



## Original scientific article

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# QUO VADIS, MUNDI?

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**Abstract:** The present article aims to provide a comprehensive study of the future course of events that are still to come. It presents an engaging intellectual endeavour of philosophically deepened understanding of its subject-matter i.e. phenomenological reduction of the six cardinal syndromes that are anchored as societal endemic disorders in the Realm of Human Affairs. The essence of discovered syndromes has a significant impact on humanity's fate during the process of the shift from the post-modern to the trans-humanity era. The article's objectives are to on the already existing agreement on about ontological-epistemological-axiological status of the 'future': (1) diagnosis the causes of the current worldwide crisis; and (2) attempt to address the important research question of quo vadis mundi - where the world is headed in the future? The problem is determining what future's research could plausibly anticipate, based on already visible tendencies, will, to a greater or lesser extent, happen to humanity in the near or distant future. Consequently, it has been found that six serious syndromes are important key indicators or symptoms of the *Zeitgeist* disorders in the age of transition. As a helpful theoretical foundation for additional research in the field of future studies, this paper concludes.

## 1. Introduction

*'For humans, it is not better if everything they desire comes true.'*<sup>2</sup>

Today's globalised world is inherently a highly sophisticated, multi-dimensional, hyper-dynamic, complex socio-historical conglomerate whose challenging development opens up many different possibilities and divergent tendencies. The spirit of the time (*Zeitgeist*) perceives this formation as an intensely restless, challenging, and uncertain *trans-modern space-time* situated somewhere between late Modernity and something that timidly emerges on the horizon of the future: while we can speak of the former in the pluperfect, the latter is still mostly in the future tense. It seems self-evident to us that Western European civilisation has been the main factor that has played the role of the *Protagonist of Progress* on the stage of *world history*<sup>3</sup> for centuries, performing its 'last


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<sup>2</sup> Heraclitus, *Fragmenti [Fragments]* (Beograd: Grafos, 1979), 110

<sup>3</sup> Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War* (see Tukidid, *Povijest peloponeskog rata [History of Peloponnesian War]* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2009) laid the foundations for modern scientific historiography, as he was *an analyst* who aimed for *accuracy and objectivity*, analysed the *causes and*

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dance' before our eyes (Jelovac 1999, 77–90). Modernity, therefore, has played its part, at least in the West, without (giving) birth to its rightful successor. An interregnum of civilisations has emerged, a state typical in that one world order disappears in it while another is still being established but in fragments, individual aspects, and incomplete dimensions. It will take a long time for it to take shape as a self-sustaining civilisation, a new world order of things, people and ideas. Until then, we can only speak of it as a *trans-modern transitional period*, a state of transition that is currently beyond Modernity (see for example authors such as Habermas and Ben-Habib (1981); Lyotard (1979); Habermas (1989); Harvey (1989); Pejanović and Jelovac (1989); Giddens (1990); Vattimo (1991); Jelovac (1993); Tester (2002); Bendle (2002); Bertens (2003); Beck and Lau (2005); McGuigan (2006); Inglehart (2020); Smart (2023), whether a truly post-modern civilisation will emerge from it, as some wrongly believe has already happened – remains to be seen. Meanwhile, humanity will be on an uncertain journey of *Transposition*, where, phenomenologically speaking, we encounter a series of ominous signs along the way that appear as syndromes wanting to warn us of the challenges, uncertainties, and dangers lurking on the paths and straits of the civilisational transition that is in full swing. Since there is a whole range of such *syndromes*, some of which are relatively new while others have been present since time immemorial, some caused by social, cultural, and technological changes, while others caused by individual psychological factors, we will have to focus on diagnosing only the most significant and dangerous for the survival of the human race, of course, if it does not want to end up in a *universal catatonia*<sup>4</sup>. For the beginning let's see what the overview of relevant literature can tell us about such type of issues.

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*consequences of events, and attempted to derive general principles from them.* Unlike his predecessor Herodotus, (see Herodotus, *Istorija I & II [History I & II]* (Novi Sad: Matica Srpska, 1988) Thucydides was more sceptical towards myths and legends, insisting on a *critical approach to sources* because his approach to writing history was much closer to the modern scientific approach, unlike Herodotus (op. cit.) and Tacitus (Tacitus, *Anali [Annals]* (Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1970) who had different priorities, namely, more narrative or moral objectives. Specifically, the former wrote *History* 'so that the achievements of mankind might not be forgotten in time, and that the great and marvelous deeds, some displayed by the Hellenes, some by the barbarians, might not be without their glory; and especially to show why the two peoples fought with each other' (Herodotus, *History*, 7). Similarly, he differs from the latter who in his *Annals* reflected on his calling as a historian with carefully chosen words: 'I think that the main duty of history is to ensure that *virtuous deeds are not allowed to slip into obscurity*, and that their record, if possible, may be of service to the reader's pleasure, and also that those who have lived lives of evil may be deterred from their crimes by fear of being detected, *seeing that they are to be remembered forever for their wickedness*' (Tacitus, *Annals*, xi; emphasis added - D.J.), thus continuing the moralistic tradition of Roman historiography. In short, we can conclude that Herodotus was more of a narrator than an analyst because the history had a wide range of objectives, including primarily the preservation from oblivion and the celebration of the great and marvelous achievements of humanity. Herodotus's *History* is characterized by a multitude of anecdotes, legends, and miraculous stories, which formed the basis for his nickname 'the father of history' and/or 'the father of lies'. He did not have the same rigor towards the credibility of sources as Thucydides. On the other hand, Tacitus adopted a moralistic approach to writing history, emphasizing values such as honesty, courage, and respect, and condemning crimes and injustice. He did not limit himself to merely describing events but intended to draw moral lessons from the past and to critically analyse the actions of rulers and powerful figures. Tacitus was therefore often more of a critic than just a chronicler of events i.e. a narrator about what happened once, somewhere, to someone.

<sup>4</sup> The term '*catatonia*' comes from the ancient Greek language, more precisely from the word *katatonia* (κατάτονος) which originally means *flood*. It is used in a modern medical context as a term to describe a serious psychiatric disorder characterized by inability to move, extreme passivity, mutism and often strange body posture; this disorder may be associated with schizophrenia, depression or other mental illnesses. Although *catatonia* as a *terminus technicus* has a clearly defined medical meaning, in an informal, figurative or metaphorical sense we can use it (like many other medical terms) to describe social, political or cultural phenomena. However, extreme caution should be exercised when using such terms outside their primary



Today's 'global village' has brought the 'dialectic of modernity *versus* postmodernity' (Wellmer 1987), also 'the dark side of Western modernity', which shows itself more clearly than ever before that its foundation, hegemony, dominance came to an end (Mignolo 2011). While some are inclined to see the *sole conditions* of modernity (Frank 1995), others would like to examine how 'western civilisation is passing' and that is why they think about what would be worth saving from it in order to take it to some other civilisation as our treasure (K.B. Taylor 2020), others are more inclined to a pessimistic view that already sees 'the collapse of the West civilisation' (Oreskes and Conway 2013). Nietzsche criticises Western civilisation toward the end of nineteenth century, which he considers *decadent and nihilistic*. Decadence is a sign of a life that develops too much, that focuses too much on itself, that spends too much - so spoke Zarathustra as Nietzsche's *alter ego* (Nietzsche [1883-1885] 2003). Nihilism is the end of all values, the end of all aspirations, the end of all meaning - writes Nietzsche on the genealogy of morality (Nietzsche [1887] 1994). This is why his Zarathustra preaches in the spirit of *revaluation of all values* - a new value, which is based on individualism, freedom and creativity. Nietzsche claims that morality, which was originally an expression of power and domination, has become decadent in Western civilisation, because it has become the servant of the weak and helpless. Only love, which he considers the source of life and creativity, can help people to free themselves from Nihilism and find the meaning of life, since it is 'the most powerful weapon against nihilism' (Nietzsche [1882] 1979). According to others<sup>5</sup>, this can only be accomplished by a fresh, *radical contemporary renaissance* (Jelovac 1991).

