

Ludwig Boltzmann-Institut für Historische Sozialwissenschaft, Wien - Salzburg

Immanuel Wallerstein

**"The Racist Albatross:
Social Science, Jörg Haider, and Widerstand"**

Vortragsmanuskript

Vortrag gehalten an der Universität Wien am 9. März 2000

[Lecture at the Universität Wien, Mar. 9, 2000, in the series, "Von der Notwendigkeit des Überflüssigen - Sozialwissenschaften und Gesellschaft"]

[This article is copyright Immanuel Wallerstein. It may be downloaded or forwarded electronically. It may not reproduced in print form or translated without permission of the author.]

"God save thee, ancient Mariner

From the fiends that plague thee thus! -

Why look'st thou so?" - "With my crossbow

I shot the albatross."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, ll. 79-82

In Coleridge's poem, a ship was driven astray by the winds into hostile climate. The only solace of the seamen was an albatross, which came to share their food. But Coleridge's mariner shot him, for some unknown reason - perhaps sheer arrogance. And, as a result, all on the ship suffered. The gods were punishing the misdeed. The other sailors hung the albatross around the mariner's neck. The albatross, symbol of friendship, now became symbol of guilt and shame. The mariner was the sole survivor of the voyage. And he spent his life obsessed with what he had done. The live albatross is the other who opened himself to us in strange and far off lands. The dead albatross that hangs around our neck is our legacy of arrogance, our racism. We are obsessed with it, and we find no peace.

I was asked more than a year ago to come to Vienna to speak on "Social Science in an Age of Transition." My talk was to be in the context of a series entitled "Von der Notwendigkeit des Überflüssigen - Sozialwissenschaften und Gesellschaft." I happily accepted. I believed I was coming to the Vienna which had a glorious role in the building of world social science, especially in the era of *Traum und Wirklichkeit, 1870-1930*. Vienna was the home of Sigmund Freud, whom I believe to have been the single most important figure in social science in the twentieth century. Or at least Vienna was his home until he was forced by the Nazis to flee to London in his dying year. Vienna also was home, for an important part of their lives, to Joseph Alois Schumpeter and Karl Polanyi. Men of strikingly opposite political opinions, they were in my view the two most important political economists of the twentieth century, underrecognized and undercelebrated. And Vienna was the home to my own teacher, Paul Lazarsfeld, whose combination of policy-oriented research and pathbreaking methodological innovations began with *Arbeit lösen von Marienthal*, a study he did with Marie Jahoda and Hans Zeisel. It was to this Vienna I was coming.

Then, as you know, came the last Austrian elections, with their far from inevitable consequence, the inclusion of the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) in the government. The other states in the European Union (EU) reacted strongly to this change of regime, and suspended bilateral relations with Austria. I had to consider whether I still would come, and I hesitated. If I am here today, it is for two reasons. First, I wished to affirm my solidarity with

der andere Österreich, which has manifested itself so visibly since the new government was installed. But secondly, and even more importantly, I came to assume my own responsibilities as a social scientist. We have all shot the albatross. It hangs around all our necks. And we must struggle with our souls and our minds to atone, to reconstruct, to create a different kind of historical system, one that would be beyond the racism that afflicts the modern world so deeply and so viciously. I have therefore retitled my talk. It is now: "The Racist Albatross: Social Science, Jörg Haider, and *Widerstand*."

The facts of what has happened in Austria seem quite simple on the surface. For a number of successive legislatures, Austria had been governed by a national coalition of the two major and mainline parties, the Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (SPÖ) and the Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP). One was center-left and the other was center-right and Christian Democratic. Their combined vote, at one time overwhelming, declined throughout the 1990's. And in the 1999 elections, the FPÖ for the first time came in second in the vote, surpassing the ÖVP, albeit by only several hundred votes. The subsequent discussions between the two mainstream parties on forming still one more national coalition failed, and the ÖVP turned to the FPÖ as a partner. This decision of the ÖVP upset many people in Austria, including President Klestil. But the ÖVP persisted, and the government was formed.

The decision also upset, and it must be added surprised, the political leaders of the other EU states. They decided collectively to suspend bilateral relations with Austria, and despite some voices that have questioned the wisdom of this, the EU has maintained its position. The EU action in turn upset many Austrians, and not only those who supported the formation of the present government but many of its opponents. Many of the latter argued that the EU was overstating the dangers coming from the inclusion of the FPÖ in the government. "Haider is no Hitler" was a common formulation of this position. Others argued that the equivalents of Haider could be found in all the EU states, and to some extent even in their governments. And hence, these people argued, it was hypocritical of the EU to take the action that it did. And finally, some Austrians argued (as did some other Europeans) that the appropriate action by the EU would have been to wait and see, and that if eventually the new Austrian government did something reprehensible, then and only then would it be time to take action. Meanwhile, within Austria itself, there was launched a *Widerstand*, which is still going on.

I would like to take as my object of analysis not the FPÖ as a party and what it stands for but the strong reaction of the EU to the inclusion of this party in the Austrian government and the Austrian counterreaction as well as the *Widerstand*. Both the reaction and the counterreaction can only be understood if we shift our analytic focus from Austria proper to the world-system as a whole, its realities, *and* what social scientists have been telling us about these realities. I propose therefore to look at this larger context in four time frames: the modern world-system since 1989; the modern world-system since 1945; the modern world-system since 1492; and the modern world-system after 2000. These are of course symbolic dates, but symbols in this case are very important. They help us to discuss both realities and the perception of realities. In doing this, I hope that I am expressing solidarity with the Austrian *Widerstand*, and I am hope that I am assuming my own responsibilities, both moral and intellectual, as a social scientist.

