

Civil Engineering and our newest frontier: Reallocating water
Mason Gaffney, at American Society of Civil Engineers, June 15, 2011
Outline, Highlights, and Key Words and Names
Emended, June 22, 2011

1. The frontier never closes, it just changes
 - a. The Turner Thesis after Crash of 1893. Turner misread 1890 Census Director's Report. Turner's thesis was gloomy and premature: he did not foresee the irrigation revolution, or the steep growth of western as well as other cities.
 - b. Then came the Golden Age of urbanization cum civil engineering: subdivision, street improvements, sanitary, electrical, hydraulic, mining, petroleum, industrial, automotive, et al.
 - c. A key to successful urbanization is civic (as in city, civil engineering, and civilization itself). "Municipalization" is an even better term, for municipalization need not even be urban, it entails integrating and coordinating and synchronizing public works with private land development, rural as well as urban.
 - d. The Wright Act, 1886, showed the way. It enabled groups of small farmers to form rural municipalities with tax powers, leading the irrigation revolution in California farming. Irrigation Districts are legal "municipalities". Regular cities also got involved in water supply for farms, as they still are. San Francisco, for example, partnered with the Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts.
 - e. Taxing the benefited lands:
 - i. Paid for the public works
 - ii. Let small landowners pool their lands, collectively mortgaged as collateral for district bonds, to raise capital
 - iii. Spurred landowners to use the public works, e.g. convert from dry-farming to irrigation
 - f. Contributions of some leaders: C.C. Wright; H.H. Dennett; David Weeks; Elwood Mead
 - g. "Mature Economy" of 1930's. Another gloomy and premature "closing of the frontier". Gigantism and Federal and State finance lead us out of it, and revive Irrigation Districts, but create new problems
2. Engineers do not block the way. They lead economists in understanding and teaching finance. They do, however, (like lawyers and economists), get coopted into identifying with legal and bureaucratic systems, and working for giant landowners. Stanley Barnes.
 - a. Kenneth Boulding and The Corps
 - b. "The Green Book" and pygmy dams used to preempt key waters and sites. Issue of a High Dam at Hell's Cyn.
 - c. Me, the Kaweah Delta and its need for rationalization using The Equimarginal Principle. See Appendix.
 - d. Hostile reactions to my report by Sid Harding, Charles Kaupke, and Frank Trelease
3. Lure of the Lorelei of Gigantism distracts from and seems to obviate small local economies and water transfers and local civics. Marshall Plan and CVP; Pat Brown and CWP. Cheap water and poverty in the Central Valley today.
4. California today as a macrocosm of the Kaweah Delta case study. Crying need for water transfers, and leadership from Civil Engineers. Unbounded room for professional growth to replumb all of California.

Movement for "Water Marketing" should show the way, but beware of hijacking by licensees who would use the movement to convert their licenses in private property.

SCANNED AS FOUND

DRAFT

Submitted to AJES, 30 May 90

LOGOS ABUSED

The Decadence and Tyranny of Abstract Reasoning in Economics

Mason Gaffney

perhaps does this appear it refers to nothing at all

The writer acknowledges the role and value of abstract reasoning in economics. He has done his share of it, and is not reacting against ^{theoretical reasoning or} rationalism ^{and} or marginalism. Abstract, however, should not mean abstruse or obscure; theoretical should not mean irrelevant or impractical; ideal should not mean intolerant or imperialistic. Theorists are increasingly scorning ^{reasonable} those rules and carrying their work ~~beyond its proper role~~ to extremes of abstrusity, irrelevance and presumption ^{These practices} that are damaging and screening ~~to~~ out students and writers whose ~~purpose is to~~ ^{wish} to understand and apply economic reasoning to the human condition.

dictates or cautions?

This paper seeks through historical parallels to understand the animus behind ^{this tendency so common among theorists} that movement, and suggest how to check its excesses.

1. Six kinds of cognition

if so I
Six Kinds of Cognition

More I at 1st thought this was a footnote - it has no heading - no lead in - or is it a heading?

From Greek thought we can learn something about ² which will aid the quest.

There are different methods of cognition (knowing, understanding and ordering the data of the senses). Our concern is with ^{the} cognition of social life, including relationships of property, markets, contracts and inheritance. The Greeks had a word for each method of cognition. ^{of sit} ✓

close up

A. Chaos ^{i.e.} raw data without ordering or understanding. Viewed favorably, chaos is liberating and objective. Observing data chaotically, without preconceived ordering, is a precondition of creative work and inductive reasoning that leads to generalizations, hypotheses and theories to serve as premises for later deductive reasoning. Viewed pejoratively, chaos is scatterbrained. Viewed as mediocrity, chaos is description and reporting, or mindless bean-counting, answers without questions.

ditto

B. Pathos ^{i.e.} elemental feelings: love, hate, security, anxiety, comfort, hunger, excitement, boredom, compassion, greed, loyalty, ambition, pride, guilt, lust, jealousy, community, alienation, fellow-feeling, rivalry, charity, possessiveness, service, selfishness, etc. These are the basis of consumer wants. Merely to list those few gives a

is this right?

1. My purpose in using the Greek words ^{are} is to avoid the multiple meanings familiar words carry, submerge individual idiosyncracies of usage, and label my organizing concepts distinctively.

should be collected at the end in normal form

notion how hard it is to reduce them to symbols and
abstractions.

C. Mysterion, or mystery: ^{i.e.} faith, belief, hope,
fear, devotion, piety, consecration, sanctification, worship,
prayer, occultism, mysticism, animism, spiritualism, aspiration,
convictions about the unknown and unknowable.

D. Hierarches, or corporate organization: ^{i.e.} with
ranking and authority, creed and dogma, orthodoxy and heresy,
law and order, pageant and ritual, test and certification, code
and discipline, income and property, fund and disbursement,
owner and tenant, taboo and enjoinder, text and censor.

E. Logos, or pure metaphysical a priori reasoning: ^{i.e.}

from axioms, ~~using~~ mathematics, logic and dialectic, with
allegories, symbols, abstractions, universals and
generalizations. Theologians use Logos as divine wisdom. We use
it here for human attempts to attain something comparably
universal, attempts ^{which other} ~~some~~ might consider presumptuous.