Deep crisis of the magnificent New Age Enlightenment Programme (Kant [1783] 1974) in conditions of complete separation of ontology from axiology at the height of blindness of the west-oriented-man who *no longer knows and recognises no objective standards, but leaves everything to the free decision of the autonomous atomised individual* (Đurić 2002). These are more than visible interconnected trends, and with a wide range of implications on society, economy, culture, and politics worldwide. Understanding these trends is crucial for the development of sustainable policies and solutions that can contribute to a better future in the *realm of human affairs* (hereafter: RHA)<sup>6</sup>. There is still no consensus among eminent intellectuals and academics on all of this. For example, some believe that we are 'becoming gods. We are on the verge of achieving immortality and we will eventually become a new species of superhumans' (Harari 2014), and that violence has been declining over time, i.e., over the course of human history, both within and between societies, which should be attributed to factors like the spread of democracy, the rise of international trade, and the decline of religion. 'We are living in the most peaceful time in human history, and the future is even brighter' (Pinker 2011). Others are sceptical about this, as they

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field of application, in order to avoid serious misunderstandings or offensive connotations. Since we want to use the potential of the term 'catatonia' as a parable to describe the current crisis of Western civilisation, we have defined it clearly and unambiguously, in order to underline the distinction between our specific use of this term and its generally accepted use. Because, if *nomen est omen* - namely, an appropriate name is a good sign, i.e., a guide to the essence of the concept it signifies, then certainly the noun catatonia is an adequate name to denote the current state of affairs and spirit in today's world.

<sup>5</sup> See for example seminal study of Dejan Jelovac *Fenomenologija preobražaja* [The Phenomenology of Transformation] (Beograd: Naučna knjiga, 1991).

<sup>6</sup> We are using in present article the phrase '*realm of human affaires*' (RHA) to refer to the domain of human behaviour as a purposeful, meaningful, planned action and interaction with both other humans and the natural world. That's the main reason why humans are 'political animals' (Aristotle, *Politics*, 1253a) who are naturally drawn to form societies and engage in political activity. The argument is that humans are political animals who are compelled to create communities and participate in political activities. We are also ready to argue that the goal of politics is to achieve the *good life* for all citizens.



believe that the facts speak differently. 'Humans have become the dominant species on Earth through a combination of violence, cooperation, and cognitive superiority' (Harari 2015), and there is no reason why this should not continue in the future. Today, in our opinion, violence and the readiness to resolve disputes using brute physical force have become so ingrained, both in the minds of world leaders and in the heated minds of terrorists, that violence has practically become a self-evident *modus vivendi et operandi*. The transmodern world is facing a number of 'unprecedented risks, including climate change, nuclear proliferation, and economic globalisation', risks that are all of a transnational nature, meaning that they require global solutions (Beck 2013).

Well, all above identified global trends have a significant impact on the planet and humanity, each in its own way. However, it is challenging to determine which of them is the most dangerous because they are interconnected and often amplify each other's effects. Nevertheless, some of these trends can have particularly serious and long-term consequences if not timely addressed with adequate measures. Let's illustrate this perspective with some paradigmatic examples reported in the relevant literature.

### 1.1. Theoretical background

Let's start with philosophers. Scheler (1916, 1920, 1923 1928), deeply influenced by Husserl's work, advocates that *man is a unique being* that differs from animals in that he is complex and capable of *self-transcendence*, a being that is at the same time *moral* (Scheler 1916), *social* (Scheler 1923) and *spiritual* (Scheler 1920). Self-transcendence is the ability to rise above oneself and to connect with something greater than oneself that is the key to human flourishing. Does the state of affairs and spirit in today's world still allow us to believe in this idea of man's special place and role in the cosmos (Scheler 1928)? Obviously does not, because, the mankind is confronted by *epochal fundamental crisis* which has engulfed our civilisation and which different philosophers perceives and describe in the form of different indicators, such as: Nietzsche's '*decadence & nihilism*' (Nietzsche [1882] 1979, [1887] 1994, [1883–1885] 2003), Urbančič's '*epilogue of nihilism*' (Urbančič 2011, 2012), Scheler's '*ressentiment*' (Scheler [1912] 2001)<sup>7</sup>, Heidegger's '*the inauthenticity of existence of human being (das Da-sein)*' (Heidegger 1978), Husserl's '*the consequence of the crisis of European sciences*' (Husserl [1938] 1991), Sartre's '*the very existence of the human being*' (Sartre 1947), Derrida's '*anomie*' (Derrida 1992) and, finally, Urbančič's '*Zarathustra's tradition*' (Urbančič 1993, 1996).

We are at the same time witnessing an ambivalent process where, on the one hand, there is an obvious rise of secularism in the West, which is not simply the absence of religion but rather a new way of understanding the world characterised by *a pluralism of values and a belief in the autonomy of the individual* (C. Taylor 2011). On the other hand, in the East, Africa, and Asia, there is a rise in Islamic fundamentalism that does not recognise Western system of values, seeking to regressively transform human beings into 'God's warriors' (mujahideen) whose highest purpose in life is to engage in a 'holy war' (jihad) against unbelievers (especially atheists), which essentially means all those who think, live, and work differently. This clash of value systems leads to conflicts

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<sup>7</sup> Max Scheler (1874-1928) became best known for his concept of 'ressentiment', which he developed in his book: Max Scheler, *The Ressentiment in the Structure of Morals* (London, New York: Routledge, [1912] 2001). It is a feeling of envy and resentment that arises from a feeling of powerlessness and inferiority. Scheler argued that resentment is a powerful force in human life, and that it can lead to the development of morally destructive attitudes and behaviours.



worldwide, ranging from terrorist attacks by Islamists in developed Western countries, especially in the EU, to real wars such as the ongoing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Just when we thought that bloody religious wars, the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, the Crusades, and holy wars were a thing of the past, they have been revived on the world-historical stage. Unfortunately, not in the form of comedy. Therefore, if a way is not found very quickly to establish some sustainable tolerance between these hostile systems of values in the form of *peaceful coexistence*, humanity will be in serious trouble. A necessary precondition for something like this is undoubtedly *good will* (*bona fide*) on both sides, which, unfortunately, is currently not visible.

Let us highlight the indicators of the crisis that we find in the relevant literature that deals with this topic. We decided to classify the content we encountered in previous studies on empirically observable and verifiable crisis indicators into eight types, namely:

(1) *Over-individualism on the West vs. over-collectivism on the East:* The process of radical individualisation is called by Alain de Benoist the '*ideology of sameness*' (de Benoist 2022) or political ideology of 'centrist liberalism' (Wallerstein 2001). Derived as the legitimate child of liberalism, stems from the idea of making man a *social animal*, in such a way that he is removed from the ground, uprooted from every community, and therefore replaceable at any moment. The ideology of sameness, which, unfortunately for many, lies at the heart of Modernity. Within modern Western society, human has broken with collectivist egalitarianism, becoming an egocentric selfish subject who, like an eagle, seeks to appropriate for himself everything he can. This sinister dynamic aims at the complete erasure of all differences, the neutralisation of the world and the destruction of communities — all in the name of a *purely mathematical vision of equality*. This is a pathological distortion of the concept of political equality, *as equality is not synonymous with sameness* (de Benoist 2022).

(2) *Worn out paradigm of education & upbringing:* Classical schooling, traditional education, and universities in particular as an exclusive special place for producing, disseminating, and recycling trustworthy knowledge in order to provide the best possible the highest education has exhausted its potential and reached a breaking point. This thousand-year-old institutional system has arrived in a profound endemic crisis that goes beyond a structural one, and it has already performed its 'last dance' before the intended inheritors have emerged. After the university's *last tango with its feudal obsolete paradigm*, we attempted to address the open question of their potential successor and provided a fairly concrete draft of the really *contemporary peripatetic school* (Jelovac 1992, 1994, 1995, 1999, 2001, 2004).

(3) *Fragility of liberal type of western democracy:* The biggest problem of the modern democratic order (Duverger 1968), based on *Declaration of Independence in 1776* ("Deklaracija o neodvisnosti 1776" 1989) and *Declaration on the Rights of Man and Citizen in 1789* ("Deklaracija o pravima čoveka i građanina 1789" 1989) is that 'democracy is a *fragile institution that must be constantly defended*'. If this struggle is not successful or only partially successful, then surrogates of democracy appear in the form of authoritarian or hybrid political systems, conflicts, terrorism, refugee crises, and political tensions present in many parts of the world. In such circumstances, some think that *the use of violence is necessary to achieve equality* (Honderich 1980) along with *mass civil disobedience* (Honderich 1995; Schlesinger 2013). Unfortunately, after the victory in the Second World War, the West's systematically attempt to export its own type of democracy as the



only role model to other parts of the world proved to be particularly problematic and controversial. To learn more about different democratic models, one can consult Held's seminal study on this issue (Held 1990). Conflicts and political instability in certain parts of the world can lead to humanitarian crises, refugee flows, and global insecurity in rest of the world. This can complicate international cooperation in solving other global issues and problems. The West and the East have found themselves on opposite sides. Fukuyama optimistically announced that the '*end of history*' is marked by the triumph of liberal democracy because he believes that it is: a) the best form of government and b) that it will eventually prevail over all other forms of government. 'The end of history is not necessarily a bad thing. It could mean the end of wars, the end of poverty, and the end of suffering' (Fukuyama 2011). Of course, this is too nice to be true.