1. The World-System Since 1989

In 1989, the so-called socialist bloc of nations collapsed. The countries of east-central Europe that had been held in check by the Brezhnev doctrine (and even more importantly by the Yalta agreement) effectively asserted their political autonomy from the Soviet Union, and each proceeded to dismantle its Leninist system. Within two years, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union itself was dissolved, and indeed the U.S.S.R. broke up into its fifteen constituent units. If the story of the Communist states was different in East Asia and Cuba, this changed little in the consequences that these eastern European happenings had for the geopolitics of the world-system.

Since 1989, a great deal of world attention has been concentrated on these former Communist countries. There have been endless conferences of social scientists on their so-called transition, to the point where we talk of "transitology." And in the zones that formerly constituted the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Caucasian areas of the Soviet Union, there have been a large number of quite nasty civil wars, in which in several cases outside powers have been actively engaged. Many social scientists have analyzed this violence under headings such as "ethnic purification," a phenomenon asserted to be the result of long-enduring ethnic hostilities. Even in states that have escaped a high level of internal violence, such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, and the Baltic states, there have occurred unpleasant reminders of seemingly resurgent ethnic tensions. At the same time, similar kinds of full-scale,

as well as of low-level, civil wars have been occurring in many parts of Africa as well as in Indone-sia, to take only the most obvious cases.

In the pan-European world (by which term I shall mean western Europe plus North America and Australasia but not east-central Europe), the analysis of these civil wars has centered on the presumed weakness of the civil societies in these states and the low level of their historic concern for human rights. Anyone who has read the press in western Europe cannot miss the degree to which, in what is being called a post-Communist world, the attention to these formerly Communist areas has been an attention focused on a "problem." And the "problem" has been defined de facto as the absence in these areas of the higher level of modernity presumably to be found in the pan-European world.

Meanwhile, it is equally striking how little attention - by the press, by politicians, and especially by social scientists - there has been to what has changed since 1989 in the pan-European world itself. Political regimes which had built their national logics on the fact that they were involved in a "cold war" suddenly discovered that the arrangements they had sustained for forty years now seemed pointless, to their voters and to the politicians themselves. Why have a system of *pentapartiti* (and its *tangentopoli*) in Italy built around the permanent majority of Democrazia Cristiana, if there was no cold war? What was there now to hold together a Gaullist party in France, or even the Christlich-Demokratische Union in Germany? Why should the Republican Party in the United States continue to be bound by the constraints of a "bilateral foreign policy"? The result of these self-doubts? The major conservative parties in the pan-European world are crumbling, torn apart by divisions between the new ultras of economic liberalism and a more social conservatism, whether it be of the variety that wishes the state to rectify the degraded morality of the citizenry or the variety that retains a paternalist concern for social safety-nets. And these factions fight each other amidst supporters who are fearful that, in the turmoil, their existing social positions and income may be seriously threatened.

Well, then, what about the center-left parties, most of which call themselves Social-Democratic? These parties too are in trouble. The collapse of the Communisms was in fact only the culmination of a spreading disillusionment with the Old Left in *all* of its three main versions - Communist parties, Social-Democratic parties, and national liberation movements - a disillusionment that was signaled dramatically by the 1968 world revolution. This disillusionment was the consequence, not so paradoxically, of the very political success of

these same movements, the achievement by them of state power around the world. For once they were in power, these movements showed themselves not really capable of carrying through with their historic promise that, if only they achieved state power, they could and would build a new society, that is, transform society substantially in the direction of a more egalitarian, more democratic world.

In western Europe, the Old Left meant primarily the Social-Democrats. And what has happened, since 1968 but even more since 1989, is that people may vote for such parties as a *pis aller*, but no one dances in the streets when they win an election. No one expects them to bring about a revolution, even a peaceful one. And the most disillusioned of all are their own leaders, who are reduced to talking a centrist language of *Der Mitte*. But with this disillusionment in the Old Left parties has come a disengagement from the state structures themselves. The states had been tolerated by their populations, even lauded as potential agents of social transformation. Now they were coming to be seen primarily as agents of corruption and of the use of unnecessary force, no longer the citizen's rampart but now the citizen's burden.

You can see from this description that Austria is merely one more instance of a general pan-European pattern. Why have a national coalition in a post-Communist era? And why even vote for parties that seem primarily interested in the *Proporz*? It is in this context that the FPÖ received its 26.9% on October 3, 1999. This is to be sure the highest percentage achieved by any far right party in any European country since 1945. In 1995, Le Pen's Front National got 15.1% in France, and this already was a shock. But at that time, the two main conservative parties insisted that they would refuse the support of the FN at any level. And when, in the regional elections of 1998, the results were such that the conservative parties could form majorities in a large number of regions only with the support of those elected on the ticket of the FN, five regional leaders ignored this directive and obtained FN support for their regional governments. However, these regional leaders were promptly expelled from the two main conservative national parties, the RPR and the UDR. On the other hand, in Italy, Berlusconi did form a government with the support of Fini and his *Alianza Nazionale* which was a party similar to that of Haider, with nonetheless the nuance that Fini had specifically renounced its neo-Fascist past before the elections.

Still why then, as many Austrians insist, did the EU take such a strong position on what happened in Austria? The answer is really quite simple. They were all afraid, precisely

because their countries were not that different from Austria, that they would be faced with similar choices in a near future, and that they might be equally tempted to follow the path of the ÖVP. It was their fears of themselves that led to the strong EU reaction. At the same time, it was Austrian incomprehension that they had indeed crossed a line which all of western Europe had set for itself, not in 1999 but in 1945, that accounts for the Austrian counterreaction. Let me make my own position quite clear. I approve the EU decision to suspend bilateral relations with Austria. I consider that, had they not done this, we could indeed be swamped by an ideological tide that might tear western Europe apart. But I also agree that there was considerable hypocrisy, or rather considerable self-deception, in the EU decision. To see why this is so, we must look at the world-system since 1945 and not since 1989.