F. Sophia, or wisdom: ^{i.e.} reason applied to human
problems, tempered by experience, judgment, circumstances,
ethics, justice, mores, institutions, administrability, etc.

Starts at A and

4

The evolution of social thought leads ideally through B C D + E to F, but historically E has been a roadblock. Logos, partly from its difficult nature, moreso from the exclusionary pretensions of its practitioners, repels many persons, who take refuge in A, B and C. In addition, leaders of D are skilled at coopting practitioners of E.

2. Logos run wild: neo-Platonism

Neo-Platonism, in the decadent period of Roman-Hellenistic power and culture, developed E to extremes which identify and symbolize the genus Logos, pure and picked clean of any Chaos or Pathos. Abstract forms are the only realities (Plotinus of Alexandria, 3d century A.D.). Matter and spirit are mutually hostile elements. The body is the prison of the soul, an emanation of the divine mind which contains all the "real" Platonic forms. Objects (events are not mentioned) in the apparent world are just poor imitations of these ideal forms.

The system of Platonic forms is logically rigid in detail. Allegories explain more than apparent events. Thought is rarefied, ethereal, otherworldly. In Plotinus' period, asceticism and mortification of the flesh were in vogue. The object of the soul is to escape the confines of matter and regain the divine essence whence it came. Through repeated

breaks throughout - they add nothing to the concept confusion of form

exercises of mysticism (combining C and E) one may reach "the one," the all-surpassing glory of life. What most people call "life" is merely what happens while anchorites and monastics meditate on its deeper meaning.

Substitute

René Descartes, founder of analytic geometry, led a revival of neo-Platonism in the early 17th Century. Ambition and his "dream of reason" led the great mathematician before a fall. He aspired to impose mathematical method on all fields of knowledge. Mind was separate from matter, and prior to it: "I think, therefore I am." His "Vortex Theory" of astronomy, however, defied plain facts and was soon demolished by an earthier observer and cogitator who began wondering why an apple fell on his head. Newton's apple was clearly from the Tree of Knowledge, forbidden by both Mysterion and Descartes' a priori Logos.

poorly said?

3. Hierarches, order and assimilation

In the 4th century, it is said, "The Church supplanted Christianity," meaning D, Hierarches, supplanted C, Mysterion. D did not destroy C, but absorbed it. That was easy, mystery and hierarchy had long histories together.

centered, headings of value it - no titles - up

our style

→ We use bold 8pt rule

treatment of & also not opening words in each section (fllc + sc)

over the centuries absorbing

~~Over~~ centuries The Church proved adept at coopting wave after wave of evangelical reformers moved by spontaneous Mysterion. It converted them to religious orders: Cluniacs, Benedictines, Cistercians, Carthusians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, ... it is a long list. The idea was to bring contagious movements within control of The Church, where they could absorb critical tendencies ~~could be absorbed or stifled~~ under watchful eyes.

or stifle

Therefore groups of

The operative rule is that wealth undermines zeal. Zealots, who would not hold property and had communistic ideals, were particularly trying, ~~therefore~~, especially while their dedicated founders retained control. The stubbornest ^{and unyielding} cases (Albigensians, Waldensians, Anabaptists) had to be exterminated by burning. The Church prevailed even over the saintly, gentle Francis of Assisi. ^{Thus} not long after his death in 1226 A.D. Franciscans, with stipends, were helping Dominicans administer The Inquisition.

Presumably in this way God coopted them!

(also on the pay roll ??)

Assimilating evangelicals was perhaps enough to satisfy the credulous majority. However, for the troublesome intellectual minority, Logos is always an issue. To placate or dominate the intellectuals, Hierarches also absorbed E, Logos. Platonic formalism made that easier; formalism tends toward authoritarianism. Plato's Republic is acknowledged today as a fascist model. Augustine's City of God was a Platonic prototype of spirit separated from flesh. ^{But} In this city an elite, chosen by

I think you need something to tie this last sentence in.

3rd meaning of coopt - to persuade, or lure (an opponent) to join one's own system, party, etc.

God, were "predestined" for salvation hereafter (and to rule today).

I don't see the last sentence as consistent with the separation (not logos!) that

Clement and Origen taught the Sacred Writings are allegories. They were moving from C, Mysterion, toward E, Logos. The simple may take Scriptures literally; the sophisticated read between the lines. They see deeper truth in the metaphor, the significance behind the meaning. Some of this significance is social.

The social corollaries of Platonism add powerful political-economic support. Imputing reality to abstractions helps give binding force to commitments made in the names of universals (The United States, Dartmouth College, General Motors, City of Chicago) by particular individuals: commitments like land titles, bonds, franchises, etc. Hierarchies themselves are Platonic forms: tables of organization that transcend individuals. Thus it may be that Platonism has socially conservative implications, if by "conservatism" we mean not individualism but tradition, vested interest, property, statism, corporatism, etc.

as a means of
In Education, Platonism is prized ^{up} to combat the menace of social relevancy. Universities do not become ivory towers and sanctuaries from reality by accident. Pragmatism ^{when} applied to public policy leads inevitably to questions about origins and

validity of property, distribution of wealth, basic values of consumption, the costs, benefits and beneficiaries of public works, and leadership of the polity.

For example, John Dewey the pragmatist was a social radical, troublesome for Columbia President Nicholas Murray Butler. John Locke was exiled; his contemporary Isaac Newton was spared that fate. Newton may have been more radical intellectually, but not socially. Thorstein Veblen, John R. Commons and other Institutionalists economists were social critics. The Hierarches feels threatened and may strike back. Platonic detachment is a refuge for besieged or lazy Administrators, a very present help in time of trouble.²

Mysterion, Hierarches and Logos also merge when reasoning is so difficult, or made so difficult ^{that} it mystifies and intimidates. Abstract reasoning and theory have an important place in economics, but in evaluating specifics the sincere inquirer must

always judge them on grounds of clarity and utility. He rejects ^{all} whatever works to mystify or intimidate ^{them}, rather than edify and empower the audience.

