normal. Diocletian was the last Roman emperor who persecuted Christians. Besides, he was the only emperor who did not die on the throne (whether it was natural, violent death, or poisoning, strangling, You too, my son Brutus, and similar), but retired and lived in his weekend cottage till the rest of his life. And this tells me that he was one of the smartest Roman emperors.

O.H.B. – He was the emperor of the whole world of that time, which means he could have built the Palace anywhere he wanted. I don't believe he would have had problems with the building permit. He could have built the Palace in the middle of what is today London or Paris, Barcelona or Zagreb or Vienna; he

could have settled down anywhere in what is today Greece, Portugal, Serbia, Turkey, Italy or somewhere at the coast side of Niles, Tunisia, Red Sea or Corsica, but he didn't; he built it precisely here, which means he had taste.

O.H.A. – Well, I'm not sure if it's a matter of his taste or the impact of the stinking sulphurous waters on his choice of location. It seems he liked to daze himself with the sulphurous vapours, so he could at the same time be considered as the first drug addict of this town.

O.H.B. – The Roman Empire wasn't a state with the bad system at all. For instance, they had 172 holidays. Imagine 172 days when it was expressly forbidden to work, it's almost half the year. When shall we manage to win something like that? Because, the work–life balance has a great impact on the quality of living.

O.H.A. – Here is how to easily solve the unemployment issue. Why do I think of self–management now?

O.H.B. – Maybe because of little work and quite good life.

O.H.A. – Workers were stealing pounds and pounds, and directors tons and tons. Yugoslavia was the only communist country that engaged in self–management. In some companies the results were better, in some worse, and the state always had everything under its control. It had never allowed this idea to go all the way and the state had never allowed the workers to really manage their companies.

O.H.B. – They were afraid to let go of the power; the rings of power are not easily released.

O.H.A. – I'm in favour of self–management, but without Party, parties and politics. I think we should try this concept once more. Self–management is nothing else but the democracy within the company. The Western world, that likes to call itself democratic, does not allow any democracy within corporations.

We are the only country in the world to have a modicum/minimum of experience of that kind of democracy.

You must admit that people under that system seemed more relaxed, more satisfied than today; they hang around more.

O.H.B. – Although I hate to admit you're right, today everyone is talking about stress; I suppose we've got it in the package together with the capitalism. It seems to me that stress did not exist before or it existed in a smaller degree.

O.H.A. – Capitalist stress bloody likely. We were shook by the shells, that's why we're talking such nonsense.

I keep convincing myself that I'm not a nostalgist, and I'm telling myself that what it once was will never happen again, and I again recollect the state that led the world's poor, and today we are the last of the rich. Maybe the most peculiar case was the case of credits every citizen could get, élite probably of larger amounts, but they were mostly accessible to everyone. Crazy credits – you would borrow for example € 10 000 from the bank, and would return 2 to 3 thousand, and this lasted for years. Today you take € 10 000 from the bank and after few years pay back from € 16 000 to € 17 000. The things that were possible in that state were not possible ever again and nowhere else.

O.H.B. – Sobering down is always painful. It was not realistic economy.

O.H.A. – Of course. Vampiric economy is the only realistic one. Vampiric economy is ignorant of the democracy within the company and of reversed interest.

2600 years ago, when Solon was introducing democracy in Athens for the first time in history, the first thing he did was to cancel all debts, introduce progressive taxes and devaluated money. This could sound dreadful to the lords of the rings.

O.H.B. – As far as I know, Mohamed too admits only zero interest rates.

O.H.A. – We started talking about democracy within corporations that does not even exist, instead there is a classic hierarchical pyramid. At the top of it is the owner, director, board of directors...

In the hierarchy the power moves from the top down...

The prime minister decides who will be the minister.

The director decides who will be the boss.

The generals decide who will become the colonel.

The cardinals decide upon the new archbishop, etc.

At the bottom of the hierarchy are citizens, workers, soldiers, laymen, etc.

Out of these four categories of people, only citizens have the right to fold and throw some kind of papers into famous boxes with a slot on the top every four years, i.e. they have the right to circle the name of a person that makes their stomach turn the least, and this is what constitutes all the democracy of the democratic world.

Hierarchical system looks something like this: the owner lectures the directors, directors take it out on big bosses, big bosses command small bosses, small bosses oppress workers. The big boss dreams of becoming a director, and heals his frustration and complexes on small bosses below him. **31**

In the hierarchical system the superior is obeyed unquestioningly, the horse is being tied where the boss says, the boss is always right.

The superior is very rarely told what one actually has in mind; the superior is mostly told what he likes to hear. **32**

This creates frustrations that are attempted to be healed on one's inferiors, if there are any, and it's often passed on

the weaker ones at home. Of course, it's impossible to treat frustrations in this way, especially given the fact that the surrounding of the hierarchical system is sick. Sycophantic mentality is being created, and it is beneath a free man's dignity.

O.H.B. – If you tell your boss what is really on your mind, you are likely to be fired, and being fired in a situation when everyone is taking vampiric loans is equal to disaster. Less and less people resemble human beings, and more and more resemble dumb, bent down sheep that yield to the belly. **33**

O.H.A. – Maybe the better comparison would be the one with the dogs who had once upon a time been wolves, big, wild and proud, but in the meantime became tame and started barking, so now they live a dog's life – more comfortable, safer, but nevertheless a dog's. Dogs are dreadfully afraid of wolves; it's a combination of fear and envy, as if they're thinking: look what we once were, and what we became. There is a touch of guilty conscience to it. **34**

O.H.B. – Local wolves allegedly respect only tornjak²².

O.H.A. – Wait a second! We were talking about the hierarchical system that pursues the maximum efficiency, i.e. achieving the maximum profit in the minimum of time.

In view of this holy aim, a rivalry on all levels of the hierarchy has been introduced. Insecurity is permanent, a colleague is not a colleague but an enemy, there is no solidarity and there is no confidence.

A war against everybody has been introduced deliberately, and all this for the purpose of taking the maximum from each worker. **35**

Wage rate is a big secret, although everyone knows the other person's wage, but if you say this out loud, you can end up in big trouble. I experienced it personally.

²² Race of dogs split into Croatian and Bosnian tornjak.

That Darwinist world maybe creates the maximum profit, but it surely creates people under stress, whistle-blowers, flunkys, frustrated guys, mental invalids, sick people who are deluding themselves that the shopping in malls will make them feel better.

O.H.B. – When you leave the war in which solidarity among the fellow-soldiers is brought to the limit and in which you would give your life for your comrade, and enter a world in which everybody is everyone's enemy, it is natural that you cannot find your way around that world.

Do you sometimes feel like asking yourself which of these two worlds is more normal? Who is crazy here? Who is actually at war here?

O.H.A. – I think that the democracy is the only cure for this illness. I'm not against hierarchy, but in favour of introducing democracy into hierarchy. **36**

In hierarchy without democracy the power moves from the top down. By introducing the democracy into hierarchy, the direction changes by 180°, so it moves from the bottom up (see the Declaration of Independence).

Everything is turned upside down – those that are at the bottom determine what the hierarchy will look like.

Workers elect the best among them to be their boss. Now the boss sucks up to workers, and not vice versa, because their will decides whether he will still remain the boss. Here we come to the famous Jesus' words: "Whoever would be great among you must be your slave." **37**

In the democratised hierarchy there is no stress or frustration.

O.H.B. – You took me by surprise with Jesus. I really did not expect him here. This what you're talking about sounds all very nice, but I guess you're aware it's utopia.

O.H.A. – It seems you're also one of those who are for democracy, but are actually afraid of democracy because they divide people into two categories: crowd or mass that is unreliable, irresponsible and incapable of solving the problems, and the élite which is only capable of managing. Of course, you do not rank yourself among the incapable crowd. My friend, we are no élite, we are part of the mass. When you doubt the mass, you doubt yourself. If you don't believe in people, you don't believe in yourself.

O.H.B. – According to you, everything should turn upside down, and, with all due respect, it's not real.

O.H.A. – In my hand I hold a mobile phone, and if I want to, I can pay my parking with it. With this very same mobile phone I could make a decision on who will be my director (decide on the management in my company and on the results of my work, i.e. on the company's profit) and whether my country will sign the Kyoto Agreement or the Vatican agreements. The device already exists, all we have to do is develop a programme that makes it possible, and that's a trivial technical problem. Naturally, the will to do that is necessary. I have no illusions regarding the fact that it is most difficult to alter the programmes in human heads, because people have been living in the hierarchical systems for thousands of years. For generations and generations they got used to only serving others, they lost a habit of freedom and responsibility it brings about, we lost a habit of being free. We have technology and we have democracy, all we have to do is link them and bring the democracy to the end.

O.H.B. – You are a complete anarchist. For the love of God, how did you manage to involve Jesus in this story of yours?

O.H.A. – You have to admit he fits in perfectly. It's no coincidence. The Christian idea still has a revolutionary power despite Saint Paul. **38**

O.H.B. – In the end Christianity worm–ate the Roman Empire.

O.H.A. – Exactly. Long ago this idea was changing the world. It’s no coincidence that the most revolutionary sentence of all times, according to me, was not uttered neither by Marx nor by Lenin, nor by Che Guevara, but by a Brazilian Franciscan, and it goes like this:

In nowadays conditions, giving bread to those who need it, means to destroy the system that obstructs this by revolution.

The name of this Franciscan is Leonardo Boff. He seems to be still alive, God willing.

I very much like Anthony de Mello too, an Indian Jesuit who studied philosophy in Barcelona, psychology in Chicago and spirituality in Rome.

In his books he joined Eastern wisdom and teachings of Taoism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism with Christianity. Eleven years after his death, I guess when they realized that the popularity of his books is still increasing, Vatican spoke, or to be more precise the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (former Inquisition), and distanced itself from his books. Their main objection to his teaching is that it is too wide and comprehensive and that such ideas could confuse a good Christian. **39**

O.H.B. – My impression is that this Indian is some peaceful guy, something like Gandhi, but, my brother, this Brazilian is extremely rebellious. Imagine – break up the system by revolution.