Before however I do that, let me say a word more about world social science since 1989. It has been lamentable. All anyone talks about - and that almost irrespective of political tendency - is globalization, as though that were more than a passing rhetorical device in the continuing struggle within the capitalist world-economy over the degree to which trans-border flows should be unimpeded. It is dust in our eyes. So also is the endless litany about ethnic violence, and here not only the social scientists but also the human rights activists are responsible. Not that ethnic violence is not a terrible and terrifying reality but that it is distinctly not the domain of some less fortunate, less wise, less civilized others. It is the absolutely normal result of the deep and growing inequalities within our world-system, and cannot be addressed by moral exhortation, or by an *ingérence* by the pure and advanced into the zones controlled by the impure and backward. World social science has offered us no useful tools to analyze what has been happening in the world-system since 1989, and therefore no useful tools to understand contemporary Austrian reality.

2. The World-System Since 1945

In 1945, the Nazi experience and the Nazi horror came to an end. Hitler had not invented anti-Semitism, nor had Germans. Anti-Semitism had long been the major European internal expression of the deep racism of the European world, and in its modern version, it had been endemic on the European scene for at least a century. Anyone who compares Paris to Berlin on this score as of 1900 would not think that Berlin comes off the worst. Nowhere was active anti-Semitism absent, even during the Second World War, even in the United States.

So, why was everyone so upset with Nazism, at least after 1945? The answer stands out and cannot be missed. It was the *Endlösung*. While almost everyone in the pan-European world had been openly and happily racist and anti-Semitic before 1945, almost no one had intended it to result in an *Endlösung*. Hitler's Final Solution missed the entire point of racism within the capitalist world-economy. The object of racism is not to exclude people, much less to exterminate them. The object of racism is to keep people within the system, but as *Untermenschen*, who can then be exploited economically and used as political scapegoats. What happened with Nazism was what the French would call a *déravage* - a blunder, a skid, a loss of control. Or perhaps it was the genie getting out of the box.

One was supposed to be racist just up to the point of an *Endlösung*, but no further. It had always been a delicate game, and no doubt there had been *déravages* before - but never on such a large scale, never in so central an arena of the world-system, and never, never so visible. The Allied troops who entered the concentration camps in 1945 were truly shaken at a personal level. And collectively, the pan-European world had to come to terms with the genie that had escaped from the box. They did this by a process of banning public usage of racism, and primarily of the public usage of anti-Semitism. It became tabu language.

The social scientists joined the game. In the years after 1945, they began to write book after book denouncing the meaningfulness of the concept of race, the illegitimacy of assuming that differences in any current social measurement of social groups could be traced to innate genetic characteristics. The memory of the Holocaust came to be subject matter for school curricula. The Germans, a bit reluctantly at first but eventually with some moral courage, have tried to analyze their own guilt and thereby reduce their shame. And, after 1989, they have been joined, somewhat reluctantly no doubt, by other countries of the pan-European world. Allied powers such as France and the Netherlands began to admit their own guilt as well, guilt for permitting this *déravage* to occur, guilt because at least some of their citizens actively participated in the process. One of the reasons that the EU reacted so strongly to Haider is that Austria as a country has refused to assume its share of the guilt, has insisted that it was primarily a victim. Perhaps a majority of Austrians had not desired *Anschluss*, although it is hard to know this when one sees the newsreel clips of the cheering crowds in Vienna. But what is more to the point is that no non-Jewish, non-Roma Austrian was considered other than a German in the Third Reich after *Anschluss*, and the majority gloried in that fact.

This realization that racism had been undone by going much too far had two major consequences in the post-1945 pan-European world. First, these countries sought to emphasize their internal virtues as integrative nations unspotted by racist oppression, countries of liberty facing the "evil empire" of the Soviet Union, whose racism in turn became a regular theme of Western propaganda. All sorts of socio-political actions flowed from this attempt: the 1954 Supreme Court decision in the United States outlawing racial segregation; the philo-Israel policies of all the pan-European world; even the new emphasis on ecumenism within the western Christian world (as well as the invention of the idea that there was such a thing as a joint Judeo-Christian heritage).

But, second and just as important, there was a need to restore a sanitized racism to its original function, that of keeping people within the system, but as *Untermenschen*. If Jews could no longer be treated thus, nor Catholics in Protestant countries, one would have to look further afield. The post-1945 period was, at least at first, an era of incredible economic expansion and simultaneous demographic transformation in the direction of a radically reduced rate of reproduction of the pan-European world. This world needed more workers and was producing less than ever before. And thus began the era of what the Germans gingerly called the *Gastarbeitern*.

Who were these *Gastarbeitern*? Mediterranean peoples in non-Mediterranean Europe, Latin Americans and Asians in North America, West Indians in North America and western Europe, Black Africans and South Asians in Europe. And, since 1989, persons from the former socialist bloc coming to western Europe. All these migrants have come in large numbers because they wanted to come and because they could find jobs, indeed were desperately needed to make the pan-European countries flourish. But they came, almost universally, as persons at the bottom of the heap - economically, socially, and politically.

When the world-economy entered its long Kondratieff B-phase in the 1970's, and unemployment grew for the first time since 1945, the immigrants became a convenient scapegoat. The far right forces, which had been absolutely illegitimate and marginal since 1945, suddenly began to reemerge, sometimes within the mainline conservative parties, sometimes as separate structures (and if so, then eating into the support not only of the conservative parties but of the center-left workers' parties as well). By the 1990's, these parties began to seem more serious, for reasons I've already suggested.

The mainline parties were not at all sure how to handle this resurgence of more or less openly racist parties. They were panicked that the genie might get out of the bottle once again and undo the social placidity of their states. Some argued that these far right forces could be undermined by coopting their anti-immigrant themes in a mildly edulcorated form. Others said these forces constituted a virus that had to be isolated as fast as possible. You know the arguments, because you are having them in Austria right now.