In his search for that which edifies and empowers his audience he rejects

²These points were developed at length in Upton Sinclair, The Goose Step, a Study of Education in America; and Thorstein Veblen, The Higher Learning in America. Hierarches assimilated Veblen, and survived Sinclair. Nothing comparable has appeared since 1922, not from lack of provocation and need. Is there a weakening of the cultural matrix that once produced such bold and trenchant dissections of pretense and hypocrisy?

When did The Good Soldier Schweik (sp) come out?

these books have been mentioned

*This is confounding - what
How do you get here - what
is this related to -
what opposite view*

Hierarchy, however, usually takes the opposite view. Its task is to absorb and neutralize what is socially challenging, pertinent or threatening. To this end it converts problem-solving reasoning to arid abstractions and conundrums of the Logos, leading students on an endless paper chase. Hierarchy does not deliver on the implied promise of a Holy Grail of Enlightenment at the end of the chase. The exhausted survivors, like hazed fraternity members, turn their frustration and spite on the next generation in a treadmill of futility.

no tolerance to provide continuity and thus etc.

4. Intellectual Imperialism

a hiatus in meaning here

Mysterion, Hierarches and Logos join in their claims of exclusiveness. They define and enforce orthodoxy. As ~~the~~ independent prophets disturbed the constituted authorities of the medieval Church, so they threaten authorities of modern Academe.

How about when there are disturbing zealots loose in the land etc

? ~~The~~ Churches at times persecuted heretics. It was necessary to establish that no priest is free to ignore the statutes of the Apostolic See. Forgery, murder, torture, even extermination were acceptable methods, ~~failing~~ ^{if} friendly persuasion or ordinary intimidation. *failed.*

Religions?

1st H under I seems to have no reference to material body to it - you could reverse the order of these 2 Hs here

In modern Academe Liberalism proscribes overt Inquisitions on the old models. The new technique is ^{used} "crowding-out" ^{aim and result} Orthodoxy and Authority crowd Heresy out of the curriculum by piling on required "theory" studies, controlled by Orthodoxy. The ^{are} idea is to preempt students' limited time and attention, just as monopolies control markets by preempting key resources.

Economists who teach the science of allocating scarce means among competing ends know full well students' time is one of those scarce means. ^{It is that is} Time may be infinite, ^{The assumption} and that informs the rhetoric when new requirements are added, ^{the particular} but students' time is, ^{in fact,} finite. Therefore "Exclusion is also part of knowledge", an observation ^{always} worthy of an economist, but coming from physicist Michael Faraday. ^{Modesty!!} * ^{that should have come from the insight provided by economics,}

To doubly limit students' time, ^{They} hierarchs press us to lower the "normative time to degree," ^{thus} constricting the later end of students' freedom, ^{while} The other pincer attacks the earlier end, ^{by expanding} extending the required core theory courses. Together, the pincers curtail the creative period of restless, troublesome innovation. Such are the ways of orthodoxy, suffocating and oppressive.

^{is singular ok?} The pincer at the front end not only crowds out, it screens out. Screening is doubly important today when Hierarches has lost its ancient weapons of Interdiction and Excommunication, reenforced by The Curse of Anathema and the fear of hell. ^{Now}

* Will Rogers had a related thought that the problem was not that the people knew too little but that they knew too much which was not so.

now *Since* *they*
 Scholars get tenure, mistakes are unerasable, and must be aborted!

(These are you advocating aborting heretics - do there a medical test for this yet?)

Orthodoxy keeps the gate and judges who may enter. In the process of judging and screening it indoctrinates, by establishing a monopoly over theory. "Intelligence," says Henri Bergson, "is the faculty of manufacturing artificial objects, especially tools to make tools." Theory supplies the machine tools of thinking. Who controls theory has a powerful grip on how students are to think. Students seeking order from the chaos of disputed data and swirling, competing models in a complex discipline grasp for a system, an ordered framework offering refuge from Chaos. The first and only system they have to study gets a long jump on the competition.

(a parable is the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rocks the world -)

These theory requirements are metaphysical, that is Logos, pure reason, whose application to the actual human condition is a Mysterion which never gets to Sophia (wisdom). The metaphysic may be highly formal, rigorous and demanding, *and this* which enhances its exclusiveness. The tendency in modern Academe, as in the medieval church, is toward ever more ceremonial formality *and thus* to crowd out content. Isidore of Seville, a 7th Century authoritarian, at least sought to preserve the work of the past. Modern metaphysics crowds out not just Sophia but Clio as well, with her large portion of Sophia. Thus surviving students gain Doctorates knowing neither where we are, nor how we got here.

Waldensians in the 12th Century, and soon Franciscans too, preached without formal training or ordination. When Hierarches assimilated the Franciscans they insisted university training was necessary for efficient preaching. Hierarches conferred (or withheld) the right to preach. Soon ^{and} Francis' original sense of mission was lost, ~~and~~ Franciscans were part of the hierarchy. Viewing modern university training in economics it is easy to imagine how the process worked then, and crystal clear how it works now.

5. Exclusionary Codes and Languages

Exclusionists enhance their claims by proscribing Vernacular communication. Donatus, Latin grammarian and stylist of the 4th Century, made an art of Latin which served as the intellectual medium for a millenium. Dark-Ages' scholars were so uncreative ^{that} they limited themselves to commenting on Donatus most of ^{the} ~~that~~ time.

Boethius, famous for translating Aristotle in the 7th Century, translated the Greek only into Latin. So narrow was the circle that we find St. Thomas Aquinas and the Scholastic movement in the 13th century reviving Boethius' favorite project of reconciling Faith and Reason (Mysterion and Logos). Not until

printing and the Gutenberg Bible was the Scripture, the basis of medieval intellectual life, available in any Vernacular.

Exclusiveness was assured by restricting discourse to a dead foreign language, known only to an elect few who, having learned Latin developed ipso facto a vested interest in it.

Understanding was not the main idea. As Anselm said, "If he can understand it, let him thank God. If he cannot, let him not raise his head in opposition but bow in reverence." Anselm was canonized.