(4) *Limitation of energy sources:* There is also an energy crisis, which is, according to some, crucial for our survival on planet Earth. 'Energy is *the key to understanding human civilisation. The future of civilisation depends on our ability to develop sustainable sources of energy*' (Smil 2009). In any case, all these factors often lead to *political instability* (Aisen and Viega 2013; Alesina et al. 1996; Ali 2001; Elbargathi and Al-Assaf 2019), affecting global peace and security.

(5) *The widening gap between the rich and the poor both within countries and internationally:* it repeatedly leads to social tensions, political conflicts, and local wars. This gap between the rich, developed, and superior West and the underdeveloped Third World is only deepening: some are getting richer, some are getting poorer (Adams 2004; Peterson 2017; Smeeding 2005; Smith 2010). Of course, we should not accept this *economic inequality* as a sort of inevitability because it should not be inevitable. 'Poverty can be eliminated within our lifetime. We have the resources and the technology to end poverty, but we need *to make the political commitment to do so*' (Sachs 2012). However, something like that simply does not exist in the minds of political decision-makers nowadays.

(6) Today's globalised world is *undergoing a third industrial revolution*, driven by the rise of renewable energy, the internet, and distributed manufacturing, leading to a more decentralised and sustainable economy (Rifkin 2011). According to Rojko, Erman and Jelovac, the *fourth industrial revolution* has been in long period of time on the march with clear indications of the fifth that will emerge from the rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI), industrial automation, the development of the 5G network, and the Internet of Things (IoT). These technological advances change the way we communicate, work, and solve problems. While technological progress brings many benefits, such as faster communication and medical breakthroughs, it also raises questions about privacy, data security, and the impact on the future of employment. AI and automation can lead to permanent job losses and economic inequality (Grant 2011; Nel 2008; Rojko et al. 2020; Smith 1991; Solomon 2000; Thiele 1997).

(7) *Climate changes that are a consequence of human activity:* The increase in the average temperature of the planet, the melting of ice in the Arctic and Antarctica, frequent natural disasters such as fires and floods, etc. are obvious symptoms of a serious climate disturbance. Civil society organizations, OUN and governments worldwide are working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen renewable energy sources. These changes are a serious challenge because they can lead to extreme weather conditions, such as frequent droughts, floods, heatwaves, and stronger hurricanes. This can threaten agriculture, water and food resources, as well as cause mass population migration due to resource shortages (Calzadilla et al. 2013; Crowley 2000;



Grimm and Railsback 2013; Hardy 2003; Tol 2018; Tonmoy et al. 2014). By reviewing the relevant literature, we found solid and fresh systematic meta-analyses and reviewed articles on climate change and migration (Beine and Jeusette 2021; Rode et al. 2021). Therefore, *the decarbonization of RHA*, primarily, its energy system, is becoming the topic of the day and, consequently, increasingly an issue for academic researchers, civil society actors and independent intellectuals. Understood by that term ‘moving from a centralised, fossil fuel-dependent energy system to one based primarily on renewable energy’ some authors (e.g. Groves et al. 2021, 1) find that today’s visions of changing the entire system focus much more on socio-technical concepts, instead to individual technologies (such as nuclear or solar), whereby the role of technological niches in relation to such systematic sociotechnical visions remains insufficiently explored. Emphasising the central role of anticipation of the future in social life, which includes more than just the representation of the future and its effects on the perception of future possibilities, the authors argue for a new social learning that can include *a critical consideration of the key assumptions underlying dominant systemic visions* (Groves et al. 2021).

(8) *Aging of the world population*, with an increasing number of elderly people, poses challenges in healthcare and social support (Cole et al. 2023; Johnson-Hanks 2008; King et al. 2021; Liao 2011; Riley and McCarthy 2003). At the same time, the number of migrants is growing, leading to cultural diversity, integration challenges and ‘clash of civilisations’ (Huntington 2005). Pandemics and the spread of infectious diseases, such as the plague, malaria, Spanish flu, AIDS, swine flu, bird flu, COVID-19, and so on, represent a serious threat to public health and can have huge socioeconomic consequences. A rapid and coordinated response to such crises worldwide is crucial to prevent the spread of disease and protect people's health (Chen et al. 2021; Hogan and Goldman 2021; Macaron et al. 2023; Moon 2021; Roberts and Everly 2006).

The thematic framework we have just outlined above has become the subject-matter of research in the field of *future studies*. Just like in any area of established scientific knowledge, various theories and methodological problems arise here, which are the issue of lively debate in the academic community. Their evolution is tracked by Kuosa (2011) and Slaughter (1996) in their articles published in the journal *Futures*, which specialises precisely in this kind of topic. In the same place, one can find a study revealing a reality-based view on future studies in the twenty first century (Marien 2002). Are *futures organisations ‘ahead of their times’* is a question addressed by Gidley (2013). Defining what future studies *are and what they are not* has been the focus of Dator’s work for 40 years (Dator 2019) , leading to very useful findings. The *knowledge base of futures studies* was examined in the monography as collection of papers edited by Slaughter and Hines (Slaughter 1998). While older *reviews of methodologies* used by future studies researchers can still be found in Andersson (1973) , Lang (1995), and Bell (1996), newer discussions on theory-building and methods used in this field are found in Öner (2010), Sardar (2010), Inayatullah (2013), Melnikovas (2018), Minkkinen (2020), Slaughter and Hines (2020). We can only note that in these and other works, a respectable body of knowledge has been developed, which we, naturally, used in conceptualising our present paper.

Future studies are by their nature complex, demanding, and multidisciplinary. Therefore, it should not surprise us that the majority of methods in futures studies have been according to Bell (2002, 2003) and May (2000) adapted from other fields, and that there is still an open discussion about what future studies are and what they are not (Dator 2019). Consequently, it could be argued that futures studies exist as ‘a rather flexible field of study having a great



potential of adapting various techniques and methods' (Melnikovas 2018). At the same time Melnikovas provides a good overview of the literature that emerged based on methodological reflection on the methods and techniques used in the formation period of future studies as an independent research area. The complex situation that arises can be explained using a research design model in futures studies which may be based on the seven layers concept of the 'research onion' (Melnikovas 2018), originally proposed by Saunders et al. (2016).

## 2. Methodology

The method we used in this article was formed on the basis of the synthesis of Aristotle's *classical practical philosophy*, developed in works like *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle 1976), *Politics* (Aristotle 2000) and *Organon* (Aristotle 1965) combined with three main streams of Western philosophy of the 20th century into one alliance in order to answer our fundamental research question: *where is this world going?* It is *about analytical philosophy, phenomenology and the Frankfurt school of 'critical theory of society'*. We could not bypass the first because its cardinal purpose is based on linguistic analysis and the use of logic to clarify the meanings of concepts and statements, thus ensuring clarity and precision in language and thought, which constitutes its main advantage over those streams of thought that try this to ignore. Hence, in present paper, we rely on analytical philosophy due to its methodological approach asking for *clarity, precision, and rigor of telling*, focusing predominantly on the analysis of ordinary language and formal logic (Ayer 1971), believing that we can only understand the world by: (i) first of all analysing it in elementary parts, emphasising the exactness and analytical standpoint to understanding philosophical questions and problems, (ii) built a highly sophisticated methodology that uses logical analysis, argumentation and linguistic analysis in order to effectively clarify and solve them in order to eliminate traditional misunderstandings, let's say, metaphysical ideas that arise as a result of imprecise speculative thinking that is above all articulated in vague language. Moreover, for it is preferable, according to Wittgenstein, to remain silent on anything that cannot be expressed *clare et distincte* (Wittgenstein 1987).

The second stream was important to us because phenomenology as a philosophical school from the very beginning of the 20th century was that one which strongly emphasises the importance of *direct experience*. Introduced into use by Husserl, who argued in his famous book *Idea of phenomenology* [1905] that we can only know things through our experience of them (Husserl 1975). This is certainly the case with phenomenology in the form of Heidegger's *fundamental ontology* (Heidegger [1927] 1978) to its Gadamer's deep analyses of key concepts and hermeneutic interpretation (Gadamer 1978) in which set itself the goal of discovering the primordial structures of consciousness and the objects we perceive, whereby: (i) our everyday perception contains a series of habits and prejudices that prevent us from understanding things in their true essence, (ii) which is why we must get rid of such habits by using *the method of phenomenological reduction*, because only in this way can we get to *the true essence of things themselves*, (iii) the ultimate purpose of this specific type of reduction is the inclusion of reflection on our perception that allows us to reach an abstract, 'pure' understanding of objects and experience without filtering through prejudices and habits<sup>8</sup> (Schutz 1967) or emphasising the deeper sense of being and experience, by focusing on ontological understanding essential being, things and people as beings-in-the-world which, consequently, includes emotional and spiritual

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<sup>8</sup> Edmund Husserl, in Alfred Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World* (Illinois, 1997).



aspects of human existence (Heidegger). The characteristic of this approach, which brings to light the subjective and/or ontological aspects of experience, is that it represents the main advantage of phenomenology in relation to those currents that do not have this problem on their agenda - that it includes a broader picture of human experience, including its metaphysical aspects.