O.H.A. – Ha, not bad for a Franciscan! And that phrase on “the sin of structures” raised by our cardinal few years ago, who suddenly became silent, is also a shell from the Leonardo Boff’s explosives dump. **40**

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith was not inclined towards him too; if we lived in the Middle Ages, he would definitely be flambéed.

- O.H.B. – We had just touched the issue of anarchy, when you suddenly drifted away again to priests. It seems you cannot do without them; it's a strange connection. God, what an atheist!
- O.H.A. – Well, I have to admit that, when it comes to gods, I have a strange experience, to say the least. I was about seven or eight years old, and these are awkward years – you take for granted everything that the adults say. My parents did not tell me anything – neither that there is God, nor that there isn't. However, there was my grandfather who truly admired Lenin. I guess he wanted to make me admire Lenin the same way so he attributed him the superhuman, i.e. divine characteristics.
- O.H.B. – God, what awful traumas from the childhood. No wonder you're so fucked up.
- O.H.A. – It took me some ten years to realize that Lenin was neither god nor demigod, but only a human, maybe extraordinary, but only a human being like all the rest, with his faults and virtues.
- O.H.B. – You'll never going to recuperate.
- O.H.A. – Isn't there a chance that some long-time ago grandfathers, in order to pass on their admiration of Jesus or Mohamed, told legends to inculcate into their grandsons that they too have divine traits? Ha?
- O.H.B. – You're crazier than I thought.
- O.H.A. – If this civilization survives this century, we'll start conquering other planets and galaxies. We'll establish settlements on some other blue planets, and there I cannot even imagine churches, mosques, private property or marketing, and let alone national and racial prejudice.
- O.H.B. – Have a drink, you don't look so great.
- O.H.A. – Being nationalist or racist, which is a normal way of thinking in our surrounding, will then become something so rude, just as pissing at the square in broad daylight is rude nowadays.

O.H.B. – It’s not all that gloomy and black as you see it. We have calmed down and we won’t engage in war at least in 40 years time.

O.H.A. – No, it’s not black but dark brown as in a septic tank. Our county director for roads is a man who was driving drunk too fast with his limo through a populated place and thus killed a twelve-year-old girl in a hit-and-run manner; archbishop compares ruffians from the military police with Jesus; robbers of churches are presidential candidates, and a man who sold our cement plants to foreigners shudders at the miserable state of our economy and runs a campaign “Buy Croatian”, etc.

O.H.B. – We are used to living in stench, we adapted ourselves after all these years, you know, these sulphurous waters, and then the sirocco starts, you can imagine. What is important is that there is no more firing, no more shells, no more people getting killed.

I’ve met a rich American who tried to reconcile a Serbian Orthodox and a Catholic priest in Knin²³ via UNHCR. He was a man of advanced age and I suppose he wanted to do a good deed before he dies, whatever it costs.

O.H.A. – And did he manage?

O.H.B. – Not a chance, no way! Each of them sticks to one’s own view and doesn’t yield an inch, and the American can’t understand that for the life of him. He insisted on reconciling them, but it’s no good.

O.H.A. – You have to understand that for me as an atheist it’s difficult to comprehend such thing. They are both Christians, they have the same Bible, they celebrate the birth and resurrection of the same Jesus, their calendars do not correspond in some ten days, but is that important? If these had been two less stupid guys, maybe the American would have had some success,

²³ A city in Croatia, capital of former self-declared Krajina (see above), recaptured by the Croatian forces in 1995.

but such guys are the exception from the rule after all. The less stupid you are, the better you demand answers, you are interested in some other ideas, knowledge, you doubt many things, you become more open, more tolerant, the more and more things become relative. **41**

Then it's only a question of time when the comrades from the Central Committee will knock on your door or the gentlefolk from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and explain to you how your considerations are interesting, but that, nevertheless, you've gone too far and that you've left the line of Party, and that if you don't repent and wear sackcloth and ashes, they will be forced to expel you from the party or religious community, because you have negative influence on your surrounding. The more brutal version is that you go to Siberia or to the stake.

Because: the Party is the avant-garde of the working class and period.

Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation and period.

Allah is the only God, and Mohamed is his prophet, and period.

Bigotry. Bigotry. Bigotry. Repetition. Repetition. Repetition. Always the same prayers, prayers, prayers, Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola; that's the essence of marketing, and of any brainwashing.

What else can we conclude then but that the more stupid you are, the better member of the party you are, the better Catholic, the better Serbian Orthodox, the better Muslim... **42**

- O.H.B. – You're placing the party and religion together, and our experience tells us that the nation and religion that is tied by blood to it is far stronger than the class antagonism.
- O.H.A. – You are completely right. Let's take Bosnia and Herzegovina for example. The results of the first democratic elections in

Bosnia looked like the census. Each nation voted for its party, and even today the situation is similar.

It was not before the war quieted down that they started realizing that someone is still being a boss, and someone still a serf. The so-called national and religious feelings are definitely stronger than the class ones. When in Gornji Vakuf²⁴ you take the dirt road in the direction of Novi Travnik²⁵, after few kilometres you'll run into a burnt-down hamlet, which seems to have belonged to Croats. On one of the burnt-down houses there was a graffiti that best described the Bosnian democracy, and it said:

“Jebo narod majku svoju.”²⁶

O.H.B. – Wonderful graffiti, which again completely corresponds with the words of Branko Ćopić²⁷: “I know us – screw us.”

O.H.A. – There is either dust or mud on these macadam roads, there's no third thing. Ah, no, no, the worst thing is when the land freezes solid, and when there has been an ample rain, we used to put chains on the wheels to get out of the mud. This is where I learned my trade of driving well; when you pass such school, it's easy to drive on the normal roads. However, while driving, as in life in general, you must never be too self-confident, despite your experience, you can always make a mistake, some stupid thing.

O.H.B. – That's life. But I'm telling you, this what we've gone through is yet awaiting others. Bosnia seems like a model of the whole world in a nutshell. Currently there's no shooting, but nothing important has been solved.

O.H.A. – We live in a world in which every nation has its price. It's not nice to learn it the hard way. When you work in the same company with a colleague who is from a richer country, you

²⁴ A city in central Bosnia, place of heavy fightings between Bosnian Croats and Muslims.

²⁵ Same as footnote 24.

²⁶ A typical Bosnian swear saying.

²⁷ Famous Yugoslavian, Bosnian Serb writer.

work just as good as he does, maybe even better, and he is ten times more paid than you are just because he has different passport.

O.H.B. – You have to come to terms with that. Switzerland, for instance, has better standard, but also higher costs of living, and so the wages are higher too. A greaser from Burma gets on board for \$300 a month, Filipinos are somewhat better paid, and our price is as it is. A Danish good-for-nothing can live on his welfare support in Thailand as a king, and a Thai can work strenuously all his life, and nevertheless might never see Denmark. The world is divided into rich and poor countries, and we are somewhere in between.

O.H.A. – The unwritten rule of capitalism is that a man is worth as much as he earns. I can't accept that, but that's how it is.

There is a world price-list of nations. This is in fact a price-list that shows the price of workforce in a particular country of the world. Good, e.g. a television or a car, has approximately the same price (depending on the taxes, customs and business policy of a manufacturer) in Italy, India and Brazil. Any goods can freely travel around the world and always has the same price.

The workforce cannot do what capital and goods can. Only the workforce from the richest countries can freely travel around the world, while the cheaper workforce doesn't have rights or possibilities to travel. And then you come to a conclusion that the workforce is the most destitute of all goods. Oh, Charles the Great, these are your words.

O.H.B. – It's natural that everyone cannot go where one wants. If that were the case, the poor would overflow the rich countries.

O.H.A. – But goods from rich countries can be sold all over the world, and that's ok?

O.H.B. – It's possible that everyone will have the same passport at some point in the future, maybe American. Maybe Rome

would not have declined if it had given the citizenship right to all the nations of the Empire on time.

O.H.A. – Interesting comparison.

O.H.B. – Maybe globalisation will lead to the levelling the workforce price in the whole world.

O.H.A. – Unfortunately, the process is exactly the opposite. The differences are increasingly greater, and the annual amount of the total humanitarian aid that the rich give to the poor is less than the amount the pets only in Great Britain eat in a year.

So much for the humanism and charity of the West.

O.H.B. – The humanitarian aid is not so small, as the amount that the British dogs and cats can eat is big.

O.H.A. – Even the poorest country of the world where people die of famine has its representatives in the United Nations. But these people are not hungry: they eat in fancy restaurants in New York and wear expensive suits because they're politicians, that is, the representatives of the élite of their country. So actually, millions of hungry people do not have its hungry representative in the UN.

That's the essence of democracy through a representative, i.e. a politician.

The élite from the rich countries controls the élite of these other countries, and these again control their poor and so the Earth keeps turning on its axis.

This price–list of the world nations shows all the brutality only when the wars break out. At the moment the American poor are killing the Iraqi poor, and the ratio is about 1:100. On the world price–list of nations, the Iraqi are very low. The war is being waged because the American lords of the rings have the plan to completely control the Iraqi oil and that part of the globe.

O.H.B. – Of course. The official explanation is that it's the fight for the world peace, that the American interests are being threatened, that it's the fight against terrorism and the like.

O.H.A. – And there is also a deliberate production of fear of terrorism, famous threat, and it's easiest to manipulate the threatened people. **43**

We here on these areas have experience of the World War II, where Nazis publicly declared the price–list showing that for one wounded German soldier they would execute 50, and for one killed German soldier they would execute 100 Balkanites.

The Germans really followed that price–list, but the German soldiers nevertheless continued to be killed. Germans called those who killed them the bandits; today the term terrorist is used.