The method of modern exclusionists is no longer the use of Latin, but of new Cabalistic symbols ~~impenetrable to most readers~~. A few persons may enter the cartel by accepting indoctrination via these new Codes, but entry of new scholars provokes the development of new, more abstruse Codes. The Cult of Progress having replaced the Cult of Antiquity, all this is done in her good name, on a sweaty treadmill going nowhere. *(I do not think it wise to oppose better methodology - one can question its use + preoccupation with it.)*

Baruch Spinoza, 17th century philosopher, laid down a few rules of teaching. Rule #1 is "To speak in a manner comprehensible to the people ..." He was called arrogant. If this be arrogance, the standard curricula of today are humble indeed, where "comprehensible is reprehensible," and standard authorities patronize plain talk as vulgar populism. Is it really appropriate that the people's University should communicate only internally and ^{using} ^{glossaries} in private glossalalia? In our

a problem! "understandable no longer to the intelligent reader" but to fellow cultists, a small minority.

"Developing new codes is acceptable 'religious' - hierarchical practice and a means of succession within the organization + its preservation."

~~indeed, they are encouraged to use,~~
14

~~the~~ competitive pursuit of specious prestige and respectability, as connoted by difficulty, many ^{persons} use ~~obscurity~~ in lieu of authentic high standards with useful substantive content and constructive purpose. *use obscurity, indeed they are encouraged to use obscurity.*

Spinoza exemplifies the danger to hierarchs of philosophers who communicate with common folk. He strayed into a Tractatus Politicus presuming to deal with public affairs, ^{real and important matters such as.} where his policy positions were quite levelling. ^{Furthermore thus provoked}

indent one line single space

a straw.
"The military basis of democracy should be universal military service, ...; its fiscal basis should be the single tax. 'The fields and the whole soil ... should be public property, ... let at a yearly rental to the citizen; ... and with this exception let them all be free from every kind of taxation in time of peace.'" (op. cit., p.195, citing from Tractatus Politicus, ch.6).

use normal citation procedures

punctuation

in this book passage we note
Spinoza was prescient, anticipating the brain drain that besets cities, states, provinces and countries that support education handsomely by use of job-aborting tax systems (like the high VAT of Ireland, the sales and excise taxes of The Philippines) which in turn close off opportunities for the graduates, who then emigrate along with their stored-up human capital. *Disparitiques these matters*

has by no means ceased today.

6. The Cult of Rigor

Authority (apomnemnyxis) and Obscurity are reinforced by a call for Rigor, perhaps echoing Calvin's revival of the ascetic notion that penance improves the character. What is "Rigor" that we should be mindful of it? Rigor is "Harsh inflexibility in opinion, temper, or judgment; the quality of being unyielding or inflexible; severity of life; strictness, severity or cruelty; a condition that makes life difficult, challenging, or uncomfortable; strict precision; rigidity or torpor of organs or tissue that prevents response to stimuli." (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate, 9th Ed.)

The last meaning is most familiar, and just a step short of rigor mortis, its logical extension. Rigor without mors is a cruel punishment. Excessive Rigor atrophies the right hemisphere of the brain, the creative, intuitive half that thrives on Chaos and Pathos. The trick, of course, is to bring order out of Chaos and Pathos without killing creativity. The Cult of Rigor would maintain order, its own order, at whatever cost.

None of the values in the definition of Rigor look very positive except for the "strict precision," and we might well even sacrifice that if the rest of the baggage must come along. Even strict precision may be useless in evaluating unprecise but

important economic ideas and phenomena such as expectations, uncertainty, animal spirits, taste formation, the interface of law and economics, paranoia and the military budget, or the case for inheritance taxation.

There is little Rigor in the relevant and important observation "Corporations have neither bodies to be kicked, nor souls to be damned"? Where do we stand on Matthew Arnold's thought, "Inequality materializes our upper class, vulgarizes our middle class, and brutalizes our lower class"? Or ^{on} Confucius, "The superior man understands what is right; the inferior man understands what will sell." ^{and do we accept} Or Cicero, "...there is nothing so characteristic of narrowness and littleness of soul as the love of riches; and there is nothing more honorable or noble than indifference to money."

Francis Bacon wrote "There are four classes of idols which beset men's minds: Idols of the Tribe, of the Cave, of the Market-place, and of the Theatre." (Novum Organum, 1620). Is our supposed rigor just another Idol, after all, and ^{are} we Idolaters?

Bacon went on

"all the received systems of philosophy are but so many stage-plays, representing worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion....And in the plays of this philosophic theatre you may observe the same thing which is

is this getting nerboser?

I wonder about these citations - would "References" signify the article?

Indeed what does it add - to you agree?

idol

etc

is this correct or
↓ correct or ellipsis
17

found in the theater of the poets, -- that stories invented for the stage are more compact and elegant, and more as we would wish them to be, than true stories out of history."

I was getting lost here as relating all this to your title + section heading -

True stories out of history are both more realistic and more interesting than enduring rigors; let students get at them.

But you give quotes (apophthegms) true stories

do you need it all? Perhaps the statement hangs you back to your heading's theme

Serious students accept the need to endure some mortification of the flesh to learn and achieve. The cruelty of Rigor is it mortifies ^{and shrivels} the flesh without uplifting the spirit, which ~~instead it shrivels~~. Most students see through its pretensions and would flee its arid, sterile tribulations. It is not marketable: Platonic economics is as dry as Platonic love!

To overcome resistance we force students into rigors in the name of Quality, with the implied promise they later may study humane topics actually bearing on the human condition, the interest that drew them to us originally. However, many of them see through these Platonic methods as the infinite digression (apoplanesis) that they are, ^{known} and ^{will} ~~how they are to~~ dominate later studies as well. ^{they are of the all} why else are they The Core? Many, perhaps most excellent students lose interest, swallow their losses and drop out quietly, not wanting to advertise their "failure."

Great line!
|
do you want itches?

an unsubstantiated assertion which is very likely wrong

lifetime?

I want some evidence here, after all excellent people like you'd be stuck with it.