Once again, the social scientists did not help us very much. They sought to analyze the Nazi phenomenon in terms of some peculiarity of the German historical situation, instead of seeing that the whole world-system had been playing with fire for a long time, and it had been just a matter of time that sparks would ignite somewhere somehow. Social scientists sought to proclaim their own moral virtue (the merits of which we shall come to in a moment) and to absolve the pan-European world because of its current supposedly non-racist rhetoric, when the pan-European racism after 1945 was in fact just as virulent as its racism before 1933 or before 1945. They had simply substituted other objects of hatred and fear. Do we not debate these days the so-called "clash of civilizations," a concept invented by a social scientist?

Indeed, the very denunciation by the EU of Austria, much as I approve of it, smacks of racism. For what is it that the European Union is saying? It is saying in effect - Haiders are possible, perhaps even normal, outside the pan-European world, even perhaps in such close countries as Hungary and Slovenia. But Haiders are impermissible, unthinkable within civilized Europe. We Europeans must defend our moral superiority, and Austria threatens to make this impossible. It is true: Austria does threaten to make this impossible, and Austria must somehow retreat from its present untenable position. But the grounds of the EU complaint are not above suspicion of moral taint. For western Europe's universalist values are themselves deeply encrusted with the chronic, constitutive racism of the pan-European world.

To appreciate this, and to appreciate the failure of social science to unmask this, we must look at the story of the modern world-system after 1492.

3. The World-System Since 1492

When Europeans landed in the Americas, and claimed to conquer it, they encountered indigenous peoples who were extremely strange to them. Some were organized as fairly simple hunting and gathering systems. And some were organized in sophisticated and elaborate world-empires. But in both cases neither the weapons of these peoples nor their

acquired physiological immunities (or rather the lack of them) made it possible for them to resist successfully. Thereupon, the Europeans had to decide how to treat these peoples. There were those Europeans who, acquiring vast lands (often for the first time), wished to exploit them as rapidly as possible, and were ready to enslave and use up indigenous laborers. The justification they gave for this was that the indigenous peoples were barbarous, undeserving of anything but harsh servitude.

But there were also Christian evangelists, who were both horrified by the inhuman treatment meted out to these indigenous peoples by the European *conquistadores* and fiercely insistent on both the possibility and the importance of winning the souls of the indigenous peoples for Christian redemption. One such person was Bartolomé de las Casas, whose passions and militancy culminated in a famous and classic debate in 1550 about the nature of the "other." Already in 1547, he had written a short summary for the Emperor Charles V (and all others) recounting the horrors of what was going on in the Americas in some detail, and summarizing what had happened in this way:

If Christians have killed and destroyed so very many souls of such great quality, it has been simply in order to have gold, to become exceedingly rich in a very short time and to raise themselves to high positions disproportionate to their station....[T]hey have for [these people so humble, so patient, and so easy to subdue] neither respect nor consideration nor esteem....They have not treated them as beasts (would to God they had treated them as well and been as considerate to them as beasts); they have treated them worse than beasts, as less than manure.²

Las Casas was to be sure the impassioned and crusading defender of the rights of the peoples. He was, in a connection worth noting, the first Bishop of Chiapas, home today to the neozapatistas, where it is still necessary to defend the same cause that Las Casas was almost 500 years ago, the rights of these indigenous peoples to their dignity and their land. These peoples find themselves little better off today than they were in the time of Las Casas. There are those who would therefore classify Las Casas and other neoscholastic Spanish theologians, philosophers, and jurists as precursors of Grotius and the "true founders of the modern rights of man."³

The Emperor had been at first seduced by the arguments of Las Casas and made him his Protector of the Indians. But then later, he had second thoughts and convened at Valladolid in 1550 a special Junta of judges to hear a debate between Las Casas and one of the Emperor's other advisors, Juan Ginás de Sepúlveda, on the underlying issues. Sepúlveda, a staunch opponent of Las Casas, gave four arguments to justify the treatment of the Indians to which Las Casas had been objecting: They were barbarous and therefore their natural condition was that of submission to more civilized peoples. They were idolatrous and practiced human sacrifice, which justified intervention to prevent crimes against natural law. Intervention was justified to save innocent lives. Intervention would facilitate Christian evangelization. These arguments seem incredibly contemporary. All we have to do is substitute the term democracy for the term Christianity.

Against these arguments, Las Casas asserted: No people may ever be forced to submit to another people on the grounds of a presumed cultural inferiority. One cannot punish a people for crimes of which they were unaware that they were crimes. One is morally justified in saving innocent people only if the process of saving them does not cause still greater harm to others. And Christianity cannot be propagated by the sword. Here too the arguments seem incredibly contemporary.

For some therefore Las Casas should be seen as the last of the *Comuneros*, that understudied first great movement of social protest which took place in Spain in the first third of the sixteenth century, a movement that was both democratic and communitarian. The implications of what Las Casas was arguing seemed to question the very basis of the Spanish empire, which is in fact the probable reason that Charles V withdrew his early support for Las Casas.⁴ Indeed, in his discussion of the concept of what is a barbarian, Las Casas insisted that "no one is unable to locate a barbarian to dominate," reminding Spaniards of their own treatment by the Romans.⁵ But others have argued that Las Casas was really simply the theorist of "good" colonization, a reformer who "proposed tirelessly, to the end of his life, substitute solutions for the problems of the colonial system founded on the *encomienda*."⁶

The fascinating thing about the great debate before the Junta de Valladolid is that no one is quite sure what the Junta decided. In a sense, this is emblematic of the modern world-system. Have we ever decided? Can we decide? Was Las Casas, the anti-racist, the defender of the downtrodden, also the person who was seeking to institutionalize a "good" colonization? Should one ever, can one ever, evangelize by the sword? We have never been

given answers to these questions that were logically consistent or politically so persuasive that they ended all discussion. Perhaps no such answers exist.