This is joined by the third stream of thought in the form of 'critical theory of society', inspired by young Marx, later developed by Marcuse (1941, 1965, 1972, 1992), Horkheimer (1974), Horkheimer and Adorno (1974), Adorno (1974, 1979) and Yugoslav Praxis Marxism in works of Marković (1967, 1972, 1974), Petrović (1986), Kangrga (1970, 1983) and many others, with its very important value-dialectical analysis, which, starting from the ontological-epistemological assumption of *the split between the existing state and the desired state of society/culture*, reveals that capitalist society is the one that permanently produces, it perpetuates and deepens class differences, inequalities and violence in attempts to maintain itself on the world-historical stage as a basically internally dysfunctional, exploitative and permanently unsustainable regime. The advantages of this line of thought include: (i) the intention to integrate theory and practice, (ii) the focus on exposing deeply hidden social power structures, class differences and ideologies that constantly lead to antagonisms in social systems, (iii) wholeness, since it is not limited to on the economy (it deals with wider social aspects such as, for example, culture, identity, politics, ideology), (iv) an obvious emancipatory potential for changing society, not just thinking about it and, finally, (v) striving for a real change in the state of affairs in the developed modern Western society on the basis of radical critical thinking and (self)reflection of the existing social conditions-and-relationships, which has as its primary goal the awareness of people, inviting them to ask important questions and consider dominant ideas and values, in order to be encouraged to concrete action to create a fairer society (which was best expressed in the Student Revolution of 1968).

Since analysts, critics and phenomenologists strive for thought exactness, we do not see any good reason why they should not synthesise this advantage and intellectual potential of theirs in the philosophy of the future into a new harmonious conception of *the essential thinking* of the future, despite the fact that we already hear the loud grumbling of many to whom something like this seems like a disgusting eclectic papacy. It is not necessary to possess a super-intelligence for one to notice the obvious similarity between all three mentioned tributaries of the philosophy of the West: all three are essentially concerned - despite the different ultimate purpose and emphases, theoretical-cognitive power and inherent weaknesses - with *a deeper understanding of the world, emphasising the necessity (self) critical methodological approach to the world, language and thought*. However, there is no doubt that there are also some serious differences between these three tributaries of one Heraclitus 'river' of world's course. Namely, while 'critical theory of society' is more concerned with the social world, phenomenology or analytical philosophy are for something like that to a much lesser extent. Because critical theorists want to understand how the social world shapes our lives, they are consequently more interested in social change than phenomenologists or analytical philosophers. On the other hand, phenomenology is more concerned with the subjective experience of the individual than critical theory or analytic philosophy, because phenomenologists want to understand how we experience the world through our senses and emotions, so they are clearly more interested in describing experience than critical theory or analytic philosophy is, which is, quite logically, more concerned with clarity, precision and rigor of statement than critical theory or phenomenology. Analytic philosophers want to analyse concepts and arguments in a precise and rigorous way, while being more interested in the



analysis of ordinary language than in critical theory or phenomenology. While the critical theory of society investigates social injustice and strives for social change, contemporary phenomenology deals with a deep understanding of subjective experience, to the extent that analytical philosophy limits itself to the precise analysis of philosophical problems and concepts, they essentially make up currents, which from different perspectives on different dimensions of human existence, each contributes to philosophical thinking in its own specific way. These perspectives, in our humble opinion, *are compatible*, so all that remains is to combine the ultimate reason (*ultima ratio*) of philosophising in *a harmonious synthesis within the philosophy of history of the future in the era of trans-humanism*, in which solving the problems of human existence will be taken over by a general artificial super-intelligence supported by hyper-computers, neural networks, robots and automated production and distribution of goods and services on a global scale.

Last but not least, many scholars would agree that *the human ability of anticipation* is deeply rooted in our cognitive and emotional structure, but whether this ability can function independently of language and representation, and transcend human dimensions, remains an open question. There are arguments suggesting that our ability to anticipate is not entirely constrained by language and representation, but that we can experience and anticipate the future in an intuitive or emotional manner that transcends linguistic boundaries. This may involve intuitive feelings, premonitions, or instincts that are difficult to describe in language or represent in images. But in this context, phenomena such as 'hope' *versus* 'faith' and 'prediction' that is, rational forecast / foreseen of future events *versus* divination (Wikipedia n.d.a.), prophecy, augury, horoscopy, occultism, etc, also arise, our thinking about anticipation of the future may go further in opening up intriguing dilemmas about *the occupation of the future* by the emerging alliance of human and artificial intelligence. This relates to the question of how our actions today shape the future for us and for future generations, and how technological progress and the development of artificial intelligence can have profound and long-term consequences for our world. Anticipating these consequences may be crucial for understanding our choices and making decisions that are in the best interest of humanity and the planet Earth.

In any case, our thinking aims to stimulate further reflection on the complexity of anticipating the future and its impact on our society and the world as a whole, rather than to draw any final conclusions. It seems to us that if, and whenever the human mind (and currently AI that merely imitates it) delves into the depths of the future, it will always see its own reflection on the surface of the water at the bottom of that well. For instance, if Xenophon's donkey could think, then its own image would also appear to it at the bottom of the well. And wouldn't the same be true for all thinking beings? So, if that's the case, then understanding its 'more than human' i.e. beyond human dimensions of future anticipation that some intend to achieve (Groves 2017) can have a dual effect: on the one hand, it is a commendable bold attempt to speculatively transcend the realm of possible human experience, which, on the other hand, can contribute to increasing some controversial aspects in the philosophy of the future. Our analogy with the well and the reflection on the surface of the water at its bottom aims to suggest, as vivid and deeply symbolic, an understanding according to which, no matter how deeply we delve into anticipatory thinking about the future, we will always encounter the reflection of our own thoughts, experiences, and beliefs. Because, as humans, we are fatefully condemned to, like a snail, always carry our shell with us wherever we go, we cannot 'jump out of our essence' which forces us to continually shape our perceptions of everything 'under the sky', hence, also of the future exclusively according to 'our own image and likeness', which actually means, based on our own gaps, limitations, expectations, and prejudices.



As a necessary consequence of such a state of affairs, the boundaries of our language appear as the ultimate limits of our rational-logical world-view beyond which always awaits us, according to Wittgenstein, the sphere of the inexpressibly-mystical (Wittgenstein 1987). Therefore, when faced with complex and elusive concepts such as the future and anticipation, there is always a risk of confusion or uncertainty.

However, the goal of the philosophy of history and science of future studies, which deals with the exploration of such complex themes, is precisely to address them in such a way as to open up cognitive space for open-minded discussion for the purpose of their deeper understanding rather than to close it off. Their critical reflection must grasp and always keep in mind the idea of the irreparable limitation of the human mind in anticipating the future, but at the same time emphasising the importance of researching and thinking about these issues. Although we may never fully understand all dimensions and aspects of future anticipation, it is important to persistently ask questions, explore different perspectives, and open dialogue on these important dilemmas. After all, understanding our perception of the future holds the key to creating a more meaningful, humane, and sustainable world for all of us. In doing so, the question of which is the most dangerous reef awaiting our boat on that uncertain journey must never go unnoticed. Namely, it is about *ideological, religious, and technological 'isms' that insidiously, universally, partially distort a clear image of the future of humanity and the world-view in general.* By creating distortions and partial images that can be skewed, dangerous, and harmful to society and the RHA as a whole, these mentioned 'isms', without exception, can significantly limit our ability to clearly envision possible paths of progress and make informed, intelligent, fair, and timely decisions that would contribute to a better future. Therefore, critical consideration of these 'isms' is an essential step in creating a clearer, more comprehensive, and sustainable holistic vision of the future for humanity and the world. This includes a comprehensive and thorough reassessment of ideological and religious prejudices, technological fallacies and tendencies, as well as a critical review of our own assumptions and beliefs, values-ideals, and/or norms about the future. Only through such comprehensive intellectual criticism can we surpass these distortions and embark on the odyssey of meaningful and sustainable progress that, in line with the common good and the general-human emancipation, has found that barely visible free passage between the reefs of Scylla and Charybdis.