VII

18

~~7.~~ Shame of Arrogance: the Precept of Conformity and Humility

long leading

To maintain control in a more democratic time, the Cult of Conformity has ^{largely} replaced the Cult of Authority. Now the cry is we must learn to read certain journals previously captured by the exclusionists. These become the new Sacred Texts and Canon of Orthodoxy.

Scotus Erigena, ^{the} Carolingian scholar considered the one original thinker of the Dark Ages, wrote "All authority which is not approved by reason seems weak." That seems too obvious to recite today, until we think how the Argument from Conformity (apodixis) has become the new Argument from Authority (apomnemynosis). Scotus continued, "But true reason, since it is established in its own strength, needs to be strengthened by the assent of no authority." How does Authority answer the challenge?

It is traditional for Hierarches to shame independent thinkers as "arrogant." The Deacon of Lyons condemned Scotus for "daring to define with his own presumption what should be held and followed." Eight centuries later Baruch Spinoza, one of the rare, original and relevant thinkers, received similar treatment. A former student, Albert Burgh, reverted to Orthodoxy and addressed Spinoza thus:

Heb ?
of ?

"How dare you set yourself up above all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, doctors and confessors of the Church? Miserable man and worm upon the earth that you are, yea, ashes and food for worms, how can you confront the eternal wisdom with your unspeakable blasphemy. ... What devilish pride puffs you up to pass judgment on mysteries which Catholics themselves declare to be incomprehensible?"
 (cited in Durant, Story of Philosophy, p.159).

*lost
justly*

etc.

This appeal to general practise was an old rhetorical ruse. Aristotle called it apodixis. ^{*dogmatists*} Burgh's modern ^{*economists*} disciples use apodixis rather like this. We must teach what is taught in "respectable" departments elsewhere. Such topics are "minimal essential knowledge for a modern economist," with which "all students should be familiar." ^{*}Like Burgh, the modern authoritarian also trashes deviants with a post-Greek concept, shame and guilt. To think otherwise than the respectable herd is "arrogant." Heavy! Who can dispute it before a modern academic Sanhedrin?

*needs
a
Reference
Section*

"Respectable," I suggest, is an offensive term because of the value-system it exalts and dictates. It idolizes the herd instinct, the Idols of the Tribe. It is, one may object, an elitist herd, one above the common. However, every herd thus fancies itself. No herd was ever universal, only truth is that.

Let us therefore seek not respectability, but respect.

*do we lack
balance by
being too one-
sided throughout
oops! Authority!*

*Ed Witte once said you needed the math or you would not be able to read the journals. The same arguments apply to sociology etc - - The computer has made a difference.

Spinoza, born Jewish, got no comfort from the Synagogue of Amsterdam. In excommunicating Spinoza its leaders also remarked on the "insolence with which these heresies are promulgated." (op. cit. p.153.) No one was to "read any document dictated by him, or written by his hand." Thus the mindset that imputed insolence moved directly to censorship, a point to be well noted in the modern context.

Durant expands on Spinoza's arrogance:

incident "Spinoza has not much use for humility; it is either the hypocrisy of a schemer or the timidity of a slave; it implies the absence of power -- whereas to Spinoza all virtues are forms of ability and power. ... 'humility is very rare'; and as Cicero said, even the philosophers who write books in its praise take care to put their names on the title-page. 'One who despises himself is nearest to a proud man,' ... And whereas Spinoza dislikes humility he admires modesty, and objects to a pride that is not 'tenoned and mortised' in deeds." (ibid., pp.181-82).

don't right justify

Spinoza even arrogantly refused the Chair of Philosophy at Heidelberg, even though he was assured "the most perfect freedom in philosophizing, which His Highness feels assured you would not abuse by calling in question the established religion of the

state." (ibid., p.161). Hierarches would patronize Logos, if Logos would kneel.

But who needs a loose

It reckoned without Spinoza's Sophia (observation and judgment). Spinoza anticipated ^{my} our present condition, ^{write} ~~writing~~ "Academies that are founded at the public expense are instituted not so much to cultivate men's natural abilities as to restrain them." (op. cit. p.194). He advocated a freedom wherein "...everyone that asks leave is allowed to teach publicly, at his own cost and risk." Such arrogance! Obviously he believed his business would survive in the competition, perhaps because of his Rule #1, "To speak in a manner comprehensible to the people".

Thus arrogance leads to self-deprivation or ingratitude to patrons. A modern university Chancellor might well reprobate it as reaping the punishment it deserves. Yet should we not rather admire and support those who deny themselves sure conventional rewards in order to guard their freedom to pursue truth? History has treated Spinoza with more respect than did the organization-men of his day, and than history has treated them, whom it has forgotten except as his arrogance exposed their presumption, tyranny, and hypocrisy.

Another arrogant philosopher was Immanuel Kant, who immodestly prefaces his Critique of Pure Reason: "...there ought not to be one single metaphysical problem that has not been

* Melton's Acropagitia could be cited - cf. Bartlett's

solved here." With such proud egotism nature spurs us on to creation. In his arrogance Kant, like Spinoza and Bacon, rejected pure a priorism with its pretense of Rigor. Observing the enduring reputation of Kant, perhaps arrogance is preferable to the humility of those who, in humbly pursuing only respectability, attain only humble goals.

The danger in such a man, of course, is he may speak out on public affairs, and Kant did so under the very nose and guns of Frederick the Great. Kant, in Eternal Peace, condemned imperialism, land-grabbing, conscription, and privileges of rank and class, and promoted subversions like democracy and world government.

Most moderns would give lip-service to Scotus, Spinoza, Bacon and Kant, their heresies safely buried in the distant past. Yet the ghosts of The Lyons' Deacon, Albert Burgh, the Synagogue of Amsterdam, and His Highness prevail in molding and casting modern economics' curricula.

redundant?