O.H.B. – At least Germans were not hypocritical. They openly published the price–list; they did not camouflage it in phrases on free world, movement, safety, democracy, etc.

They considered themselves as the superior, Aryan race that will rule the world, and we, as the subordinate race, were pre–destined to serve them.

O.H.A. – Racists are at least easy to recognize; they are mainly Aryan types: blond, tall, elegant, blue–eyed. Something like our Anto Đapčić²⁸.

O.H.B. – Something like that. Do you really think that there is no black, Arabic, Indian or Chinese racism?

O.H.A. – Sure there is, but they did not leap into prominence so far, and I hope they won't. None of the groups of the human beings is immune to collective narcissism.

Anyway, we paid a high price in the World War II, and Germans too had a tough time here, worse than anywhere

²⁸ Leader of Croatian extreme right–wing party HSP.

else in Europe. We did not wait for the Americans, Britanians and Russians to liberate us.

O.H.B. – Hem, well, it depends.

O.H.A. – I know, I know. All kinds of things happened, but I would not like to turn the story into that direction.

I'll give you another example. I've been working for years now for foreigners, and whether we want it or not, so do more and more people in our free, independent Croatia.

I like them as tourists, but since I've generally never tolerated the bosses, I don't tolerate them either. Now and then, but not very often lately, I used to run into my boss the foreigner. Let's say my monthly salary, i.e. the price of my labour, is 500 something, and the price of my boss the foreigner is 5000 something.

Hence, the ratio of our values is 1:10.

Now, if the boss the foreigner is less stupid, he'll treat you normally, like the colleague from the same company, and he'll pretend as if the difference between our values is not so great. However, if it's a case of a more stupid specimen of the boss the foreigner, and I experienced a few such cases, he'll not be able to hide his contempt towards you; he will look down on you, he'll be arrogant, because your value is significantly lower than his. Then I bring it home to this foreigner, nice way, that I was in war and that I am maybe a little crazy so I don't want him being arrogant here, because this is my country after all, and if I go ballistic, I could make him swallow these five thousand something, but I'm telling you, I'd do this nice way, politely.

And then you see fear in his eyes and arrogant story ends immediately.

O.H.B. – You are a terrorist. You're frightening people!

O.H.A. – Exactly, my friend. Do you now understand the causes of terrorism?

- O.H.B. – I think I do, and please don't look at me so wild.
- O.H.A. – It's sad, but the only way to get his respect is to make him afraid of you. The world is so pathetic.
- O.H.B. – I can see that your war is not over yet.
- O.H.A. – My war has not started yet.
- O.H.B. – Ah, what an ugly cold. I think you would not be so impertinent if you had wife and kids, and loans.
- O.H.A. – You're are right on that matter. In that case maybe I would have to eat my hat and sell my pride for a handful of dollars, as our shit-eaters that I despise so much do. I think I wasn't made that way, and neither were you.
- O.H.B. – No one is made that way. Free world is not ruled by freedom but necessity.
- O.H.A. – That's why this is not a monkey planet, but something more worse – a shit-eaters planet.
- O.H.B. – Are you implying that only proud people are terrorists?
- O.H.A. – Almost. Even the Iraqi man has an alternative: either sell oneself for a handful of dollars or being called a terrorist. And you got to have really big balls to wage war against the most powerful military force in the world that has the most modern techniques. These are the words of a Croat from Žepče²⁹ who I knew for ten days, on the eleventh day he got killed.
- O.H.B. – When you see what we do to each other, you come to a conclusion that we the human beings have not moved much from the animals. **44**
- O.H.A. – Exactly. At some time past Schopenhauer studied a cat playing and concluded that this cat has nothing to do with a cat from 10 000 years ago, and at the same time it's the very same cat as it used to be 10 000 years ago.

²⁹ Croatian enclave in central Bosnia.

A man of 10 000 years ago and a man of today are the same man, but in these 10 000 years we have collected some knowledge and experience that can be found in the libraries.

In fact the only difference between the cats and us is in the fact that we have libraries.

O.H.A. – That’s right, and out of the million of these books one should choose that what is important for the life of a man. Quite a lot of that has accumulated in the past ten millenniums. **45**

O.H.B. – From the cave to the present day our experience has accumulated a lot... now we walk freely...

O.H.A. – People died for freedom silently or with song instead of moans, our comrade Tito...

O.H.B. – Let’s sum up: we are animals with libraries; the world is governed by the lords of the rings who control the majority of capital; hierarchical system turns men into shit-eaters who are neither happy nor creative but fucked up and frustrated. Masses from the rich countries and masses from the poor ones are easily manipulated by the good old patriotism. And, hallelujah, there are also religious fanatics. **46**

O.H.A. – We all just stand there and watch from the charred remnants of the European war as if from a peak aiming at understanding something.

O.H.B. – You aim at understanding everything.

O.H.A. – I know it’s impossible but at least I’m trying. I guess it’s only natural.

There is you and there is my perception of you; between these two there is a difference. My intention is to make this difference the smaller as possible, to make my opinion of you as closer to the real you as possible.

At the same time there is you and your perception of yourself, which also does not agree with what you really are, but this is psychology and I would not like to go into it now.

Hence, there is world and there is my perception of the world. I would like to make this perception of the world as closer to reality, as closer to the truth.

This is my attempt of perceiving the world and I don't give a damn if this perception of the world does not completely agree with the communist, Christian, Buddhist, Islamic, liberal or somebody's else perception of the world.

O.H.B. – So far, the philosophers explained the world in different ways; it's about changing the world.

O.H.A. – These are Marx's words. Maybe violent change was attempted too soon, maybe we have not explained the man and the world in too many details. If we had explained the world better, maybe the changes would have happened by themselves.

Anyway, I'm not for a violent revolution; there were enough of those and they did not result in anything.

O.H.B. – My friend, I do not see any other way apart from the force.

Those who have power, the lords of the rings who own the majority of the world capital, will never share this power with people in a peaceful way.

The force is inevitable.

O.H.A. – I wouldn't agree with you. There is another way as it was written down by Fernando Pessoa.

O.H.B. – Whoever is he? Some prophet?

O.H.A. – Pessoa is a Portuguese who went more far than Vasco da Gama and Magellan. We might call him a prophet because as early as the twenties of this century he anticipated the collapse of the October Revolution; he anticipated that the world revolution, which is necessary, could be executed only peacefully, by persuading people, and in no other way.

O.H.B. – Well, it seems you believe in prophets.

O.H.A. – As far back as early eighties, Štulić³⁰ was talking about war that happened in the nineties; he released great many albums on that topic, but at that time no one took him seriously. As early as then he was singing “it will not end up well” because “it’s either unrest or passion, there is too much of it here”, and “nobody is strong enough to turn away the decline”, he saw that the “new caliph is already sitting on the wet cushions on the throne” and “the cutting of nameless slaves” and “iron suitcases carried by the stream hide the colourful orders” and left us to “count our crosses alone”. It was only after that we realized what he had been singing about.

O.H.B. – I still keep discovering new things in his lines.

O.H.A. – I can understand Pessoa and Štulić. It seems they knew themselves, people and the society around them so deeply that they could predict some things.

There is no mystery about it. It’s simply the case of a great knowledge of these men. I am confused only by Ivan Goran Kovačić³¹ who wrote a poem “Moj grob” (My grave) in 1937, and in 1943 he was killed by the Chetniks somewhere in the mountains of Montenegro; his grave has never been found. I admit I find no rational explanation for that; it makes my flesh creep every time I think of that. **47**

O.H.B. – It was maybe a poet’s intuition. In 1937 new European slaughter was already evident, and he was not of good health either. Kafka predicted those gloomy times even before him.

O.H.A. – The ongoing gloomy times. In Kafka’s Trial only beautiful people are being prosecuted, or to be more precise, more ugly people were exterminating less ugly people.

O.H.B. – Maybe because beauty is power; women know this best.

³⁰ Croatian singer, frontman of the band Azra, known for his socially-engaged poetry. Know lives in the Netherlands.

³¹ Croatian poet (1913–1943), author of anti-war poem Jama (The Pit), killed by Serbian Chetniks.

O.H.A. – It is said that until some age the parents are “guilty” for your appearance, and afterwards you take on the responsibility; I think this comes from within. I often recall the last Congress of the Yugoslav communists from which the Great–Serbians expelled Slovenians and Croats; these were the most ugly Serbs possible. People even sweet–talked to some of them: young, beautiful and smart (to fucking hell with their beautiful mother). The explosion of ugliness happened at the first congress of HDZ too when the delegates interrupted and attacked a Bosnian priest who was talking about the tolerance and life together. It was a horrible scene. **48**

O.H.B. – All this is relative. You find them ugly; for somebody else they are beautiful.

O.H.A. – Let’s go back to Pessoa’s revolution. He was in a similar social position to ours and he addressed similar issues. **49**

Revolution sounds like a rape, and rapists are only sick idiots; there is always a chance to seduce a girl.

I think Pessoa had seducing in mind.

O.H.B. – You cannot seduce yourself to something better. How do you think you can change somebody? **50**

O.H.A. – When I realize how stupid I was, I try to improve myself, I try being better, I try not to repeat the same mistakes. I’ve made so many mistakes in my life. If I was stupid at some point before, that means I am stupid today too. Maybe I’m little less stupid when compared to ten years ago, but I’m still stupid. These are just derivations from Socrates’ words All I know is that I know nothing.

Imagine a politician, a priest or a director who admits his/her stupidity. There is no such thing, especially because they are a part of the hierarchical system that is reluctant to admit its mistakes, i.e. its stupidity.

O.H.B. – We have already stated that people do not like when you indicate their stupidity to them.