Since Las Casas, we have constructed a capitalist world-economy, which then expanded to encompass the entire globe, and which has always and at every moment justified its hierarchies on the basis of racism. It has always to be sure also had its quota of persons who have sought to alleviate the worst features of this racism, and they have had, it must be admitted, some limited success. But there have also always been brutal massacres, *Endlösungen* before the *Endlösung*, though perhaps less bureaucratically, systematically, and effectively planned, and certainly less publicly visible.

Ah, you will say, but then came the French Revolution and the *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme*. Well yes, but well no! The French Revolution did to be sure incarnate a protest against hierarchy, privilege, and oppression, and made this protest on the basis of an egalitarian universalism. The symbolic gesture that displayed this protest was the rejection of "Monsieur" in address and its replacement by the appellation, "Citoyen." Ay, there's the rub, as Shakespeare put it. For the concept of citizen was intended to be inclusive. *All* citizens were to have a say in their government, not just a limited group of aristocrats. The rub is that if one is to include everyone who is in a group, someone has first to decide who constitute the members of this group. And this necessarily implies that there are persons who are non-members.

The concept citizen inevitably excludes every bit as much as it includes. The exclusionary thrust of citizenship has in fact been as important as its inclusionary thrust in the two centuries since the French Revolution. When Karl Lueger, of Viennese fame, said in 1883, "Wir sind Menschen, Christlichen Österreicher,"² he was offering a definition of the limits of citizenship, one that Viennese voters seemed to appreciate, even if the Emperor did not. Lueger was not ready to include the Judeo-Magyaren,³ who were for him as much foreigners as the foreign capitalists he also denounced. Was this proto-fascism, as many contend, or merely "calculated extremism," as John Boyer wishes to insist?⁴ Today, some pose this same question about Jörg Haider. But what difference the answer? The political result is virtually identical.

At that very moment in modern history, when the French Revolution was bequeathing to us all this minefield of the concept of citizen, the world of knowledge was going through a major upheaval. This upheaval followed on the successful secularization of knowledge

achieved by the detachment of philosophy from theology, a process that had taken several centuries. But now it was to be more than a question of secularizing knowledge. More or less in the latter half of the eighteenth century, two terms that had hitherto been if not synonymous then heavily overlapping, science and philosophy, came to be defined as ontological opposites. The two cultures, that singular feature of the structures of knowledge of the modern world-system, had become accepted as a defining cleavage of knowledge. And with this cleavage, came the intellectual and institutional separation of the search for truth on the one hand (the domain of science) and the search for the good and the beautiful on the other (the domain of philosophy or the humanities/*Geisteswissenschaften*). It is this fundamental rupture which explains the subsequent form of development of the social sciences as well as, I believe, its inability to speak to the constitutive racism of the capitalist world-economy. It is to this story that I now turn.

The two great cultural legacies of the French Revolution were the idea that political change was normal, and that sovereignty resided neither in the ruler nor in a group of notables but in the people.⁴ The latter was simply the expression of the logic of the concept of citizen. Both were extremely radical ideas in their implications, and neither the downfall of the Jacobin regime nor even the end of its Napoleonic successor regime could keep these ideas from suffusing the world-system and becoming widely accepted. Those in power were forced to deal with this new geocultural reality. If political change was to be regarded as normal, then it was important to know how the system operated, the better to control the process. This provided the basic impulse for the institutional emergence of social science, that branch of knowledge which purports to explain social action, social change, and social structures.

This is not the place to analyze the institutional history of the social sciences. This was done succinctly in the report of the international commission I headed, *Open the Social Sciences*.⁴ There are just two things I wish to discuss here: the place of social science amidst the two cultures, and the role social science has played in the understanding of racism.

The two cultures divided up the domains of knowledge along lines that today we think are self-evident, although no one would have thought so in the seventeenth century or earlier. Science appropriated the domain of the natural world as its exclusive realm. And the humanities appropriated the world of ideas, cultural production, and intellectual speculation as its exclusive realm. When, however, it came to the domain of social realities, the two cultures contested the domain. Each argued that this realm really belonged to it. What happened

therefore when the social sciences began to be institutionalized in the re nascent university system of the nineteenth century is that they were torn apart by this epistemological debate, this *Methodenstreit*. The social sciences emerged in divided camps, with some of what were now called disciplines leaning heavily, at least at first, towards the idiographic, humanistic camp (history, anthropology, Oriental studies) and others leaning heavily towards the nomothetic, scientific camp (economics, sociology, political science). The implication of this for the problem with which we are dealing here is that the social sciences were deeply divided over the issue of whether they were to be concerned only with the search for the true or were also to be concerned with the search for the good. The social sciences have never resolved this issue.

As for racism, the most striking thing about social knowledge throughout the nineteenth century and right up to 1945 was that social science never confronted this issue directly. And indirectly, its record is deplorable. Let us start with history, the only modern social science that existed as a name and as a concept long before the nineteenth century. History underwent a so-called scientific revolution in the nineteenth century, whose central figure was Leopold von Ranke. You will all know that Ranke insisted that historians must write history *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*. This meant reconstructing the past primarily out of materials contemporary to the past being studied. Hence, the archives, depository of written documents of the past, documents which had to be analyzed critically as *Quellen*.

I will ignore now later criticisms of this approach as limiting us inevitably to the study almost only of political and diplomatic history, using the writings of persons linked to the states and their rulers. I will also ignore the fact that the insistence on archives as the crucial source of data forced history exclusively into the past, whose temporal boundaries were defined by the degree of willingness of states to let scholars peruse their archives. Allow me to insist merely on one element of history, at least as it was practiced before 1945. History was the history only of so-called historical nations. Indeed it had to be, given the methods used.