Would Spinoza, Bacon or Kant find refuge in Academe today? Would Tom Paine find happiness under Mrs. Grundy? In an unreasonable age, a man's reason let loose might undo him. Let us do better, though, than stepping aside nimbly while ignorant armies clash by night. Let us be arrogant enough to follow our own beliefs to the extent of framing a curriculum on what we

perceive to be its merits. Let us be too arrogant to follow the moods and caprices of the day, as women change their hemlines and men their lapels. (A great philosophy is not a philosophy without reproach but without fear.)

TO BE CONCLUDED

→ it can be put together
by brave men
if fearful (i.e.
intelligent, aware etc.)
people

— also the P. of who
fears it — originators
students
administration
society
good —

etc.

if run as 1 article - put many
quotes in as notes - this would often
ease the flow & shorten the piece

DRAFT

Submitted to AJES, 30 May 90

Concluded from previous installment

LOGOS ABUSED

The Decadence and Tyranny of Abstract Reasoning in Economics

Mason Gaffney

8. Exhibitionism

~~Those~~ ^{more} who chastise arrogance in others ~~are~~ not ~~always~~ modest
about parading their own mastery over forms and symbols. ^{in the} Roger
Bacon, 13th Century pioneer of observant and experimental
science, also observed his ^{that} colleagues The Schoolmen.

"There are four chief obstacles in grasping truth, which hinder
every man, however learned, and scarcely allow any one to win
a clear title to learning, namely, submission to faulty and
unworthy authority, influence of custom, popular prejudice,
and concealment of our own ignorance accompanied by an
ostentatious display of our knowledge." (Roger Bacon, Opus
Majus).

How vulnerable most students are to the last, and what
clever mimics some are. What little prigs and pedants they
quickly become if we train them only by heaping doctrine upon

→ it also might appear
where you 1st mentioned the
4 obstacles

if properly
Referenced
just give
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as an
endnote

citation
again

doctrine, rather than urging them to frame and evaluate hypotheses to solve problems they perceive around them.

~~that~~
It is not surprising ¹Bacon was repeatedly censured for such thoughts as those cited, and finally imprisoned. Bacon predicted, among other things, the development of flying machines. Do not the words quoted also predict the decadence of modern economic theory?

~~I~~ IX ~~for shaft.~~
9. Decadence and Cults of Minutiae

Medieval philosophy rose no higher than seeking to reconcile Faith and Reason, Mysterion and Logos. It would bring all knowledge into one coherent system subordinate to theology, using ^{the} methods of Aristotelian logic. The effort enlisted the genius of St. Thomas Aquinas, ^{and he} yet failed. St. Bernard rejected ^{the effort} it because it was not Faith; the modern world rejects it because it is not science. ??

After the Scholastic climax of the 13th Century, the extreme rationality and subtlety of later Scholasticism no longer satisfied people's curiosity. The problems it addressed no longer seemed applicable to the society of which they were a part. It was noted an emphasis on style and form betrayed the absence of a vital subject matter. Later schoolmen, dominating many

universities, had ample chance to build up a rounded system of belief but did not seize it in any important way.

They continued to dispute each other on minutiae of less and less moment, excelling more in subtle quibbling (leptologia) than overall rationality, reducing speculation to clever logical calisthenics. The necessity for absorbing Greek and Arabic philosophy crowded out any study like literature that might liberate the spirit. Presently the disappointed world turned away from Logos and Hierarches both, back to the Mysterion of Martin Luther. May we not expect a similar reaction to the triviality, subtlety and irrelevance of modern economic theory?

Lester Thurow (a preacher's son) draws a parallel between the contemporary return to fundamentalism in religion and the return to uncritical market fundamentalism and deregulationism in economic thought and policy. Reacting to modern Scholastics who make simple things complicated, people turn back to fundamentalists who make complicated things simple. Is anyone optimizing? That is our job; let's do it.

*where
an end
note
is
needed
here
or
citation*

10. The Enlightenment: an outbreak of Sophia

In the 17th Century there came finally a use of Logos to interpret the data of Chaos without imposing preconceptions.

Isaac Newton, a Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, ~~was also~~ ^{and} on his own account an experimentalist. ~~He~~ first took data from nature, then prepared mathematical laws based on the results. What he found, of course, was a set of universal physical laws more Platonic than anything ever deduced a priori.

Newton avoided political-economic issues but his contemporary, John Locke, addressed them head-on. Locke, too, ~~was~~ an empiricist first, ~~but one who~~ entered more dangerous and murky waters, dealing with Pathos and Hierarches as subjects of study. His ideas on the necessity for a functional justification of property helped open a floodgate of Liberalism that is only now closing.

From these beginnings there followed an amazing three centuries of scientific, economic and social development. The leading lights of classical political economy were rarely trained to be such, but included physicians (Locke and Quesnay), men of affairs (Turgot, Du Pont and Ricardo), and philosophers (Hume, Smith and Mill). Leading radicals in the classical tradition were journalists (George, Marx) and the co-discoverer of evolution (Alfred Russel Wallace).

All these were synthesizers who, whatever their failings and foibles, observed the Chaos of nature before building systems to order it by Logos.

XI

11. Property strikes back: neo-classical reaction and Platonic revival

Hierarches could abide the classical economics of Locke, Hume, Smith and Ricardo, ^{They} who stopped short of challenging the distribution of wealth. Quesnay's slogan of laissez-faire, and Smith's good name were even coopted, after their deaths, as bywords for social conservatism, although that was no part of their intention. Mill, however, came close to kicking over the traces. George and Marx went the rest of the way, showing how to use classical economics to rationalize radical redistribution of wealth.

The inevitable reaction came to be called neo-classical economics, as though it were simply an evolution of classical economics. No single figure personifies the change, but ^{John} J. Bates Clark exemplifies it. His aim was to undercut Henry George's attack on landed property by erasing the classical distinction of land and capital.

Clark's

~~His~~ method was to endow capital with a Platonic essence, a deathless soul transcending and surviving its corporeal embodiment. Some characterize Clark's concept as "jelly capital", ^{the term} but ~~that~~ rather trivializes the power of ancient Platonic

who - citations

Winters??
he Clark
books traditions and ideas ~~he~~ could marshal to support it. The ecstasy *his* evoked in some souls had a strong Cartesian resonance of Logos mingled with Mysterion; *thus*

under When ... he published The Distribution of Wealth, the logical beauty and precision of the system of theory there displayed was like an illumination from Heaven to many of those whose goal for economic science was the reduction of economic life to terms of law and order (Paul Homan, Contemporary Economic Thought, 1928).