O.H.A. – This is a curse. People are made that way that they like listening to compliments directed at them; this approves the human EGOISM. We like listening how beautiful we are, how smart, how good, how capable... although the truth is that we are not so beautiful, not so smart, or good and capable... The truth often hurts, and we are terribly afraid of pain, that's why we do not want to hear the truth, we hate it. **51**

O.H.B. – Only God knows what the truth is, only He can judge.

O.H.A. – Yes, I agree with you totally. And do you agree with me that the hierarchical systems, be it political, religious, economic etc., human systems are subject to mistakes, i.e. stupidity?

O.H.B. – I agree.

O.H.A. – An individual might even admit its stupidity, but hierarchical system will be much more hesitant to do the same. The “little men” from the bottom of the hierarchy might then start doubting their infallibility. It is then that the hierarchical system starts losing its authority.

There are well-known cases from the late Soviet Union when the done-away-with dissidents were retouched on the old photos; they were moved from the books and films as if they never existed. The history has been falsified just to leave an impression of infallibility of the system. **52**

For his 1984 Orwell definitely found inspiration in the Soviet hierarchical system, because he himself experienced the dreadful brutality of that system in the Spanish civil war, thousands of kilometres away from Moscow. The Soviets ended up in the dustbin of history, but now you notice with dread the elements of 1984 in the American bureaucracy; even Russians seem naïve when compared to them.

O.H.B. – You're right. The American lords of the rings manipulate with people's fear in order to achieve their filthy aims, and all this boils down to power, money, and control.

O.H.A. – Orwell predicted all this in the mid twentieth century. Wars, fears and tensions are being made up just to maintain the hierarchical system of power. All this is done with premeditation in order for rich to remain rich, and poor to remain poor. **53**

American administration does not admit that Vietnam was a mistake (if the word mistake can cover years of killing and destroying). To admit a mistake means to admit one's stupidity. People could come to a conclusion: if at one point in time, 5, 10, 20, 50 or 200 years ago the hierarchical system was wrong, who can guarantee then that it is right today? To admit one's stupidity means nothing else but admitting being human.

Always being right, being sinless and infallible is nothing else but pretending to be God.

O.H.B. – People are people, sinful and imperfect like the systems that they have created. Sinlessness is the virtue of gods, and we are only humans.

O.H.A. – Here we come again to the Leonardo Boff's "the sin of structures". I have a theory in my mind that could explain everything. It could be elaborated further, but it's basically it. I just hope I'll manage to explain it in a simple manner.

O.H.B. – You have a theory that could explain everything?

O.H.A. – Almost everything, that what is most important – wars. The theory starts a bit brutally, it starts with a statement that there's no love.

O.H.B. – There's no love?

O.H.A. – Exactly, there is no love.

O.H.B. – What do you mean, there is no love?

O.H.A. – Ah, screw it, Vahid – it seems there's no love.

O.H.B. – And what about Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, and Ode to love from the Bible, and all those songs by the Beatles?

Are you saying that those millions of pages, novels, films, poems and songs about love were just a delusion, and that you're right? Are you saying that?!

O.H.A. – Hey, wait, easy, calm down, I'll explain everything, at least I hope so.

Schopenhauer claims that the fundamental driving force of all human beings is the “WILL TO LIVE”.

Nietzsche said it was the “WILL TO POWER”.

Bergson uses the term “LIFE FORCE – ÉLAN VITAL”.

I think the term “life force” is the best; term life energy could be used too. I'll use the term EGOISM (that's about it; later on I'll explain why I use exactly that term).

So, the life force is the basic force that drives all living creatures, human beings as well as plants and animals.

This life force exists in all creatures, from one-cell amoeba to man.

In nature, an incessant struggle for life is going on, each leaf, each bush, each tree struggles for its place in the sun, grows, propagates, dies. **54**

Animals struggle for food, for ground, for partner; only the strongest survive, only the best transfer the genes to their descendants, only the most fit and able of the species go on.

It's cruel, but that's the way it is; nature is cruel, and we are a part of that nature – without any illusions. **55**

We derived from nature, moved a bit from it (mostly thanks to librarians), but the struggle for survival, the dog-eat-dog law keeps ruling the human society.

As the lions struggle for the place in the hierarchy of the pride, so do Homo sapiens struggle for the place in society, in the hierarchical system, be it in politics be it in economy, for the position either in formal or informal social group.

And that's ok, that's only natural, that's the result of the competition of individual life forces or individual EGOISMS that are the driving force of all living creatures. **56**

All that which we call love, hate, envy, greed, lust, jealousy, curiosity, all that which we call emotions, fears, all that which we call intelligence, physical appearance, temperament, physical strength, resourcefulness, libido, stamina, persistence, promptness, etc.

All these are just manifestations, derivatives of what we call "life force" or EGOISM.

Life force has some kind of its zenith, depending on the age, and then it goes downwards that is partly compensated by experience. Your life force consists of genes (which you inherited from your ancestors and that are inalterable) and of what you've managed to learn from your surroundings (this is where we are not equal, we don't start from the same position, depending on our position in the society).

O.H.B. – Aren't you simplifying things a bit?

O.H.A. – Exactly. I have to simplify in order to explain what I want to say. It seems to me that during centuries our civilization has made things so complicated that we are not able anymore to find our way through this thicket of terms. I'm telling you, in order to explain the world, we use words, and words are not numbers, words are terrible imprecise. Some words are literally missing, while some others are too ambiguous. **57**

Let's take only word love for example. The first thing that comes to our mind when we hear the word love is the love between a man and a woman, and then there is love for one's children, for parents, love for friends, love for native country, love for native country, love for freedom, love for God, love for nature, for animals and so on and so forth. I think you remember well how prior to war, in our school a subject called "Defense and protection" was taught and within it the love for arms – horrible!

Love is no force by itself. What we call love is only a derivative of the life force, i.e. EGOISM.

We all have romanticized it too much, complicated it too much. When you fall in love with a woman, you start idealizing her, your life has no sense without her, she is the only one, the best, she is the queen of all queens, she is the only one you love, she is the only one you see, she is the only one you desire. That, of course, is what we call love, but this is actually the case when your life force, your EGOISM, want that woman only for itself. Your EGOISM wants for itself something that is the best for you.

If Juliet's egoism reacts the same way to you, than that is what we call an ideal love.

As nothing is ideal in life, thus one kind of egoism is always a bit weaker, and another yields to its fate, a compromise, something like that.

If, on the other hand, Juliet is not impressed by your life force, than it's the so-called unhappy love and then there is suffering, wailing, which is nothing else but self-compassion (majority of love poems and songs boil down to this). **58**

O.H.B. – You are not very romantic.

O.H.A. – I'm not romantic at all, I'm trying to be realistic.

O.H.B. – Do you know that the number of people who believe in love is greater than those who believe in gods. Do you really have to tarnish everything?

O.H.A. – Exactly the opposite. I'm trying to clean the surface and remove the hundred-year-old paint, varnish, rust and dirt, and reach the essence. I'm interested in the truth, no matter what it is. Schopenhauer claims that the love is a deceit of the sexual drive. However, I would not completely agree with this old German cynic. **59**

Let's take then the love of parents for their children. It's only natural that parents love their offspring, it is simply a part of

them, they in fact love a part of themselves, they like themselves, and once again we are on the field of EGOISM.

It is well known that a cat is the most dangerous when she has just had youngs. If she thinks that you would want to hurt her kittens, a common domestic cat will turn into a beast that jumps into your eyes. Her life force drives her to defend her helpless offspring; it's natural.

And then the famous love for God. Spinoza's definition of God (which I find most acceptable) says that the God is in every man, in every living being, in every stone, in every object, in every dew drop, in every drop of the every ocean. Well, if you show me one such God-loving person, I'll buy you a crate of beer.

O.H.B. – I don't accept the bet.

O.H.A. – Then we come to that part that is most interesting for us: the "love for native country".

There are two poles: there is an individual and there is a mankind. **60**

Between these two poles man is always found within some social group. A man is always a member of several social groups. To some social groups we belong by birth, while belonging to some others we choose ourselves. **61**

The most important groups are family, tribe, nation, religious groups, racial groups, fan groups, etc.

You and I are from the same street, the same neighbourhood, we are fans of the same football club, of the same national team, we are from the same region, we belong to the same nation, we are citizens of the same country. We are Europeans, Caucasians and in the end we belong to the social group that we call mankind.

Joining the groups is not just a characteristic of people. We find this in nature too for the purpose of easier survival; we have swarms of bees, grasshoppers, bumble-bees, shoals,

flocks, herds of antelopes, buffalos, packs of dolphins, prides of lions, monkeys. Packs of mammals often struggle among themselves for the living area. Animals don't have anything like the United Nations, and truth to tell, in case of Homo sapiens this organization appeared as late as the last century.

So, in case of wolves we have only a pack; in nature we won't find something like the congress of all the wolves of the world. Although there are some exceptions even in this case, I read somewhere that the whales communicate by very low-frequency sounds, and water is a medium that allows the pass of sound four times better than air. Thus, before the first ship propellers showed up, whales could communicate among each other in the whole world. The whale near the coasts of Chile could communicate with the one near Greenland. It's amazing.

O.H.B. – We screwed up the whale's communication.

O.H.A. – We screwed up the whales too. Now, people join the groups. They join their life force, their EGOISM with others to achieve a goal, interest or just because they were born in a city, county, nation, religion, etc. Erich Fromm often used the term "collective narcissism". In the last fifteen years on these areas of the Balkans, among the nations seriously ill with narcissism I have never heard someone mentioning the term "collective narcissism" – it's a sad fact.

Interesting are also the manifestations in which the life force, that is the EGOISM manifests itself in the social groups. I know you remember the day when Goran Ivanišević, bravo, finally won the Wimbledon. After losing three times in the finals, at the end of his career, when everyone wrote him off, he performed a wonder and won the biggest trophy in tennis. Almost all Split and surroundings poured down onto the Riva to give him a welcome. That kind of bash is beyond living memory; it's not likely that even Diocletian experienced something like that. What did we in fact celebrate?