Based on insights gleaned from the aforementioned methodology, we assert that we have attained a favourable vantage point from which it is feasible to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the current state of the art in the field of future studies. Much of what remains here still resides at the superficial level of observable phenomena to the discerning eye. However, our interest lies not in merely joining the registry, description, generalisation, and archival of the testimonies emerging in such a manner, thus remaining on the *surface of phenomena* upon which the future of humanity depends. Instead, our aim is to *delve deeper into the very essence of these phenomena* towards their *eidetic core*. Our objective is to embark on a methodological journey that leads *from anecdotal and empirical evidence to the essence* of what can be perceived at first glance when considering the current state of affairs and spirit in the RHA, which significantly influences the relationships of individuals and groups with their future. This endeavour can offer a *phenomenological perspective on the essence of syndromes* that are pivotal causes of the state of affairs in the trans-modern RHA. Regrettably, in pursuing this, we have had to omit numerous phenomena and challenges encountered in our own future studies due to the constraints of space limits allotted in this article. These include *challenges or risk* such as: (i) *Artificial General Intelligence* (see B. Goertzel (2014), T. Goertzel (2014), Müller (2014), Dunjko and Briegel (2018), Page et al. (2018), Roitblat (2020),



Fjelland (2020), Gautam (2022), Kuusi and Heinonen (2022), McLean et al. (2023), (ii) *neural networks* (Yao (1993), Cheng and Titterington (1994), Castells (2011), Egmont-Petersen et al. (2002), Ding et al. (2013), Zhou et al. (2020), Abdolrasol et al. (2021), Samek et al. (2021), (iii) *carbon footprint or code challenge* (Wiedmann and Minx (2008) Pandey et al. (2011), Lannelongue (2021), Clement et al. (2021), Radersma (2022), also on energy, carbon, and cost savings using conventional technologies beyond the code (Kneifel (2011), (iv) *the unipolar hegemony of one power and its Alliance over the whole world*, the consequence of which is the phenomenon that Varoufakis named by analogy with the mythological monstrous trapped in the labyrinth in Crete – Minotaur (Varoufakis 2011) - whom the ancient Greeks considered a monster that devours everything in its path, just as today's America has forced the rest of the world to swallow its enormous national debt, (v) the phenomena of *universal, radical and redundant globalisation* as new global order (Kellner (2002), Giddens (2000)<sup>9</sup>, Sassen (2001), Held and McGrew (2007, 2001), Panitch (2003), McGrew (2010), Keohane (2005, 2005a), Scholte (2008, 2014) including its *future* (Albrow 1997, 2019) and/or even *defence* of globalisation (Bhagwati (2004), and, finally, (vi) the *gig economy* (Saxenian (2006), Standing (2011), Sundararajan (2016), Healy et al. (2017), Graeber (2018), Rahman and Thelen (2019), Katz and Krueger (2019), Acs et al. (2021), among others. As will become fully evident (in Discussion, i.e. subsection 4.), the existing body of knowledge on these issues is also deficient. Consequently, the principal objective of this article is to make a meaningful contribution towards bridging this gap.

### 3. Syndromes as key symptoms of the disorder in the trans-modern-transition of RHA

Based on the use of the methodology described above, we managed to discover and subject to critical analysis six *cardinal syndromes* that will, according to our opinion decisively influence the path to the future of mankind. Within this subsection of the article, we intend to primarily present our own argumentation, so that in next subsection 4, we will engage in a discussion about how other academics weave their arguments on the main topics that our article opened. *What direction is the RHA taking?* Are we living in a certain well-known kind of society or new one? If the former is the case, then we'll *need to reimagine the future* because it's unclear now. In an era of perpetual crises, philosophy of history faces enormous issues, including how to consider the state of affairs and socio-political events in the context of military conflict, local wars, technical advancement, depletion of natural resources, and social injustice (Rawls 1972). We'll have to leave the paper specific references to such literature and to particular examples of how the questions we set out to tackle have been discussed from *Futures* and similar journals for that occasion.

However, before we start implementing this plan, it would be wise to first define the terms we will use. In its original medical field, a *syndrome* (from the Greek συνδρομον - *syndromos* meaning: *coincidence*) is, according to the nominal definition, *a set of medical signs and symptoms that are interconnected and mark a single entity and are often associated with a specific disease or disorder, and are recognizably different from similarly defined sets of symptoms of other syndromes*. In some cases, the syndrome is so closely related to the pathogenesis or cause that the terms syndrome, disease, and disorder are ultimately used interchangeably; typical examples of syndromes are Down's, Turner's, Klinefelter's, toxic shock, Premenstrual syndrome, Irritable bowel (see

<sup>9</sup> Giddens, *Globalization* (2nd ed.), 2012.



Syndrome, Wikipedia, n.d.b.) Of course, we will be interested in the concept of syndrome in a broader sense in which:

**Definition 1:** *A societal syndrome refers to any set of symptoms or signs that regularly occur together and that may indicate a particular disorder or unhealthy state in social relationships within RHA.*

**Corollary D1<sub>1</sub>:** A societal syndrome manifests as a range of symptoms, such as, for example: difficulty making and maintaining friendships and close relationships, problems communicating with others, feelings of rejection or not belonging, problems with self-confidence and self-esteem, depression or anxiety, and the like; these symptoms can be caused by a number of factors, such as genetic predisposition, bad experiences in early childhood and later life, trauma or stress.

**Corollary D1<sub>2</sub>:** The syndrome of disorders in social relations can have a significant impact on the quality of life of individuals and groups and make it difficult for them to function on a daily basis.

In the continuation of the present explication, we will have the opportunity to show how this notion was used in our diagnostics of future course of events in world history. Unfortunately, due to space limitations, we will have to leave the discussion of some equally important challenges and phenomena in this context for another convenient occasion.

### 3.1. Syndrome of Acquired Immune Deficiency to Abnormality

If there is at least a grain of truth in the age-old commonplace that 'the day is known by the morning', then the first thing that catches the eye during a closer phenomenological reduction of the already present tendencies within the 'global village' is the stubborn fact that in today's transition period on the entire planet, it is actually erased the distinction between normal and abnormal behaviour of individuals and social groups. This state of affairs and mind-set in the period of the trans-modern transition (hereafter: TMT) can be most easily understood and explained by introducing the notion of *syndrome of acquired immune deficiency to abnormality* (hereafter: SAIDA) into the conceptual-methodological discourse. Because, according to our understanding, this is about an obvious coincidence, that is, a *syndromos* with AIDS, only this time with *AIDS in a broader socio-cultural sense*, and not in the strictly medical narrow field of a still vicious disease of an individual patient:

**Theorem 1:** *The entire Western-European civilisation suffers from a lack of resistance to distinguish normal from abnormal, regular from irregular, honest from dishonest, healthy from sick, true from false, etc.*

**Corollary T1:** The consequences of this disorder are disastrous, because today it is no longer known who drinks, who cries, what is healthy, what is not, what is allowed, what is not, in a word, confusion is at its peak.

**Proof of Theorem 1:** Everything that is happening today in RHA is irresistibly reminiscent of the orgies in society that preceded the final downfall of the Western Roman Empire, which, admittedly, spanned the period from the death of the emperor-philosopher Marcus Aurelius in 180 AD until in 476, when Odoacer easily overthrew the last Roman emperor, Romulus Augustus, and was then proclaimed king of Italy. Given the effect of the acceleration of historical time, the final collapse of the West as we know it today will not last 296 years, as it did in the case of its Roman predecessor, but will unfold much faster before our eyes in the coming years and decades of the twenty first century. Hence, here-and-now is the right moment to ask ourselves which disorders, challenges and phenomena will be a symptom and/or indicator of the state of mind and affairs, that is to say,



of such retrograde events and toxic processes that will be possible to observe in a controlled manner in empirical research of the syndrome SAIDA?

But it all started with the fact that, even in the last century, leftists first problematised the concept of 'normality' in psychology, and then in society in general, so that today, in the age of political correctness, it has almost completely disappeared from the public discourse. Such a *radical deconstruction*, to use this fortunately chosen *term* that was introduced into the theoretical discourse by Derrida (1992), resulted in the emergence of *anomie as a state of mind in which normality was inverted into abnormality*: from now on, what was sometimes the abnormal is respected and praised as the 'new normal'. This recently invented oxymoron has the task of creating a collective amnesia that prevents individuals and social groups from remembering how it used to be when it was known exactly what was abnormal because there were some generally accepted norms (Greek: *nomos*) that every reasonable being should know that it distinguishes what is good from evil, what is true from what is false, what is just from its opposite. A similar crisis arose in the golden age of Antiquity. The *sophists* are responsible for it, above all, their progenitor - Protagoras of Abdera - with his famous controversial thesis with which he shamelessly courted popular vanity, that '*man is the measure of all things*' and, therefore, everything is as it seems to any individual; as a result, everyone has the right to their own opinion and point of view about everything under heaven, which, again, has as a necessary consequence the emergence of a complete relativism of truth and justice, pluralism and, in the end, overall scepticism. Because if everyone is right, then no one is actually right. If there are many moral standards circulating, how will we know which one is the right one? The grandiose project of the fight against the sophist and sophistry was taken upon by prominent thinkers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle as their spiritual mission and placed at the same time in the cradle of Hellenic culture, which is still the foundation and horizon of Western civilization: they opted for the completely opposite idea of to which truth, beauty and goodness are supreme, imperishable, eternal values that must first be clearly defined in order to even know what we are talking about. After two and a half millennia, they are in danger of being declared, together with their followers, by the ideologues of the *wokeism* (Cammaerts (2022), Duffy et al. (2022), Phelan (2023), Steel (2023) ) as right-wing, backward 'enemies of civilisation' and therefore banished to the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* and *ipso facto* thrown into the *societal black hole of oblivion*.