In the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as elsewhere, the concept of historical nations was not merely a scholarly concept; it was a political weapon. It is clear who or what are the historical nations. They are the nations located in powerful, modern states which can fund and constrain their historians to write about them. As late as the 1960's, H.R. Trevor-Roper made the incredible assertion that Africa has no history. But one might ask, how many courses were

offered in the nineteenth century in the University of Vienna on Slovenian history? How many, indeed, are offered today? The very term, historical nation, intrudes a racist category into the very heart of historical practice. It is no accident then, if one regards world historical production before 1945, that 95% of it (at the very least) was the story of five historical nations/arenas: Great Britain, France, the United States, the Germanies (I choose this formulation deliberately), and the Italies. And the other 5% is largely the history of a few less powerful European states, such as the Netherlands or Sweden or Spain. I should add that a small percentage was also written about the European Middle Ages as well as about the presumed founts of modern Europe: ancient Greece and Rome. But not ancient Persia, or even ancient Egypt. Were the historians who constructed the history of the Germanies of any use in illuminating the public debate which Karl Lueger and others launched in Vienna in the last third of the nineteenth century? I think not.

Did the other social sciences do better? The economists were busy constructing universal theories of *homo economicus*. Adam Smith, in his famous formulation, told us that *all* humans seek to "truck, barter, and trade." The whole object of his book, *The Wealth of Nations*, was to persuade us (and the British government), that everyone should cease interfering with this natural tendency of all humans. When Ricardo created a theory of international trade based on the concept of comparative advantage, he used, again famously, a hypothetical illustrative example in which he inserted the names of England and Portugal. He did not tell us that the example was drawn from real history nor did he explain to us the degree to which this so-called comparative advantage had been imposed by British power upon the weaker Portuguese state.⁴

Yes, some economists insisted that the processes of recent English history did not constitute an illustration of universal laws. Gustav von Schmoller led a whole movement, *Staatwissenschaften*, which sought to historicize economic analysis.⁴ It was a Vienna economist, Karl Menger, who led the assault against this heresy, eventually to bring it down, despite its previously strong hold in the Prussian university system. On the other hand, an even more powerful critique of classical economics than the one made by Schmoller, was that of Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, a book written in England after he left Vienna in 1936. But economists do not read Polanyi. Economists tend not to deal with political economy at all if they can help it, and the major attempt to deal with racism by a mainstream economist involved discussing it as a market choice.⁴

The scorn of the mainstream economists for analysis of any situation outside the parameters of *ceteris paribus* ensures that economic behavior that does not follow the norms of the market, as economists define these norms, is not worth analyzing, much less taking seriously as possible alternative economic behavior. The feigned political innocence that follows from such presumptions makes it impossible to analyze the economic sources or consequences of racist movements. It erases this subject from the purview of scientific analysis. Worse, it suggests that a good deal of political behavior that can be analyzed as racist or as *Widerstand* to racism is economically irrational behavior.

The political scientists have not served us too much better. Their early concentration on constitutional issues, derived from their historic links to law faculties, turned the analysis of racism into an issue of formal legislation. *Apartheid* South Africa was racist because it ensconced formal discriminations into the legal system. France was not racist because it did not have such legal discrimination, at least in the metropole. In addition to the analysis of constitutions, political scientists before 1945 also developed what they called the study of "comparative government." But which governments did they compare? Our old friends, those of the five major pan-European countries: Great Britain, France, the United States, Germany, and Italy. No one else was worth studying, because no one else was truly civilized, not even I fear that strange beast, the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Well then, at least the sociologists, who have had the reputation of being the hearth of political radicalism in the university system, at least they did better. Far from it! They were the worst of all. Before 1945, there were two brands of sociologists. There were those, especially in the United States, who explicitly justified the concept of White superiority. And there were those who, coming out of the background of social work or religious activity, sought to describe the underprivileged of the large ur-ban centers and explain the "deviance" of their denizens. The descriptions were well-intentioned if patronizing, but the assumption that this behavior was deviant and had to be rectified to meet middle-class norms was unquestioned. And since the lower classes were also in most cases, and not only in the United States, ethnically distinguishable from the middle classes, the racist underpinnings of this group is clear even if they themselves did not recognize it.

And worst of all, all four basic disciplines - history, economics, political science, and sociology - only analyzed the pan-European world, considered to be the world of modernity and of civilization. Their universalisms presupposed the hierarchies of the modern world-

system. The analysis of the extra-European world was consigned to separate disciplines: anthropology for the barbaric "peoples without history," and Oriental studies for the non-Western "high civilizations" that were however incapable of proceeding to modernity without European intrusion and reorganization of their social dynamics. Ethnography specifically rejected the historicity of its "tribes"; they were unchanging, at least before "culture contact." And Oriental studies saw the histories of these high civilizations as "frozen."

The extra-European world represented "tradition"; the pan-European world represented modernity, evolution, progress. It was the West versus the rest. Note well that, in analyzing the modern world, social science invented not one but three disciplines to describe the regularities of the present: economics, political science, and sociology. But in analyzing the extra-European world, there was not only no need for history but no need for the trinity of approaches required for the pan-European world. This was because the "differentiation" into separate arenas of social action - the market, the state, and the civil society - was

thought to be an achievement of modernity, indeed its very essence. Because of the disjunction of science and philosophy, there was no one to remind the practitioners that this was merely an assumption of liberal ideology and not a plausible accounting of social reality. No wonder that social science could not help us understand Nazism. And its post-1945 evolution, while rectifying the aim a bit, has not been very helpful in helping us understand Haider. And, most of all, there was no way of accounting for *Widerstand*, except as one more deviant activity, to which one could be sympathetic perhaps, in a slightly patronizing way.