Split 10. July 2001.



More than 150.000 people on Split Riva celebrated Goran ivanišević triumph in Wimbledon 2001.

We celebrated the huge success on the world-scale of one of our tribe, of one Croat, one Dalmatian, one inhabitant of Split. We celebrated the success of one of us; he is a part of us, a part of our group, our social group.

In fact we celebrated ourselves.

Enormous energy, plenty of passion and emotions rose to the surface on that day. The only driving force of all that are our individual driving forces, i.e. the EGOISMS.

O.H.B. – It sounds reasonable. Go on.

O.H.A. – Let's take fan groups now. The whole town, whole Dalmatia and half of the Herzegovina are covered in graffiti that declare love for a football club. A crowd of people at stadiums, mostly men, publicly declare their love, worshipping, fidelity to a local football club as long as they live.

Isn't that somewhat stupid?

O.H.B. – Don't tell me that you weren't one of them.

O.H.A. – Of course I was, and I even shouted at the stadiums and got severe beating, etc. I don't shun from that. The matter is that at that time I was still not aware what exactly was going on.

Those eleven men on the field present ourselves, our social group; their winning is our happiness, their losing is our sorrow; again emotions, massive emotions, enormous energy. All this circus brings the greatest profit to club managements that earn large sums of money; management mostly consists of overrated lousy politicians. And it boils down to the same thing as in the case of Ivanišević. By celebrating our club, we celebrate ourselves; pure individual EGOISM joined in the group in the hidden form.

The love for one's club is actually egotism, one of the manifestations of the life force – egoism. The matches of Hajduk and Dinamo³² are genuine small wars between the groups of

³² Hajduk and Dinamo – two greatest Croatian football rivals, former from Split, the latter from Zagreb. Their matches are at the same time the rivalry of the south and north.

fans; apart from the verbal threats and insulting, very often there are badly and lightly wounded; broken windows, burnt down cars, etc.

These are in fact the very same wars, but in a nutshell, that are waged between nations, religious groups, or races.

Everything is same as in the case of real wars, the same pent-up emotions, egotism, narcissism and hatred for those others, but in smaller dimension, and without organized public hierarchy, media and priests to give their blessings to all that.

Finally we come to the love for native country or patriotism. You are born in a country, state, nation, religious group, race. From childhood you're being instructed to love thy country. It is the only one, the most beautiful and so on.

Suddenly your country, your tribe is threatened, attacked, it needs to be defended.

And then you go to defend your native country, your nation, your tribe, your town, your family, and after all yourself. The love for one's country is in fact the self-love, EGOISM, to which we added some romantic quality.

O.H.B. – How can you say it's egoism when someone gives his life for his native country, when he's ready to die for his comrade in a battle?

O.H.A. – You're ready to die for a comrade you barely know fighting those you don't know at all. In the war you are something like a cat that would easily give her life to protect her kitten, her territory, the living territory of the group you belong to. You realize that all that is yours has been attacked and you join your egoism with others to defend your common country, to survive as nation, as tribe. The survival of your group for you is more important than your own survival; those who have stronger life force, i.e. egoism are more courageous in the battle.

Threat can be real but it can also be artificially produced, manipulated. It takes a lot of brainwashing to convince an American soldier in Iraq that he came there to defend his country, his nation, his tribe, the free democratic world, and so on. Man is what he is, neither good nor bad, he is what he is – EGOIST – driven primarily by egoism (just imagine a mass at the stadium screaming in euphoria ME! ME! ME! instead of their club's name or nation, and everything will be clear to you). Man always links his egoism with the members of his national, religious, racial, ... group, and derivatives of egoism, i.e. emotions, passions, fears are easily manipulated.

As in the case of fans, where we realized that only managements in the background have benefit of all that energy that is wasted at the stadiums and around them, so in the case of national, religious, racial conflicts there are also some managements in the background, élites, lords of the rings that earn lumps of money, trade in weapons, oil, blood...

They use the energy of the life forces, of confronted nations, races, religions, the energy that is wasted in the mutual hate in order to make profit on it.

The only social group that is really endangered is the human-kind. One should understand that the belonging to that group is more important than belonging to national, religious, racial, regional or any other group.

O.H.B. – Oh, you're betting on reason. I'm not sure whether that's smart.

O.H.A. – On reason, what else? So far we haven't found anything more perfect in the universe. **62**

Reason is also a derivative of our life force, of our egoism. Reason helped us understand that man is primarily an egoist and that it is the basic force that drives us through life. Reason tells us that when we understand EGOISM completely, it turns into its opposite; it takes a total twist. It goes as follows: do good, share and help as much as you can, but not

because you are some good Samaritan or because some God's commandment, but because you are an EGOIST. **63**

Reason helped us understand that the best thing for your egoism is doing good. This is what all great religions propagate as God's commandment. We understood the very same thing by reason, comprehending our egoism fully, through reason, without God's revelation. This is the key to the rebus, rebus is solved, everything fits in, Socrates and Nietzsche and all the essential parts from great religions and ... Mystification is not necessary anymore (mystification is just another word for deception). After all, saint Jacob clearly states that the proper acting (living) is more important than the proper belief, and the same says Spinoza too.

O.H.B. – Rebus has been solved, army leaders can freely retrain into ass drivers, come on, use your head.

O.H.A. – And this is all that I managed to come up with.

O.H.B. – Morality that is based on egoism?

O.H.A. – That is a natural morality, but it demands the use of reason. It demands that we justify that part of our name that differs us from other living beings – Homo sapiens – (reasonable man).

O.H.B. – Every day human reason is faced with attacks from all sides. Let's take only marketing for example.

O.H.A. – Let's take Coca-Cola out of this immense marketing. The whole armies of marketing experts, psychologists, sociologists... shamelessly suggest that the emotion of happiness is linked precisely with that product (Coca-Cola and smile, enjoy, etc.). Of course, their aim is not some kind of human happiness but the increase of sales, of profit. Consumers are thought of as sheep that are being imposed a pattern that the joy is only in owning and consuming. The reason tells us that the happiness is not inside the Coca-Cola bottle.

O.H.B. – Are you saying that the happiness lies in some other bottle?

O.H.A. – It seems there’s no happiness in any bottle. This is what my reason tells me. That is why I want to live in a world without wars, borders, burglar–proof doors and security guards (that are more often private armies of powerful organizations and individuals). I want to live in a world where people are happy, smiling, relaxed because in that world it would be better for me, because I’m an egoist, you understand?

O.H.B. – Isn’t that a call to perform good deeds here on Earth, to share everything and to follow Jesus who’ll let us in the Kingdom of Heaven after we die?

O.H.A. – I really have no idea what is going to happen after we die, but I do know that there is no believer who did not have doubts that there is nothing after death, as there is no atheist who did not have doubts that there is something. I’d dwell on the firm ground, on earth. **64**

Promising a heaven is also condoning human egoism, isn’t it? – I will be saved. I will go to heaven. It seems to me that the majority of people consider religion as some kind of additional beyond–life insurance, as if saying let’s pay it, come what may, let’s insure ourselves on that field too, we have nothing to lose. Longing for security is a dog’s quality, it degraded wolf to dog. **65**

So far I am familiar only with the life on Earth and only partially. I know this world can be better, I am aware of the enormous human energy that is wasted in vain. I want a world without class barriers, without schools and hospitals for more and for less rich, world without radioactive fallout. I want that kind of world only and precisely because I am an egoist and belong to the pack called humankind and I want this pack to survive. Each person that is born to this Earth inherits the same share of the copyright from the Prometheus’ fire.

You too want your child to live to our age in a better world because you’re an egoist.

It is no more a question of a utopia in which people would be happy; it's simply a question of survival.

The lords of the rings have to divide, i.e. democratise the power, authority, capital at all levels, not just to be called saints but for their own egoism, so that their children would have a chance to live to a certain age on the blue planet at all.

O.H.B. – The wealthiest and the most powerful always think that they'll somehow get away, and that all the others will drown.

O.H.A. – We are all on the same fucking ship. Captains and those from the first ranks imagine that they will get away in their luxurious lifeboats.

It's an illusion; all they can achieve is to float a few days longer in their iron-cased and well-upholstered boats and in miserable leisure stuff useless dollars into each other's asses. This time there'll be no "Carpathia"³³ to pick them up. It's none of my business if all the others drown; I don't want to drown, I don't want to feel the cold of the dark ocean...

O.H.B. – Because you are a fucking egoist.

O.H.A. – That's right. I don't want my family or friends, my tribe or me to be drowned; I don't want anyone to be drowned. Either the whole ship will be saved or nobody. **66**

O.H.B. – This is no big news. The golden rule from the Bible says: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." Kant's categorical imperatives sound very similar.

O.H.A. – It is known since antiquity that good deeds have to be performed so that you would be well, i.e. out of pure egoism. All I wanted was to present this more clearly using imprecise words and despite my stupidity. I'm not sure how much I succeeded in it.

³³ "Carpathia" is ship, who saved survivors from "Titanic", after it sunk on April 15, 1912.

O.H.B. – Let's say you got C plus. You can do better than that. As far as I know you, you told me all this because of some special love. You can't fool me.

O.H.A. – I can see that you're beginning to get the message.

O.H.B. – I can see you're already forgetting that you're only a stupid man.

O.H.A. – Bye.

EPILOGUE

(ADDITIONAL PHILOSOPHISING)

Conversations like these in which atheists and believers discuss sensitive topics rarely lead to the situation in which both sides, by exchanging their opinions, reach some new ideas, acknowledge their fallacies and thus approach Her Majesty – the truth.

It is mostly the case that the both sides stand by their own version of the truth; hence such conversations very often topple down to fights and insults.

At that point the truth is no longer important, the only thing that is important is who will come out as a victor from the conflict of opinions. The main reason for this is our vanity, i.e. egoism, that granite cube that arrogantly claims that our perception of the world is the only correct one.