### **3.2. Syndrome of the acquired lack of resistance of citizens to the illegal, illegitimate and immoral activities of the deep-state or captured state**

This syndrome is an indicator of a serious disorder of the socio-political being, which is manifested in the fact that:

**Theorem 2:** *The legally elected government and its representatives are not at the same time the real holders of power, but only its political models, frontman and/or mannequins.*

**Corollary T2<sub>1</sub>:** If the former is true, then it has the inevitable fatal consequence of splitting the political sub-system into *a formal and an informal sub-system*, with the latter having the undisputed predominance, instead of the other way around.

**Corollary T2<sub>1.1</sub>:** As an ultimate consequence, politicians and other state officials who appear on the public scene and in the MSM are still only low-class actors who obediently act according to the script written for them by the Masters of the Moment who are behind the scenes and hide from the public eye in the deep shadows kidnapped states, representing from there the only, true and indisputable authority.



**Proof of Theorem 2:** In Republic of Slovenia, for example, those individuals and groups who play in this trans-modern play got their real name: *uncles from the background* (Slovenian: strici iz ozadja), *straw men* (Slovenian: slamnati možje), *new faces* (Slovenian: novi obrazi). Their proven toxic role corresponds, that is to say, *syndromos* to that of the actors in the puppet children's theatre: to give their face and voice to what is written in the script whose author is always someone else, however, this time in a pseudo-reality show for adult, but, unfortunately, still minor children. It goes without saying that the kidnappers of the state will never admit it, but will pejoratively brand and label any philosophical and/or scientific explanation of this state of affairs and their position in it as some kind of conspiracy theory. That won't help them much with an audience that knows and wants to think for itself. The problem is that majority who, when faced with bad news, like in ancient times, are ready to kill the messenger in order not to have to face the truth of the message he is bringing.

The decisive role in the fact that this phenomenon remained under the radar of public opinion and the interests of academic circles is the power and prevalence of the ideologically inspired concept of the so-called 'political correctness', symptoms of which are manifested in an ambivalent way, namely: (i) as avoiding dealing with delicate topics in the public space due to fear of controversial or even hostile reactions from other participants in discussions who might feel hurt by the opinions/views expressed, on the one hand, and as (ii) excessive reaction to politically incorrect statements or behaviour of other people, on the other hand. As a direct consequence of this set of circumstances, disturbances or 'noises' may appear in public communication in such a way that (iii) they affect the unfettered exchange of ideas in the discourse of free dialogue and the openness of individuals towards other participants due to their concern not to be condemned for their different ideas and attitudes, which represents a serious obstacle for the further intellectual development of humanity in the future, and, finally, (iv) that due to the acquired insufficiency of the immunity to political correctness, the participants of debates held in public are no longer able to distinguish their personal values and opinions from the political positions they represent, that is, that they think one thing to themselves, while publicly saying something completely different, often the complete opposite, i.e. what they are expected to say. In this way, today's man has rapidly and irreversibly become a *homo duplex par excellence*, and *transmodern society is highly anomic* with very weak connections between individuals and groups. 'Far from simplicity, our inner life has something like two double centres of gravity. On the one hand is our individuality ... On the other hand, is everything in us that expresses something other than ourselves. These two groups of states of consciousness are not only different in their origins and properties, there is already a real antagonism between them' (de Benoist 2022). Such a man is, therefore, condemned to be an eternally restrained individual, torn between his own Self, which is repressed and hidden inside, and its manifestation in public, which takes place under the strict supervision of the collective consciousness socialised with the help of various mechanisms, among which the standards of political correctness occupy an extremely important place. His nightmare is loneliness, which is the product of schizophrenic dissociation, brought to him by the irreconcilable contradiction between atomistic individualism and an abnormal, which actually means, an anomic cultural and social environment/society, which, for its part, generously offers him the opportunity to live and die without would experience love and/or hate for anything else that transcends itself. He can be comforted by Freud's discovery, explained in his famous book *Discomfort in Culture*, first published in 1930, according to which every culture is created through *abstinence*, that is to say, that it is



born in the 'renunciation of instinct'<sup>10</sup>. We do not see any good reason why the civilization that will emerge after the completion of the process of trans-modern transition would be something other than *the renunciation of the primary instincts and real needs of individuals*.

### 3.3. Syndrome of Acquired Immune Deficiency to Mass Bullshitting

Since time immemorial, man has become accustomed to inventing his subjective experiences about things, people and events. Hence, he is hardly able to look at reality with objective eyes, which happens only in cases when he is specially prepared for it within the framework of the so-called *controlled observation*. Under normal circumstances, people are by their very nature 'inventors': 'we have been completely accustomed to lying since time immemorial' or the same thing, only expressed in a vocabulary that fits within the framework of today's censored political correctness, man is in spite of his awareness '*more of an artist than anything else*'<sup>11</sup>. The ICT revolution has only intensified this phenomenon by enabling the emergence of mass communication and social networks, the negative side of which is reflected in the fact that individuals hidden in anonymity behave irresponsibly and frivolously, deliberately spreading false information, offensive slander or engaging in mindless behaviour in order to gain at least short-term attention to the public. However, the trans-modern RHA no longer needs artists, but scientists, engineers and experts, that is, as they would call it - representatives of the *cognitive aristocracy as the new elite of the future*. This does not mean that in such a state of affairs and the Zeitgeist, the bullshitter syndrome will disappear. On the contrary, it will only grow stronger with time among the broadest masses of people.

**Theorem 3:** *If production and distribution processes become fully digitalized, general artificial intelligence will grow quickly, and production and services will become universally robotized, then as a result, a large portion of the population will become an unemployable workforce with plenty of free time to fantasise, get wasted, to get drunk, and generally goof around; consequently, the truth really worries these people because they could end up dead from it.*

**Proof of Theorem 3:** That's why they will be more than welcome to the possibility of bullshitting (Frankfurt, 2005), the main indicator of which is primarily that the demarcation line that separates truth from lies, untruths and nonsense of any kind has been erased, and therefore the way is open for bullshitters and their imaginations (Mears (2002); Hardcastle and Reisch (Eds.) (2006); Spicer (2017); Petrocelli (2021)). The only important thing is that they sound nice, that they are viral, because they have an influence on social network users and the public in general; no one cares about those eternal values that have been valid since the classical era of Hellenic culture - truth, justice and beauty. That's why no one should be surprised that one fine day everything will go to the Devil when bullshit conquered the world (Ball 2017).

### 3.4. Syndrome of chronic insufficiency of receptivity to practical wisdom

For the very beginning we have witnessed the situation in the First World, i.e. in the society of prosperity in the West (as opposed to the rest of the world, especially the so-called Third World) that man has at his disposal an excess of goods and services, which especially refers to an overflow of information, and at the same time it is felt lack of sense. Unlike wisdom, which was always

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<sup>10</sup> Sigmund Frojd, 'Nelagodnost u kulturi' [Discomfort in Culture]. In Sigmund Frojd, *Iz kulture i umetnosti* [Sigmund Freud, From Culture and Art] (Beograd: Matica srpska, 261-357).

<sup>11</sup> Fridrih Niče, *S one strane dobra i zla – uvod u jednu filozofiju budućnosti* [Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond of Good and Evil - an introduction to a philosophy of the future] (Beograd: Grafos, 1980), 106 (underlined by author).



painfully lacking in all fields and levels of management in the RHA, stupidity was never lacking anywhere, because humanity has always been inclined to 'sell' stupidity wholesale and wisdom retail.

**Theorem 4:** *Today's Actors mainly focused on questions related to how things happen and develop, while the questions of why and for what reason something happens exactly as it happens in RHA are elegant left to the philosophers; such indifference has cost them dearly, since they have remained blind in their eyes, unable to understand the meaning and deeper background of what they see on the surface.*

**Corollary T4:** As a result, Actors today only deal with symptoms, phenomena, indicators, while the real reasons, causes, syndromes of events remain hidden from them.