Social scientists were so busy fighting the battles of the birth of the modern world-system that they could not fight the battles of the functioning world-system. The search for scholarly neutrality was the struggle against the Church (and by derivation the states) seeking to impose themselves on the scholars. When Weber spoke of the disenchantment of the world, the very language was theological, even though he was in actuality inveighing against Prussian nationalism. It is only in the wake of the terrible destruction of bourgeois values brought about by the First World War that Weber would begin to remember once again, in his famous speech to the students at the University of Munich, "Wissenschaft als Beruf," that social science cannot separate itself from the ways in which the world is always enchanted:

Nicht das Blühen des Sommers liegt vor uns, sondern zunächst eine Polarnacht von eisiger Finsternis und Härte, mag äusserlich jetzt siegen welchen Gruppe auch immer. Denn: wo nichts ist, da hat nicht nur der Kaiser, sondern auch der

Proletarier sein Recht verloren. Wenn diese Nacht langsam weichen wird, wer wird dann von denen noch leben, deren Lenz jetzt scheinbar so üppig geblüht hat?¹⁵

4. The World-System After 2000

The strong vote for the FPÖ and the strong EU reaction are annunciatory, though not the first signs of our present crisis. The shift from an underlying optimism about the future, from the certainty that things would in fact get better, to an underlying fear that this may not be so, has reached the wealthy part of the world. In Austria too, in western Europe too, in the United States too, faith in centrist rational reformism, slow-moving but always in the right direction, has been replaced by a skepticism about all the promises of the mainstream political forces, whether they call themselves center-left or center-right. The centrist consensus informed by nineteenth-century liberal ideology is no more. It was fundamentally challenged in 1968 and buried in 1989.

We have entered into a long period of chaotic transformation of the world-system of which we are a part. Its outcome is intrinsically unpredictable. But on the other hand we can influence its outcome. This is the message of the sciences of complexity.¹⁶ This is the message that social science should be conveying to-day.¹⁷ This is the context in which we must place Jörg Haider and *Widerstand*.

In a world-system that is collapsing because its structural possibilities of adjustment have exhausted themselves, those with power and privilege will not stand by idly and do nothing. They will organize to replace the present world-system with one equally hierarchical and inegalitarian, if based on different principles. For such people, Jörg Haider is a demagogue and a danger. He understands contemporary reality so little that he is not even aware that, for Austrians to maintain their present standard of living, they would have to double, triple, or quadruple the number of immigrants they took in annually in the next 25-50 years, merely to maintain the size of a work force large enough to sustain the pensions of the aging Austrian population.¹⁸ The danger is clear, that the demagoguery will lead the pan-European world even more quickly down the path of destructive civil wars. Bosnia and Rwanda loom on the horizon. The leaders of the European Union see that. So does President Klestil. But apparently not the ÖVP leadership.

Meanwhile, there is a *Widerstand*. They represent forces of transformation amidst this structural crisis of the capitalist world-economy different from those of the FPÖ but also different from that of the leadership of the EU. But have they a clear vision of what it is they want? Only perhaps in a blurred fashion. This is where social science can play a role, but only a social science that refuses to separate the search for the true and the search for the good, only a social science that can overcome the split of the two cultures, only a social science that can fully incorporate the permanence of uncertainty and bask in the possibilities such uncertainty affords for human creativity and a new substantive rationality (Max Weber's *materielle Rationalität*).

For we desperately need to explore alternative possibilities for a more substantively rational historical system, to replace the mad and dying one in which we live. We desperately need to uncover the deep roots of racist privilege that permeate our existing world-system, and encompass all of its institutions, including the structures of knowledge and indeed including the forces of *Widerstand* itself. We are living amidst rapid change. Is that so bad? We shall have much disorder and many changes in the coming decades. And yes, Vienna will change. But there has always been more change than we remember and the change has been more rapid than we imagine. Social science has let us down too in its understanding of the past. It has offered us a false picture of a traditional world that moved oh so slowly. Such a world never really existed. It doesn't exist now, neither in Austria nor anywhere else. Amidst the immense uncertainty about where we are heading, we must strive to locate in our pasts, as we invent them now, what is good and beautiful, and build these visions into our futures. We need to create a more livable world. We must use our imaginations. And we may thereby begin to eradicate the deep racisms that lie within us.

In 1968, during the great student uprising in France, the leader of the students, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Dany le Rouge, made the tactical error of briefly visiting Germany. Since he was a German citizen and not a French citizen, de Gaulle's government could block his return to France, which they did. Thereupon the students marched in Paris, protesting under the slogan "We are all German Jews; we are all Palestinian Arabs." It was a good slogan, one we might all adopt. But we might also all add, with some humility, "We are all Jörg Haider." If we wish to combat the Jörg Haiders of the world, and we must, we have to look within first. Let me give you one small but telling example. When the new Austrian government was formed, the Israeli government correctly withdrew its ambassador in protest. Yet only a month or so later, the Israeli Knesset placed Prime Minister Barak in great difficulty by

passing a motion insisting that any referendum on a withdrawal from the Golan required a "special majority," code language for a provision that would effectively disfranchise Arab citizens of Israel on this issue. And one of the main proponents of this motion was Natan Sharansky and his party made up of Russian emigres, the same Natan Sharansky who was the famous dissident in the Soviet Union protesting against the de facto anti-Semitism of governmental policy there. The struggle against racism is indivisible. There cannot be different rules for Austria, for Israel, for the U.S.S.R., or for the United States.

Let me recount one more anecdote, a curious one. In the current Presidential race in the United States, there was a crucial Republican primary in South Carolina. During the primary race, George W. Bush sought to ensure strong support from among the so-called Christian right by speaking at Bob Jones University, a stronghold of these forces. The problem was that Bob Jones University is known for two things: its denunciations of the Pope as an Anti-Christ (the university being a fundamentalist Protestant institution), and the fact that it forbade its students to date persons of a different race. This became a major political issue subsequently, embarrassing George W. Bush, who said he regretted not having spoken against these two positions (the ferociously anti-Catholic attitude and the refusal of interracial dating) when he was at the university.