That makes the following statements more understandable:

- A man can envy a man for everything except for his/her intellect.
- Nothing in this world is so justly distributed as intellect – because everyone has enough of it.
- If there was a market of intellect, everyone would take his own.

As far as I know, in the last thirty years there was no significantly new theory in philosophy. The main religions have been intact for thousands of years, including numerous sects that emerge even today, but in their essence they do not depart considerably from the original teaching which they originated from.

Thus, that what we consider as our opinion is nothing else but the combination of views formulated by others and that were original

and unique at same point in time, and that we, in our lives, in some way or another, adopted and regard it as our own view.

The one who is more familiar with the problem is more aware that our views are mere echoes of somebody else's opinions; they are also aware that it is almost impossible to hear something original and quite new.

However, the very awareness that this is the case of other people's views, and knowing about those who uttered these opinions, is some form of knowledge.

And the very yearning for new ideas, for widening of one's own knowledge is the most sincere acknowledgement of one's ignorance, i.e. stupidity.

Those who have no such yearning and whose egoism is convinced it knows everything are usually the trivial example of the prevalent opinion of their surrounding.

You have probably noticed that all this is again just the derivative of the famous Socrates' words: The only thing I know is that I don't know anything.

In the dialogue between two older hooligans, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina is very often mentioned. My perception of that war is quite direct because at its very beginning I experienced it as a soldier, and afterwards as a humanitarian. I am aware that my truth about that war is a subjective one. It is significantly different from the official declaration of the Croatian Parliament with regards to that war. The majority of citizens of my country have very distorted picture about that war (thanks to state media), as if this had happened somewhere in central Africa, and not in the country with which we share the weather forecast at the end of the twentieth century.

Why this obsession with the truth? Why is this truth so important?

Maybe the example from the Far East that happened not long ago (April 2005) will make it more obvious.

A mass of Chinese demonstrators demolished the Japanese consulates and restaurants, shouting: “Japanese pigs out”. The demonstrations were motivated by the publication of the Japanese handbook in which the Nanking massacre of 300.000 Chinese is called an incident.

Both Chinese and Japanese authorities stick to their truth and refuse to apologize to each other. And all this seems like a curtain-raiser for a nice war, and every war in the twenty-first century could be the last war.

The cause of the tension is the Japanese history handbooks – the official version of the truth as regards the events that took place some sixty and more years ago. That seems clear. The collective Japanese narcissism, i.e. egoism does not want to admit its dark side. At this point it would be nice to repeat Nietzsche’s words that announce Freud’s psychoanalysis: “I have done that, says my memory. I cannot have done that, says my pride, and remains adamant. At last - memory yields.»

Oh, it’s so easy to be objective to something you have never been directly involved in and when you observe the problem from a safe distance!

Admittedly, I cannot help feeling that if the victors of the World War II from the area of former Yugoslavia had had the courage to admit the complete truth, if they had had the courage to face themselves with their own dark side, their grandchildren would not have waged the war again.

I suggest that the history handbooks of all the Balkans people are written in The Hague; well, why not Japanese too. However, they will carry weight of truth only in case those people responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of the Iraqi ap-

pear before the same court. It is only then this court will have the authority of the global justice.

If the Hague Tribunal criteria applied to the World War II, apart from bunch of nazis and fascists, a large number of Soviet, American, British and partisan generals and politicians would end up in prison for a long, long time.

Every page of the history of civilization is sticky from blood; those are volumes and volumes of violence, suffering, crimes, genocide committed by more powerful over defeated ones. Maybe it's time we face with history without romantic charm and pathos, but in line with the rules of the International War Crime Tribunal. That history is an endless list of violence, but it is the truth about the beginnings of our civilization. If we want to move on, we have to face ourselves with what we are and with how we got here.

According to the president of the US, currently the world's No. 1 problem is terrorism, and European bureaucrats speak the similar.

In 2004, on a world scale 1907 people died in terrorist attacks, which presents an increase in comparison to 625 dead, a number reported by the State Department for 2003.

In the same world, every DAY 50.000 people die as a consequence of extreme poverty, not to mention the figures related to the AIDS, traffic accidents, murders, etc.

Is terrorism really world's No. 1 problem?

Every season on the East coast of the Adriatic several dozen tourists lose their lives. The most common causes of death are diving accidents, drowning of swimmers, traffic accidents, stormy weather, etc.

The last shark attack at the Croatian part of the Adriatic happened in the seventies of the last century.

Hence, to say that sharks are the greatest danger at the Adriatic would be a notorious lie.

Sharks, as terrorism, causes fear. The fear is the oldest of all emotions, and it enabled us the survival through the millions of years of evolution. We share this emotion with many living creatures. Human, as well as animal, reaction to fear is an escape or an attack to the source of the danger.

Reason makes us humans, and it is of much more recent date than the feeling of fear. Painstakingly acquired knowledge of the civilization is passed on through education from generation to generation, while we do not have to learn the reaction to fear – it is primordial, we are born with it.

Fear paralyzes reason, it serves as a softener for brain. Nietzsche says: he has heart who knows fear, but conquers it; who sees the abyss, but with pride. If the feeling of fear was the one that enabled us to survive through long centuries of evolution, it is only reason that can ensure us the survival in future. In order to employ reason, we have to conquer fear; we need courage.

In his book 1984, Orwell foresaw that the ruling party will deliberately and permanently cause fear in human beings from enemies, just to maintain the existing hierarchical structure, just for the rulers to remain rulers, and the oppressed to remain in the gutter.

I don't think there is some great cunning mind behind this fear of terrorism; it is more likely that it is a spontaneous reaction of huge bureaucratic structures aimed at justifying their existence. There is the other side to the equation, and these are we, the small people who just hardly wait to blame somebody else for our own problems, frustrations, fears, incapacities, lack of courage... Be it Jews, Albanians, Croats, Serbs, Arabs, foreigners, terrorist or someone else – it does not matter at all; all that matters is that it's not us. It's much easier to find the culprit in somebody else than to confront

oneself; it's an old story about our primitive egoism, but it's always working, thanks God – the culprits are those others.

Is fear caused deliberately or is it spontaneous? It's not very important, because the outcome is pretty much the same.

The fear of terrorism with which the wealthier part of the world is impregnated, lately leads to distracting the view from the most important problem, fear is used to preserving the existing hierarchical power system.

The current parliamentary democracy model was promoted at the end of the 18th century. For that time it was very progressive model, but today it has to respond to the challenges of modern communication technologies.

Marx is concluded that development means for production is main reason of changes social relations through the history.

(social relations: slave - owning, feudalism, capitalism)

The implementation of technological innovations would mean more efficient democracy, i.e. the rule of people; it would mean necessarily more just distribution of political power, which necessarily means more just distribution of wealth, and that would, among other things, lead to the elimination of the cause of terrorism.

Political and economic power have always been closely related and inseparable, no matter is it the case of the USA, communist China or some of the little states from the area of the former Yugoslavia.

In 1998, 350 wealthiest people on the planet owned a property larger than the total annual income of the half of the world population. Something of that order is the proportion of the power of their influence on the future of the planet.

Modernized democracy could make the Andy Warhol's prophecy come true: that in the future, everyone will be famous for 15 minutes. It will take much more courage to reach these days.

How much courage it takes for the truth to come into one's own is also evident from the history of a great truth that says that the Earth.

The fact that the Earth rotates on its axis every 24 hours, and that it makes a full circle around the Sun in a year, today is a truth beyond doubt that is being learned in all primary schools in the world, but this was not achieved easily.

Heliocentric theory came about in the first half of the 16th century. Its founder is a Pole, Nicola Copernicus, although a long time before him some Greeks and odd characters of various nations arrived at this same idea.

Until then Europe, was predominated by a geocentric theory, i.e. that the Sun and other celestial bodies revolve around the Earth. This theory was taught by the Church (both Catholic and Protestant). Why did the Church advocate that theory when there is not a single word of it in the Bible?

The Christian philosophers (scholastics) were very quick in realizing that the Biblical wisdom was not enough to comprehensively explain the world, so they studied the knowledge of the ancient civilization. In doing so, they encountered Aristotle who was a great authority for the medieval theologians; they honoured him almost like God, and his perception of the universe was geocentric and this is what the Church accepted as truth.

Giordano Bruno, who was burned at the stake in 1600 for the heresy because he, among other things, advocated Copernicus' heliocentric theory, actually lost his head because of Aristotle. Aristotle, by the way, came into Europe not in the Greek original but

in Arabic, because the then Arabs realized that not all the wisdom is in Koran, so they too studied ancient classics.

Giordano Bruno was one of those people who paid the courage and truth with their lives. It was as late as 1920 when Vatican admitted that the Earth revolves about the Sun. This supports the sluggishness of hierarchical structures.

All of us from the East Europe who experienced 1990 are witnesses that the ruling truth can change overnight. The Berlin wall fell and the political climate changed, from Central Europe all to the Japanese islands. In the area of former Yugoslavia this change was especially dramatic due to the concurrent expansion of nationalism and preparations for the forthcoming ethnic conflicts.

After forty-five years of the rule of communist, atheist ideology, suddenly the parliamentary democracy returned, and religion resumed the space it had centuries before.

Each of us knows dozens and dozens people from closer milieu and public life who once were members of the Communist Party, that is to say atheists, and now became ardent believers and supporters of parliamentary democracy.

The changes in the social milieu happen continuously and people adapt to new conditions day after day, but such great and sudden changes are, however, not so common and I think they have not been studied sufficiently from the psychological and sociological perspective.

What happened at the East in 1990? How would one describe that phenomenon in nature?

A sudden change of climate happened, a change of general living conditions, let's say the ice age came to a sudden stop

In nature it looks like this: all those animals and species that are not capable of adapting to new conditions of life (new climate) are doomed to extinction.