"Law and order" also, of course, connotes Hierarches.

Clark's capital being deathless it is just like land, and theorists after Clark have made land just another kind of machine. The economic world was thenceforth divided into just two elements, labor and capital. As James Tobin noted, "... that destroys the equality of capital to accumulated savings, and dismisses all Ricardian and Malthusian problems in one fell swoop." ("Neo-classical Theory in America," AER, Dec. 1985.)

✓ The hypersensitive issue of functional distribution, the core of classical economics, became a residual twig on the branch of "production economics." In discussing distribution, the only permissible concept of cost was no longer labor cost but opportunity cost, which all resources have in common. (Somewhat

inconsistently, when discussing price formation and inflation, usually only labor cost is considered. *where* Clark's model has dominated the field for nine decades. Today, Tobin notes, Clark's model is used by Denison in analyzing growth rates; by Summers analyzing tax incentives for saving and investment; by Gramlich analyzing public deficits; and by Feldstein analyzing social security.

the August Comte, founder of "Positivism," taught that all science deals either with relations of coexistence or relations of sequence. Production economics as taught today, deals solely with relations of coexistence, *and* ignoring relations of sequence. *production* The popular Cobb-Douglas function exemplifies the point. Sequence virtually disappeared from standard economics until Keynes revived it in a macroeconomic context. Even Keynesians had to work out a "vertical" or instantaneous multiplier to communicate with people whose system of cognition left them uncomfortable with matters of sequence over time.

that It is not surprising the original Austrian economist, Böhm-Bawerk, with his interest in capital theory, disputed Clark on the concept of capital, *nor is it surprising that* and the later "Austrian," Hayek, continued the dispute with the later Clarkian, Frank Knight. But "Austrian" today has degenerated, like laissez-faire, into little more than a codeword for reactionary. Neo-Austrians have abandoned the

field, and grown silent on periods of production and the problem of excessive deepening of capital.

Production economics, meanwhile, has evolved into manipulation of symbols purporting to represent quantities of labor and capital conceived as substitutes at a ~~point~~ ^{particular or an instant of} in time. Micro theorists avoid handling the sequential relationships, that labor produces capital, ^{that} and investment employs labor. They avoid defining capital, and explaining what unit of quantity measures it. The abstract axiomatic reasoning in micro-economic theory that students are forced to take as "The Core" of economics deals exclusively with these stylized relations of co-existence. ~~It~~ ^{By the} ignoring formation, measurement, meaning, depreciation and replacement of capital. Appreciation of land ^{is ignored or} gets short shrift.

Time, which plays so explicit a role in Newton's physics, is handled clumsily by Clark's metaphysical descendants, ^{who} using the ideas of long run and short run and equilibrium. These awkward ideas are occasional embarrassments and yet survive because the alternative would entail restoring the classical distinction of land and capital.

Clark's treatment of capital confuted much of Marx as well as George. Das Kapital, Book II, deals entirely with the circulation (turnover) of capital. With Clark, capital is eternal and turnover is irrelevant. Indeed, among Clarkians the very

As someone said "Time does not come in points."

concept of a period of production or investment (the reciprocal of turnover) is anathema.

scrubbed economic theory

After Clark and Knight ~~scoured~~ time and sequence ~~from~~ *they* economic theory it had to resurface somehow, and did so in the Keynesian movement. After years of strife over how to assimilate Keynes, the strife made vain by cognitive dissonance, the parties divided theory into micro and macro. The cognitive system of Micro limits it to treating relations of coexistence; the cognitive system of Macro limits it to treating relations of sequence. This division is not inherent in the subject matter, which ~~it~~ *is* maltreated. Failure to resolve this Great Schism of modern economic theory is a scandal that impoverishes both Micro and Macro so severely that neither can deal adequately with its subject matter.

Micro and macro need more than reconciliation. Keynes' treatment of sequence suffers from being as Platonic, in its way, as Clark's dismissal of sequence. In Keynes' system, flows of spending drive the material world. Spending is the Platonic reality. Check-clearing and electronic transfers of symbols are Real; the material world is a reflection of those Realities. To the classics, money was only a veil. In Keynes, money and spending are The Original Cause. When Ricardo and Mill wrote of circular flows, they focused on flows of real capital; money was

just a convenience, a tool. In Keynes, flows of funds are the substance of which the material world is but a shadow.

The upshot is both Micro and Macro have become Platonic allegories, exercises in manipulating symbols. These symbols are many steps removed from the Chaos they purport to order and the Pathos they purport to represent. Their social function is mainly that predicted by Spinoza, "not so much to cultivate men's minds as to restrain them."

XII
12. What can we do?

Ultimately we need to recast economic theory along more useful, functional lines, some of which have been intimated supra. Micro theory needs to comprehend "nature begetting" $\frac{1}{m}$ that is capital formation, rising land prices, and other relations of sequence; not just "nature begotten" $\frac{1}{m}$ that is allocation and substitution of given resources, perceived as relations of coexistence. Macro theory needs to climb down from its Platonic preoccupation with manipulating financial symbols, and look at material wealth and capital themselves, as Ricardo did in his Chapter 1 on value. Macro needs to incorporate "structural" insights (now relegated to Micro) to help explain its problems of unemployment and the determination of national income.

useful in
income. Capital theory and distribution theory are two obvious topics ~~to use to~~ integrate Micro and Macro.

Meantime, academicians of good will can lay the groundwork in a number of commonsense ways.

A. Halt the imperialistic expansion of required theory courses.

B. Let students study theory after their applied or field courses. Then theorists will be reasoning not from axioms but to explain data.

C. Let theory be taught by persons from applied fields, not by specialists in theory alone. As the Hebrew teacher Gamaliel said, "every learned man who fails to acquire a trade will at last turn out a rogue."