The anecdote does not concern Bush's embarrassment, which does however speak to the tabus established after 1945. The interesting thing is the reaction of Bob Jones III, the president of the university, in the light of the public controversy. Bob Jones III appeared on the CNN program of Larry King. The first question Larry King posed to Bob Jones III **was why did the university forbid interracial dating? The answer was that we are against the philosophy of "one world" and no differences.** Larry King suggested that it seemed to him a far reach from opposition to one world and opposition to two young people dating. Bob Jones demurred, but then insisted that neither he nor the university was racist (the big tabu) and that the university had that very day repealed the rule, since it was secondary and not fundamental to their objective of promoting Christianity. I suppose this shows that public protest makes some racists backtrack in public, at least tactically. This should be a lesson for conservative forces faced with the nightmare of a far right offensive against them. But quite apart from the tactical shift, the fact is nonetheless that the racism persists.

The albatross is around our necks. It is a fiend that plagues us. *Widerstand* is a moral obligation. It cannot be intelligently and usefully pursued without analysis, and it is the moral

and intellectual function of the social sciences to help in providing that analysis. But just as it will require an enormous wrench on all our parts to extirpate the racism within each of us, so it will require an enormous wrench for social scientists to unthink the kind of social science that has crippled us and create in its place a more useful social science. I return to my original title, "Social Science in an Age of Transition." In such an age, all of us can have an enormous impact on what happens. In moments of structural bifurcation, the fluctuations are wild, and small pushes can have great consequences, as opposed to more normal, more stable periods when big pushes can at best have small consequences. This offers us an opportunity but also creates a moral pressure. If at the end of the transition the world is not manifestly better than it is now, and it could well not be, then we shall have only ourselves to blame. The "we" are the members of the *Widerstand*. The "we" are the social scientists. The "we" are all ordinary, decent people.

[1](#) UNESCO sponsored an entire series of such books.

[2](#) Bartolomé de las Casas, *Très brève relations de la destruction des Indes*, Paris: La Découverte 1996 [1547], 52.

[3](#) Angel Losada, "Ponencia sobre Fray Bartolomé de las Casas," in *Las Casas et la Politique des Droits de l'Homme* (Institut d'Etudes Politique d'Aix & Instituto de Cultura Hispánica, Aix-en-Provence, 12-13-14 octobre 1974), Gardanne: Imp. Esmenjaud, 1976, 22.

[4](#) See Vidal Abril Castello, "Bartolomé de Las Casas, el último Comunero," in *Las Casas et la Politique des Droits de l'Homme*, *op. cit.*

[5](#) Henry Mechoulan, "A propos de la notion de barbare chez Las Casas," *Las Casas et la Politique des Droits de l'Homme*, *op. cit.*, 179.

[6](#) Alain Milhou, "Radicalisme chrétien et utopie politique," in *Las Casas et la Politique des Droits de l'Homme*, *op. cit.*, 166.

[7](#) Helmut Andics, *Ringstrassenwelt, Wien 1867-1887. Luegers Ansteig*, Wien: Jugend und Volk, 1983, 271.

[8](#) Lueger also denounced Judensozi, Judeoliberalismus, and Judenfreimaurer.

[9](#) John W. Boyer, *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna: Origins of the Christian Social Movement, 1848-1897*, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1981, xii.

[10](#) See my "The French Revolution as a World-Historical Event," *Unthinking Social Science*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991, 7-22. [In German: "Die Französische Revolution als welthistorische Ereignis," *Die Sozialwissenschaften »kaputtdenken«*, Weinheim: Beltz Athanäum Verlag, 1995, 12-30.]

[11](#) *Open the Social Sciences: Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences*, Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1996. The German translation is I. Wallerstein u.a., *Die Sozialwissenschaften öffnen: Ein Bericht der Gulbenkian Kommission zur Neustrukturierung der Sozialwissenschaften*, Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1996.

[12](#) See S. Sideri, *Trade and Power: Informal Colonialism in Anglo-Portuguese Relations*, Rotterdam: Rotterdam Univ. Press, 1970.

[13](#) See Ulf Strohmayer, "The Displaced, Deferred or was it Abandoned Middle: Another Look at the Idiographic-Nomothetic Distinction in the German Social Sciences," *Review*, XX, 3/4, Summer/Fall 1997, 279-344.

[14](#) See Gary S. Becker, *The Economics of Discrimination*, 2nd ed., Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press. 1971.

[15](#) Max Weber, "Wissenschaft als Beruf," *Gesamtausgabe*, Bd. 17, hrsg. von W. J. Mommsen u.a., Tübingen: Möhr, 1992, 251. "Not summer's bloom lies ahead of us, but rather a polar night of icy darkness and hardness, no matter which group may triumph externally now. Where there is nothing, not only the Kaiser but also the proletarian has lost his rights. When this night shall have slowly receded, who of those for whom spring apparently has bloomed so luxuriously will be alive?" "Science as a Vocation," in H.H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1946, 128.

[16](#) See, first of all, Ilya Prigogine, *La fin des certitudes*, Paris: Odile Jacob, 1996. [In English: *The End of Certainty*, New York: Free Press, 1997]

[17](#) I have tried to do this in two recent works: *Utopistics, or Historical Choices for the Twenty-first Century*, New York: New Press, 1998; and T.K. Hopkins & I. Wallerstein, coords., *The Age of Transition: Trajectory of the World-System, 1945-2025*, London: Zed Press, 1996.

[18](#) See the report to be published in March, 200 by the United Nations Population Division entitled "Replacement Migration: Is It a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?" Austria is not discussed in the report. But for Germany, the report argues that merely in order to keep the size of their working age population constant at 1995 levels, Germany would have to admit 500,000 migrants per year each year from now to 2050.