The intelligence itself is defined as the ability of coping with new situations.

Either the person who composed these sentences is very unintelligent or there is something wrong with the definition. Of course, it is more likely that this latter thing is valid; screw it, the truth hurts.

Formerly, social climate at the East was defined by the comrades from the Central Committee; today climate is warmer, but the power mostly remained in the hands of the same people who adapted themselves to new conditions. We can again conclude how the purpose of power is the very power, and that it is being propelled by the will to power – egoism – and how political and religious beliefs we consider the integral part of our personality and we call morality is just a foam on the water, and are easily changed when faced with vis maior – instinct for surviving.

Self-preservation of the individual presents its adaptation to the requests for the preservation of a system. It can no longer avoid the system.

For an ordinary man self-preservation became dependent on the speed of its reflexes. Reason becomes identical with the capacity of adapting.

Max Horkheimer

In nature, animals are adapting themselves in order to survive, literally; in human society, very similar, although in essence significantly different, process is underway.

What makes people adapt to new social situations is fear, fear for one's existence, fear of marginalization, abandonment, loneliness, fear of the gutter of hierarchy where there are none or only severe and poorly-paid jobs. To win this fear it takes lots of strength and courage, which only rare people have, and that is why in human society even the strongest individuals can be among the unadapted. Among those who do not change their beliefs, only seasonally, no matter whether they are believers or atheists.

I mentioned morality. Schopenhauer says that we have been trying for two thousand years to find the safe foundation of morality, and concludes that there is no such thing as natural morality, but that it is a means invented for easier taming of the evil and selfish human species, which would go extinct without the support of positive religion and civil law.

Hence, our morality is based on fear, on fear of God's punishment and public sanctions if we break the law.

The commandment of the Christian morality goes as follows: «Love thy neighbour as yourself.» Consequently, love toward oneself, i.e. egoism is established as understandable and natural, while the love towards the other is being commanded.

It is interesting to point out a detail from the correspondence between Milan cardinal Carlo Mario Martini and Umberto Eco (atheist), in which the cardinal states how he cannot understand the morality of those who do not believe in God.

Schopenhauer finally reached the point in which only sympathy can be a natural foundation of morality, philanthropy, humanism.

However, we feel sympathy only towards those who we find in some way weaker than ourselves.

Nietzsche despised sympathy, and warned that we are not great enough to know hatred and envy, and to be at least so great not to be ashamed of them.

I have still not met someone that powerful, that crazy in his/her self-confidence, that perfect not to envy anyone, not to hate anyone, and feels sympathy for everyone. In other words, I have still not met God, because those are the qualities of God.

I claim that the natural foundation of morality is in reason that conceived its egoism completely, where it becomes its opposite.

You probably noticed how I keep mentioning and singing praises to my hometown, Split. That is nothing else but one of the forms of displaying my own egoism. The awareness of that stupidity is very important, because the same happens when we say: my town, as well as when we say: my nation, my religion, my race, my belief, etc.

The awareness that behind all that is our egoism is extremely important knowledge, because it was even ancient Greeks who came to a conclusion that man does not do evil because he is evil, but because he does not know what is good. In short: man does not do evil because he is evil, but because he is stupid.

There are about 6.5 billion of people, but what is that figure when compared to hundreds of billion of galaxies, each of which has hundreds of billion stars that are waiting to be explored and conquered as soon as we figure out some trivial little things on the Earth.

O. H. A.

**FOR THOSE WHO WANT
TO KNOW MORE**

1

IN BROKEN IMAGES

He is quick, thinking in clear images;
I am slow, thinking in broken images.

He becomes dull, trusting to his clear images;
I become sharp, mistrusting my broken images.

Trusting his images, he assumes their relevance;
Mistrusting my images, I question their relevance.

Assuming their relevance, he assumes the fact;
Questioning their relevance, I question their fact.

When the fact fails him, he questions his senses;
when the fact fails me, I approve my senses.

He continues quick and dull in his clear images;
I continue slow and sharp in my broken images.

He in a new confusion of his understanding;
I in a new understanding of my confusion.

ROBERT GRAVES

2

YOU HAVE YOUR LEBANON AND I HAVE MY LEBANON

You have your Lebanon and its dilemma. I have my Lebanon and its beauty. Your Lebanon is an arena for men from the West and men from the East.

My Lebanon is a flock of birds fluttering in the early morning as shepherds lead their sheep into the meadow and rising in the evening as farmers return from their fields and vineyards.

You have your Lebanon and its people. I have my Lebanon and its people.

Yours are those whose souls were born in the hospitals of the West; they are as ship without rudder or sail upon a raging sea.... They are strong and eloquent among themselves but weak and dumb among Europeans.

They are brave, the liberators and the reformers, but only in their own area. But they are cowards, always led backwards by the Europeans. They are those who croak like frogs boasting that they have rid themselves of their ancient, tyrannical enemy, but the truth of the matter is that this tyrannical enemy still hides within their own souls. They are the slaves for whom time had exchanged rusty chains for shiny ones so that they thought themselves free. These are the children of your Lebanon. Is there anyone among them who represents the strength of the towering rocks of Lebanon, the purity of its water or the fragrance of its air? Who among them vouchsafes to say, "When I die I leave my country little better than when

I was born”?

Who among them dare to say, “My life was a drop of blood in the veins of Lebanon, a tear in her eyes or a smile upon her lips”?

Those are the children of your Lebanon. They are, in your estimation, great; but insignificant in my estimation.

Let me tell you who are the children of my Lebanon.

They are farmers who would turn the fallow field into garden and grove.

They are the shepherds who lead their flocks through the valleys to be fattened for your table meat and your woolens.

They are the vine—pressers who press the grape to wine and boil it to syrup.

They are the parents who tend the nurseries, the mothers who spin the silken yarn.

They are the husbands who harvest the wheat and the wives who gather the sheaves.

They are the builders, the potters, the weavers and the bell—casters.

They are the poets who pour their souls in new cups.

They are those who migrate with nothing but courage in their hearts and strength in their arms but who return with wealth in their hands and a wreath of glory upon their heads.

They are the victorious wherever they go and loved and respected wherever they settle.

They are the ones born in huts but who died in palaces of learning.

These are the children of Lebanon; they are the lamps that

cannot be snuffed by the wind and the salt which remains unspoiled through the ages.

They are the ones who are steadily moving toward perfection, beauty, and truth.

What will remain of your Lebanon after a century? Tell me! Except bragging, lying and stupidity? Do you expect the ages to keep in its memory the traces of deceit and cheating and hypocrisy? Do you think the atmosphere will preserve in its pockets the shadows of death and the stench of graves?

Do you believe life will accept a patched garment for a dress? Verily, I say to you that an olive plant in the hills of Lebanon will outlast all of your deeds and your works; that the wooden plow pulled by the oxen in the crannies of Lebanon is nobler than your dreams and aspirations.

I say to you, while the conscience of time listened to me, that the songs of a maiden collecting herbs in the valleys of Lebanon will outlast all the uttering of the most exalted prattler among you. I say to you that you are achieving nothing. If you knew that you are accomplishing nothing, I would feel sorry for you, but you know it not.

You have your Lebanon and I have my Lebanon

KAHLIL GIBRAN

3

In the Western thought there is not even one that has not been anticipated by the ancient Hellenes.

MIROSLAV KRLEŽA

Hellas has not recovered yet.

BRANI MIR ŠTULIĆ

4

In every science there is as much science as there is mathematics.

RENE DESCARTES

5

Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody has thought.

SZENT GYORGYI

6

But this lamenting is less dangerous for the human life than programmatical mysticism, which does not know what it wants, but it pretends that things are clear, and therefore seems alluring, that is stultifying.

MIROSLAV KRLEŽA

7

All religions are true, irrespective of how contrary they may seem. They are different symbols of the same reality. They are the same sentence said in several languages, in such a way that those who are saying the same thing do not understand each other.

FERNANDO PESSOA

8

I think many would reach wisdom if they hadn't think they had already reached it, if they hadn't concealed something inside them, and getting around something putting a good face on.

SENECA

9

Ingenuity is nothing else but the most perfect objectivity.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

10

History – An account, mostly false, of events, mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers, mostly knaves, and soldiers, mostly fools.

BIERCE AMBROSE

11

“I have done that,” says my memory. “I cannot have done that” – says my pride, and remains adamant. At last – memory yields

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

12

I do not object will to power – it is completely natural – I object its impersonation that has spread all over our political institutions.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

13

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE (PART)

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness – That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, DERIVING THEIR JUST POWERS FROM THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government...

THOMAS JEFFERSON

14

A man whose walk does not reflect serenity, a peaceful dignity, should not be considered beautiful.

YUKIO MISHIMA

15

Omni-satisfaction, which knows how to taste everything, that is not the best taste. I honor the recalcitrant choosy tongues and stomachs, which have learned to say “I” and “yes” and “no.” But to chew and digest everything —that is truly the swine’s manner!

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

16

What [doth it] profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

JAMES 2:14

17

It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.

KARL MARX

18

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ

PAUL Ephesians (6–5)

Repeats the same attitude twice: in the epistle to Colossians (3–4) and in the first epistle to Corinthians 7.

19

Let the wives remain silent when the congregation meets; they are certainly not permitted to speak out. Rather, let them remain subordinate as also the Torah says; and if there is something they want to know, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for a woman to speak out in a congregational meeting..

SAINT PAUL to Corinthians14

20

I hope I have not committed a sin when I humbled myself in order to uplift you and when I preached to you the Gospel of God without any compensation. 8 I impoverished other Churches which paid me in order to work for you.

SAINT PAUL to Corinthians 11

21

Say much without saying anything; say as vague as possible, because vague is deep

MIROSLAV KRLEŽA

22

Accept nothing as true which I did not clearly recognize to be so.

RENE DESCARTES

23

Gods are very often only puppets on a string in the hands of their priests.