D. Teach from the classics, not just the moderns. The best from three centuries is bound to excel the best from the last five years, because of the wider selection. Modern writers may have the advantage of hindsight to separate the wheat from the chaff, but it is not clear it is the chaff they have discarded. Modern texts improve on Wicksell about as much as Elton John improves on Beethoven, and Louis Lamour on Shakespeare. Nothing deepens a student like historical

otherwise
perspective, ~~else~~ in his first article the ~~student~~ *new economist* will give the
name of some modern writer to ideas two centuries old, and no
modern reader will notice.

Reading classics lets students decide for themselves if the
Austrian period of production has been refuted, and if so how,
when, why, and by whom. Let students decide if the wages-fund
theory is false, and if Mill really recanted it. Let them read
Jevons and Walras themselves, rather than believe the deluding
characterization of some hasty text writer who fancies himself a
judge because he lives a century later.

the
E. Unmask and expose everything phony and venal. Keep
alert to the historical tendency of organizations to degenerate
and regress toward the mean, and of insecure philosophers to use
ink like the squid to blind the world about them. Accept the need
of uncharitable measures to combat intellectual fraud, the
ultimate white-collar crime which is the more dangerous for being
legal. Bend backwards to avoid dicaeologia, the vice of self-
righteousness that excuses one's crimes by one's circumstances;
but be willing finally to play rough, considering that malice towards
frauds is charity to students.

Purge classes and journals of pomp, conceit, cant,
obscurity, digressive convolution, mysticism, and claims of
exclusive jurisdiction. Sensitize colleagues and administrators

it should be made clear your major stress is on Graduate not undergraduate study.

too ambitious if not over meaning

to the classical unfair devices of rhetoric used by academic operators to sell themselves to Deans and Vice-chancellors and Senate Committees.¹ Even ridicule is justified to shame authorities away from "falling for" ancient fallacies and tricks.

F. Give respectful attention to novel ideas and challenges originating outside the profession. Never join a multitude of one's colleagues to bear witness against supposed heretics who are un- or underrepresented in the forum.

G. Avoid dependence on grants and patrons. Teaching is an honorable trade and a living, to support the research enterprise. Public funds are acceptable when viewed as a form of social dividend for students. Avoid ambitious expansion and grantsmanship at the loss of independence.

H. Require enough math and stat ^{emotional statistics training} for command over basic skills, and tooling up receptive minds for conceptual and quantitative reasoning. Beyond, say, differential equations, require nothing but cooperation with math and stat departments to

¹Unfair devices include apodixis, apomnemynosis, allegory, anapodoton, apoplanesis, aposiopesis, argumentum ad baculum, argumentum ad verecundiam, augendi causa, cacozelia, cataplexis, comprobatio, prescriptive definition, metaphor, epagoge, epiplexis, epitheton, euphuism, petitio principii, secundum quid, koinonia, leptologia, macrologia, martyria, meiosis, metaphor, metonymy, parasiopesis, onedismus, pareuresis, periphrasis, hypotyposis, synecdoche, tapinosis, dicaeologia, epiplexis, among others. The length of the list suggests what a deep bag of tricks, dishonesty carries, and what a long history, to subvert the legitimate purposes of Logos. The surest defense against them all is an instinct for fairness, somewhat analogous to the mystical concept of the cross as a shield against the plots of Satan.

did this confound? Yes
spelling checker
+ long

history

keep relevant courses available. By no means disparage these studies; just be wary of any neo-Cartesian imperialists.

H. Tolerate and even embrace social radicals, especially practical applied ones on the model of John R. Commons. Toleration should cease at the point where radicals go Platonic and hierarchical, demanding to impose their own preemptive theory on all students.

I. Keep public service and public policy uppermost. ^{while} It is enough to rationalize self-interest at the public expense, one need not practise it exclusively. Beware the travesty of market reasoning that says "Our discipline glorifies profit-seeking; how then can we profit most from our discipline?" We are a Levitical class and as such owe primary loyalty to the public.² ✓

Recognize public service as academic service, within reason. A tragedy of academe is the shabby reception the Platonists gave Walter Heller when he returned to Minnesota after serving his country so well. Public service also generates its own conceits, ^{jealous} and cliques which pose a risk, and there is no simple formula to cover all cases. However, no corruption is as deadly as the irrelevance and sterility of theory today.

²I like Bacon's statement: "... without Goodness man is a busy, mischievous, wretched thing, no better than a kind of vermin. ... The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall; the desire of knowledge in excess caused man to fall; but in charity there is no excess ..."

J. Understand and keep alert to the constant pressures Babbitry brings to bear on administrators; apply constant counterpressure.

K. Be yourselves. When Chairman Mao said "Let a hundred flowers bloom" it was only to mow them down. Here there is no external Mao, but each timid academic carries his internal censor. What a waste it is of hard-won American freedom to submit to the tyranny of apodixis, the academic Mrs. Grundy. Bear in mind how impressed with Jesus his hearers were "because he spake as one with authority, and not as the Scribes and the Pharisees." Let no one silence or subdue you by invoking shame of arrogance.

L. Encourage breadth. The menace of today is from the ants, not the grasshoppers. There are now thousands of Doctors of Economics who know nothing of history, government, literature, linguistics, semantics, industrial organization, composition, ecology, mores, law, geography, chemistry or culture, but fancy they can teach and write in a social science because they know some highly recondite quantitative or analytic skills, and can speak in tongues. Most seminal advances come from the interfaces among disciplines or, indeed, among ways of life.

M. Allow no rigor for its own supposed benefits, only as means to some legitimate end. Students endure too much privation without making it an overt objective.

pain

*tedium
tortuous*

N. Learn from the successes of others. In Christianity, "The Word (Logos) was made flesh, and dwelt among us, ..." The Word made flesh became more than Mysterion, it knew and evoked Pathos; it survived as a carpenter; it coped with Hierarches; it told homely stories; it manifested Sophia. Economists will interest and move more students when their words, too, are made flesh.

With such convictions and practises Academe may yet gain control over the travesty of Logos now rampant, and bring Sophia into the discourse.

it has a world to

win!

Notes

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References

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end of article