**Proof of theorem 4:** This-and-such lack of critical self-reflection of the most responsible holders of power and decision-making in today's RHA cannot go unpunished, since everywhere it is obvious that in the absence of practical wisdom that grows on the clear and distinctive awareness of the Actor about the causes and meaning of events - it blossoms in practice routine, bluffing, charlatanism, amateurism, intuition, relying on luck, etc. The only real remedy for such a diagnosis is a return to the original concept of practical wisdom within the wider efforts to revindicate practical philosophy in general. The Actor's resistance to stupidity and craziness of all kinds in the TMT period will be of crucial importance so that he does not deviate from the right path into the future, which promises not only the bare survival of humanity on this planet, but also its development. Today, unfortunately, we are witnessing how branched is the tree of preoccupation of atomized individual with useless data and kitsch content, a complete lack of critical thinking associated with a lack of cognitive-interest in reality itself and low self-confidence or lack of tolerance for diversity, which represents a great burden on the way to the future. Its motto is: 'I don't care what really happens in the big world like the Macrocosm. I'm only interested in my little Microcosm.' A mob always lived relieved of worry about 'why Hungary has no sea'. Sometimes-and-somewhere this syndrome appears as an exaggerated reaction to other people's patterns of rude behaviour as well as to their stupid and/or unreasonable attitudes, fake news and misinformation that people generally accept more easily than the truth and tirelessly spread without critical thinking and checking sources, which is especially pronounced in the era of fast information and social media. It is necessary to point out the presence of the syndrome in the totality of ominous signs and omens on man's path to the future. The treatment of this lack of resistance to stupidity will be of crucial importance when the solution to Hamlet's dilemma: 'to be, or not to be' comes to the agenda! Humanity must not act as the Bosnian in the joke when God asked him to, since he still only has two character's traits to impart to the people - beauty and stupidity. He wishes to acquire the latter because he has heard that beauty is ephemeral. It's about making stupidity a thing of the past, which we'll talk about in the past tense.

### **3.5. Syndrome of acquired immune deficiency to virtual reality, meta-universe and/or metaverse**

This is a societal disorder that manifests itself in the form of a difficult distinction between the virtual and the real world, which is a consequence of the excessive use of the Internet and social media, as well as computers, smartphones and digital devices in general. This disorder, therefore, refers to the possible negative consequences of excessive use of virtual reality and loss of connection with the real world.



**Theorem 5:** *Metauniverse goes beyond the boundaries of traditional universes or parallel worlds discussed in cosmology and the theory of multi-dimensional worlds, representing what is behind (Greek: meta) reality, that is, some higher level of reality, or perhaps even a meta-universe, in which multiple different universes or dimensions exist.*

**Corollary T5<sub>1</sub>:** Consequently, we can think of a ‘metauniverse’ as some kind of larger context or horizon in which different universes are located, perhaps as a kind of multiverse that includes all existing universes and allows for interaction between them.

**Corollary T5<sub>2</sub>:** This concept could therefore serve as a theoretical framework for considering connections, regularities or dynamics between different realities or universes.

**Corollary T5<sub>3</sub>:** The concept defined above is our pure speculation that has no solid scientific basis for now, because there is no concrete or empirical support that would conclusively prove the existence of a ‘metauniverse’; however, the bare fact that so far there is no tangible evidence that such metauniverses really exist does not necessarily mean anything.

Ideas about the multiverse and similar concepts can be developed and considered within the discourse of theoretical physics and cosmology as well as metaphysics within the framework of philosophy, that is, ontology. The hope that something may soon emerge from all this is given by a nearby phenomenon, admittedly outside the theoretical realm, but close enough to be able to talk about it with certainty. It is about a metaverse<sup>12</sup> which (although it is currently still in the development phase, with some of the technologies that will make it possible, including virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and blockchain, are already functional today) represents: (i) a term used to describe the future Internet paradigm that will consist of interconnected physical and digital worlds, (ii) a phenomenon that will allow people to connect, work, play and create in innovative ways, (iii) ‘a set of parallel universes that make up all the realities in some quantum-mechanical and cosmological theories’ (The Free Dictionary)<sup>13</sup>, (iv) ‘a third way between the real and the virtual world, in which people will be able to work, play and create in ways that are were now impossible’ (TechTarget) and, finally, (v) ‘3D Internet populated by living people’ (Philip Rosedale, creator of Second Life).

It is indicative that when Mark Zuckerberg renamed his corporation *Facebook* to *Meta* in October 2021, defined the metaverse, relying on all previously explained elements of the definition, as an ‘immersive Internet that will unite the physical and digital worlds’ in which people will be able to work, play and be creative in ways that have never been before possible. He said that the metaverse: (i) ‘is not just one place, but a collection of virtual spaces’ that will be connected through VR, AR and other technologies, (ii) ‘is not something that will happen overnight’, but will develop over time the next few years and (iii) in doing so he expressed the hope that the metaverse will become ‘the most important platform for the next decade’ which will not actually be just one platform, but will consist of many different platforms that will be interconnected. Finally, the metaverse will not be a business that originated in one company, but will be a joint venture of many companies and individuals.

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<sup>12</sup> The term *metaverse* means: 1) a shared, realistic and immersive computer simulation of the real world or other possible worlds, in which people participate as digital avatars (in science fiction literature) and 2) a theoretical or emergent online space with digital persistent environments in which people live, as avatars, for synchronous interactions and experiences, accessing a shared virtual space through virtual reality, augmented reality, game consoles, mobile devices, or regular computers (Retrieved from: Dictionary.com. Accessed 28 July 2023).

<sup>13</sup> Dictionary: <https://www.dictionary.com/>



It remains to be seen how the metaverse will actually look and develop in the coming years. However, it is clear that, in Zuckerberg's estimation, it is a key technology that has a crucial importance for the future of the Internet. We can agree with this prediction because it seems extremely reasonable. However, the question remains hanging over our heads like the sword of Damocles, what is the sense of all that can be put under the term metaverse? Why was it created and to whom does such a *syncrisis*<sup>14</sup> of the real and virtual world serve? Namely, the division of the world into different worlds was a common habit of philosophers and theologians from the very beginnings of our culture. The latter were always ready to divide the universe into a sacred and profane world, Dionysian and Apollonian, while philosophers, starting with Plato, divided reality into a higher world of eternal ideas, a world of transitory empirical things and a world of artistic appearance which represents a copy of a copy of the former, into substantial vs. accidental, on *res cogitans* (spiritual) and *res extensa* (material) (Descartes), on the realm of freedom vs. the realm of necessity, the world of alienated work versus the world of free praxis (Marx), the principle of reality versus the principle of pleasure (Freud), 'ours' and 'theirs' (ideological *isms*), real vs. the virtual digital world as a consequence of the postmodern ICT revolution and universal digitalization, etc. Such conceptual bifurcations, that is, the splitting of worlds into two, were until recently a favourite metaphysical practice of ideologies and theologies. Now we see that the supposedly trans-modern epoch exudes the need to reunify the worlds in one *technologically constructed paradigmatic space* that will gather-and-collect living people, the physical world and virtual realities in one place. Won't this leap of man from the real to 'something' which is certainly beyond the real at the same time represent a kind of death, a Kierkegaard's 'jump into the abyss' of *homo sapiens* will be its end in the form and mode we have known him so far? Won't Mr. Sugar-Hill (German: Zucker-Berg) get the role of a modern Harun who will row humanity across the river Styx to a technologically created otherworldly Hades, in which small and large children will be able to play, have fun and create to their heart's content, as never before in world history never succeeded? We have no choice but to let ourselves be surprised if the arrival of *the realm of trans-humanism* will bring us any satisfaction.

### 3.6. A syndrome of human chronic vulnerability to natural forces

The most obvious symptom of this syndrome is natural disasters such as: volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, floods, landslides, droughts, fires, hurricane winds, climate change, potential collision of the Earth with a larger asteroid, and the like. In such cases, the omnipotence of nature and at the same time the impotence of man can best be seen.