CHRISTOPH WIELAND

24

Let him come to Zarathustra who has unlearned to love his people because he has learned to love many peoples.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Nationalism – a theory that the state, whose accidental subject you are, is the only true divinity, and all the other states are false divinities and that each conflict due to prestige, power or money is the crusade for Good, True and Beautiful.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

25

It's easy to be Jesus when God is your father.

FOLK

26

In the end, the choice is simple. Either we create our own values or (whether we want it or not) we respect those of others.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

27

I esteem on earth the good simplicity
and vagueness, what is sun of clearness.

TIN UJEVIĆ

28

Everybody works, but some take the largest part because they own the capital, they buy work, create marginality and it creates poverty.

LEONARDO BOFF

29

General envy constituting itself as a power is the disguise in which greed re-establishes itself and satisfies itself, only in another way; revolution is just a manifestation of meanness of the private property.

KARL MARX

30

Is there any point in teaching Christian virtues of humbleness and selfishness to children and at the same time prepare them for life in which the exact opposites of these virtues are necessary for the success?

ERICH FROMM

31

The will of the weaker persuades it to serve the stronger; its will wants to be master over those weaker still: this delight alone it is unwilling to forgo.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

32

All suppressed truths become poisonous.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

33

Most people end up being conformists; they adapt to the prison life. A few become reformers; they fight for better living conditions in the prison, better lighting, better ventilation. Hardly anyone becomes a rebel, a revolutionary who breaks down the prison walls.

You can only be a revolutionary when you see the prison walls in the first place.

ANTHONY DE MELLO

34

Because he is like a man, both the wretched dog and the ruined being.

JOHANN WOLFGANG GOETHE

They were the real young dogs, but their aspiration was unfortunately directed only to the aim of becoming old dogs, what, of course, they could not achieve.

FRANZ KAFKA

I am a dog without an owner, with short tail, and the people consist of dogs on the leash, and each of them has many burs on a tail, and each dog adores its kennel.

MAXIM GORKY

Judging by the intensive growth of this barking around me, it seems to me that these creatures smell a he-wolf.

MIROSLAV KRLEŽA

35

They made us
drink with everybody else
the blood of everybody else.

ANTONIN BRATUŠEK

36

Release of the potential of society is impossible without
the democratisation of human relations. Hierarchical relations
obstruct various potentials of the society.

RADE BOJANOVIĆ

37

If you want freedom for many
dare to serve the many

JOHANN WOLFGANG GOETHE

38

That's why those who think
honour the Lord's words
but the copy is not the original
nor the best means.

BRANIMIR ŠTULIĆ

39

What was required in a Party member was an outlook similar to that of the ancient Hebrew who knew, without knowing much else, that all nations other than his own worshiped “false gods.” He did not need to know that these gods were called Baal, Osiris, Moloch, Ashtaroath, and the like; probably the less he knew about them the better for his orthodoxy.

GEORGE ORWELL

40

Justice is the minimum amount of love without which relations between people cease being human and become transformed into violence.

Injustice is the sin that God does not want – necessity of social structures changes that cause injustice – in order not to produce social sin anymore.

LEONARDNO BOFF

41

The superiority of an erudite over the one who only prays is equal to the superiority of the full moon when it covers the stars. Erudite people are the inheritors of the prophets who did not bequeath neither dirhems nor dinars, but only knowledge.

MOHAMED

The one who disposes of art and science
has religion too:
let the one who does not dispose of these two
have the religion.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

42

In a way, the world-view of the Party imposed itself most
successfully on people incapable of understanding it.

GEORGE ORWELL

I do not admit any world-view who lays claim to the
monopoly. Because that means putting all that enormous and
open problematic of life into a frame of specific, limited, far
too human world-view.

That means devaluing the concept of life to the merchandise
of the church of a political party.

MIROSLAV KRLEŽA

43

The race always needs to be threatened in order to be.

ALBERT CAMUS

44

Consciousness is the last and latest development of the organic and hence also what is most unfinished and unstrong.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

45

That's why we do not have to ask "What should we know?" but "What is good for us to know?"

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Man is the measure of all things.

THOMAS HOBBS

46

The contemporary world can really not be understood if we do not consider in it its devastating power of patriotism (nationalism, religion).

GEORGE ORWELL

MY GRAVE

U planini mrkoj nek mi bude hum,
Nad njim urlik vuka, crnih grana šum,

Ljeti vječan vihor, zimi visok snijeg,
Muku moje rake nedostupan bijeg.

Visoko nek stoji, ko oblak i tron,
Da ne dopre do njega niskog tornja zvon,

Da ne dopre do njega pokajnički glas,
Strah obraćenika, molitve za spas.

Neka šikne travom, uz trnovit grm,
Besput da je donjeg, neprobojan, strm.

Nitko da ne dođe, do prijatelj drag,
I kad se vrati, nek poravna trag.

IVAN GORAN KOVAČIĆ

48

and counterfoil is worn by the ugly and mean
with unheard of power to insisting on their intention
there are many of them and they make terrible noise
they usually break all the mirrors they find
not to leave a memory of beauty.

BRANIMIR ŠTULIĆ

49

I accept that some man is better than me by what the nature
gave him – by his talent, strength, energy... but I do not accept
that he is better than me by added qualities such as wealth,
social position...

The true evil are social conventions and fabrications that
impose themselves on natural realities from family, money,
religion, state.

FERNANDO PESSOA

50

The one who knows not how to yield to oneself is being
commanded.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

The best jihad is the one by which man defeats oneself.

MOHAMED

51

I always prefer the harmful truth to the useful fallacy
Even if it causes pain, the truth always brings the medicine
with it.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

52

To change one's opinion, and even one's own politics means
admitting one's weakness.

GEORGE ORWELL

53

In the long run, a hierarchical society was only possible on
a basis of poverty and ignorance.

GEORGE ORWELL

Wild asses are the prey of lions in the wilderness; so poor
men are pasture for the rich.

THE BOOK OF SIRACH

54

All that is alive wants to grow, and it needs to grow because
that's the way it should be.

BRANIMIR ŠTULIĆ

Around me are woods that know only one command, to grow, and only one necessity, to die.

IVO ANDRIĆ

55

Spinoza refused assigning any laws to human nature that would differ from the laws of nature in general.

HARDT / NEGRI

56

A man is not born to be solidary, he is born just to be himself, and that is contrary to altruism and solidarity, because that is egoism.

FERNANDO PESSOA

At the risk of displeasing innocent ears I propose: egoism belongs to the nature of a noble soul ... it also belongs to the natural condition of things.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

57

Everything is simpler than it could be said.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

58

Only related pain causes tears, and everyone cries only because of oneself.

HEINRICH HEINE

59

Erotic is not just the need of the body, but to the same degree also the need of honour. The partner that you've captivated, who cares about you and who likes you, is your mirror, the measure of what you are and what you mean – the picture of own meaning and importance.

MILAN KUNDERA

We in fact do not love and do not hate the other person, but the part of ourselves that we project onto him or her.

CARL GUSTAV JUNG

60

“Yes, they could have escaped the danger by a whisker”, he says. If they had hold on to the personal and universal, they would have remained in accordance with the Order of Things, and the Lord of the Flies would have been destroyed. But luckily, Belial had many allies – nations, churches, political parties.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

61

God gave two things mind and society. And so the one who by exclusion would be weaker than everyone else, rules the world by his mind and sociability.

SENECA

62

God did not create anything better, anything more perfect and more beautiful than reason. Blessings that God is giving are received thanks to reason; understanding derives from that. It causes God's wrath, it is the reason for getting rewards and punishments.

MOHAMED

63

It is unquestionable though mysterious that the person who does a favour in a way surpasses the one who receives that favour.

JORGE LUIS BORGES

Ideal man delights in helping other people, but is ashamed if others do favours to him. To give is a characteristic of superiority, to receive is a characteristic of inferiority.

ARISTOTLE

64

A free man thinks of death least of all things; and his wisdom is a meditation not of death but of life.

BARUCH SPINOZA

65

So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself.

Mathew, 6-7

66

THE HOUR OF LATE COGNITION

Who is courageous enough today to say: you will have to repent when you realize that you were mistaken and that you cheated others, because you were cheated and you did wrong; you will have to regret your words and deeds as abhorrence and shame? Today there are no more Savonarola nor Jan Hus. The reputation of the preacher's science and ascetic ashes has been ruined. Anyway, you will repent and you will be sorry when you find out and realize, two, ten or thirty years later. The victories of cognition are slow and late; the whole lifetime is too short for them, and it is terrible that they usually do not come on time.

Because there is late wisdom, blood revenge of time when man finds out his hollow and his former ignorance. Ten or twenty or many more years have to pass to be able to say: We

were mistaken. We were cheated. This far-away wisdom will come one day to punish us just before we die for one whole life of delusions and failures.

There are late cognitions when naked words are powerful without adornment, and when dreams are seen through, or will be seen through. We who live to see, we will come to them. They will come to us. I invite them, because they are late and thus sad. I would want earlier, better cognitions, discoveries of the basis of things, while the time has not gone by yet, while there is still time. I warn you.

I do not refer to no repentance, but the hour of wages of sin through truth will come, it has to come. Like a poet who warned his dear: “One night, when you grow old, by the candle...” The hour of truth and punishment will come. All will be naked, all will be clear, but late.

It will be late. And for all consolations and retaliations that we are going to win (the rate, the only, the chosen we), I am not rejoicing, because they will be late. The older generation and the offspring can once again uselessly and totally in vain say: There was one voice, one man who was telling truth on time, but they did not listen to him.

For injustices that were done, for outrages at the time of immaturity, many will rebuke the vociferators, as a voice of conscience, more reasonable memory of the times past and the hour of late cognitions when the evening sun of the relentless autumns in the end shines on the golden vineyard and copper groves.

TIN UJEVIĆ