**Theorem 6:** *Before the forces of nature, man is still helpless, despite all the colossal progress he has made since his cave beginnings.*

**Corollary T6:** After all, human is not *deus sive natura*, nor will it ever be.

**Prof of theorem 6:** Once mankind really understands this, it will stop being haunted by the *divine syndrome*, which will allow him to enjoy his human perspective, whose spectrum is indeed very wide and ranges from preventive measures to curative protocols for solving the consequences of natural disasters. The Titanic embarked on its maiden voyage across the Atlantic without enough lifeboats. Such madness was explained by the belief that the Ship, which was the pride of the shipbuilding industry at the beginning of the 20th century, was unsinkable. The tragic result of

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<sup>14</sup> The term *syncrisis* comes from the ancient Greek *synkrisis* (plural *synkrisis*) meaning: σύν (sún, 'with, together') + κρίσις (krisis, 'court, judge') represents a rhetorical figure in which opposite things are combined.



such a fatal error in the thinking of *homo faber*, who imagined that he possessed divine abilities, is well known. An iceberg has proven to be stronger than any material object made by human hands. That's why every smart actor in the RHA must take this fact into account and constantly keep it in front of their eyes so that the Titanic does not happen to them. Modesty is the only virtue that protects him from the vain arrogance that he falls into every time he thinks that he is the strongest in the world, stronger even than nature. And then some terrible deadly earthquake happens like the one in Turkey and Syria in 2022 with thousands of dead and wounded and enormous physical damages, so that they wonder if it was not caused, among other things, by the lowering of the standards of anti-earthquake protection in construction in order to increase profit? Or an apocalyptic fire occurs on Rhodes in July 2023, which clearly illuminates the fact of how great man's inability to tame natural forces is. Humanity will have to work on this in the future if it wants to survive. Man will have to live in harmony with nature, not against it, as the ancient Stoics prophetically advised long ago. The coexistence of man and nature will require many fresh and more adequate (than before) strategies and techniques of mutual adaptation. The only thing that must not happen to him is that he surrenders to fate in style - *let it be what it must be!* Because, until we had so many nuclear bombs and rocket technology, it could still happen that an asteroid the size of a football field collided with our planet and ended life on it, but now the situation is significantly different, since it allows the possibility of establishing an effective system for early warning and a fight against unwanted guests from space that would be based on their timely destruction by means of violent atomic explosions that would turn it into harmless debris that can then freely fall to Earth, because it will burn up in the atmosphere anyway. Equal strategy-and-tactics should be developed to deal with the mundane threats and challenges to the survival of the human species brought about by natural calamities and disasters.

#### **4. Discussion and limitations**

In accordance with widespread academic custom, we will engage in a discussion aimed at determining whether, and if so, how and to what extent our results are consistent with those that can be found in the relevant literature on the subject we are dealing with in this article. In doing so, we will follow the same order in which we presented our argumentation of findings in the previous subheading.

The SAIDA, which pertains to the loss of ability to differentiate between normal and abnormal behaviour, can indeed be intriguing in the analysis of contemporary social phenomena. While an identical concept under the same name does not exist in the literature, there are similar concepts and theories exploring related ideas. These authors and their works can provide context and perspective for understanding our concept of SAIDA and its implications in contemporary society.

One of the authors dealing with similar themes is Bauman (2000), who has explored notions of *fluidity, uncertainty, and transience* in contemporary society characterised by a lack of stability and security, which can lead to difficulties in distinguishing between normal and abnormal behaviour. Bauman's theory of 'Liquid Modernity' investigates how contemporary society is characterised by *fluidity and uncertainty*. He argues that traditional institutions and structures are losing their stability and becoming increasingly unpredictable, resulting in the loss of clear boundaries between normal and abnormal behaviour. According to Bauman, in this fluid society, individuals may struggle to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable forms of behaviour, leading to confusion and moral disorientation (Bauman 2000). Such Bauman's considerations of



contemporary society as fluid and unstable, where traditional categories and norms are becoming more and more fluid, can be positively connected to our idea of the loss of the distinction between normal and abnormal. Similarly, Foucault is known for his works on power, discipline, and surveillance in society. His analysis of power and control can be linked to the idea of losing the ability to differentiate between normality and abnormality. In his works *History of sexuality* (Foucault 1990, 2012), *History of Madness in the Age of Classicism* (Foucault 2013) and *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1977). Foucault studies phenomena of power and surveillance in society by examining the ways in which norms and values are imposed on individuals and social groups through various mechanisms of discipline. He points out how social institutional systems, such as schools, prisons, and medical institutions, shape our understanding of normality and abnormality. According to Foucault, powerful institutions control the definitions and classifications of human behaviour, which can result in stigmatisation and exclusion of those who do not fit into normative patterns.

While in her book *Gender Trouble*, Butler (1990) explores the performative nature of identity, which in a way reflects the idea that categories such as normal and abnormal are *fluid and constructed*, Ehrenberg in his *The Weariness of the Self* (Ehrenberg 2009) argues that contemporary society suffers from '*mental fatigue*' caused by the pressure to constantly adapt and perform. This constant adaptation can lead to *a loss of boundaries between normal and abnormal*, as people strive to fit into social norms *without questioning their validity*. Within such discourse, Sennett writes about how the flexibility and insecurity of modern capitalism can lead to *a loss of clear identities and moral compasses*. This can create a society where it is difficult to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong (Ehrenberg 2010, 2019; Sennett 1998). Sennett also considers the individual and societal cost of flexibility and adaptation in the modern world, which in some ways can be linked to our idea of the loss of clear identity (Sennett 1992) and boundaries in today's new capitalistic society (Sennett 2006). Although Lipovetsky (1989) like all other academics does not use the term SAIDA, he also argues that contemporary society is becoming *increasingly hyper-consumerist and hedonistic*, which can lead to *a loss of meaning and values*. In this environment, traditional norms and boundaries can be lost, leading to *relativisation and uncertainty, partially overlapping with our concept of loss of resistance to abnormality*. Ehrenberg's work focuses on the changing nature of individuality in modern society. In his book *The Individualising Society* (Ehrenberg 1995), he argues that traditional forms of social control have been replaced by a more individualising form of control, where individuals are responsible for managing their own lives and well-being. This can lead to a sense of isolation and anxiety, as well as pressure to constantly perform and improve oneself. While Sennett, Lipovetsky and Ehrenberg do not directly use the terms 'normal' and 'abnormal' as key symptoms of SAIDA, their work explores themes that are relevant to our concept. Phenomena such as *moral panic* (Goode and Ben-Yehuda (2010); Critcher (2006); Thompson (2005)), *anomie* (Wolfe (1968); Hilbert (1986); Cohen (1972)), and *loss of values* (Baumeister and Vohs (2002) are only partial indicators of SAIDA. They highlight the challenges of navigating an increasingly complex and uncertain world, where traditional values and norms are no longer as stable or clear-cut as they once were.

In summary, these authors provide a theoretical framework for understanding the loss of ability to differentiate between normal and abnormal behaviour in trans-modern era. Their works explore broader social and cultural trends that contribute to confusion and uncertainty in determining norms and values. Our reflections in this context with the discovery of SAIDA provide penetrating insight into the phenomenon of losing the ability to differentiate between normal and



abnormal behaviour in the RHA. The concept of SAIDA suggests that in the transitional period of today's society, clear boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable forms of behaviour are lost, resulting in confusion and disorientation. Our argument is based on the idea that contemporary society is undergoing a transitional period characterised by instability and uncertainty, leading to the loss of traditional reference points for determining normality and abnormality. This is a complex phenomenon that can be associated with various social, cultural, and economic factors, such as anomie, globalization, technological advancement, and changes in societal values and norms. The analogy with AIDS further elucidates this concept, suggesting that the lack of immunity to differentiate between normal and abnormal behaviour has become a widespread issue in trans-modern RHA. In summary, we maintain that the presented argumentation offers an intriguing approach in framework of future studies to understanding complex social changes and their impact on our understanding of norms and values. However, as with any theory, further research is necessary to confirm and deepen this theory and to consider its implications and applications in practice.

We wish to emphasise that we are among those who are fully aware of the dangers and limitations associated with the use of analogy in logical reasoning. However, cautiously seeking *inspiration from medical phenomena to explain social pathologies* can be a useful path towards improving their deeper and more comprehensive understanding. Especially when it comes to *isomorphic phenomena resulting from deep structural similarities* (rather than just surface ones) as we believe is the case in our example, where AIDS and SAIDA *establish an isomorphic correlation of acquired immunodeficiency, vulnerability along with consequences that can be equally applicable at both individual and societal levels*. Because both AIDS and SAIDA deal with the idea of immunodeficiency, which essentially means a loss of the ability to resist something harmful, only in the case of AIDS, it is a loss of immunity to pathogens, while in the case of SAIDA, it is a loss of the ability to distinguish normal from abnormal behaviour of social groups. Furthermore, both have a global reach and impact: AIDS is a pandemic that has affected millions of people worldwide, while SAIDA represents broader social and cultural trends visible in many parts of the world. Finally, both can lead to the stigmatisation and marginalisation of affected individuals or groups: however, while in the case of AIDS, this may manifest as discrimination based on HIV status, in the case of SAIDA, it may manifest as the exclusion or marginalisation of those considered deviant or unconventional.

However, we must consider several important aspects when using analogies, which can otherwise be a very useful heuristic tool for improving understanding of complex problems. *The first* concerns specificity vs. universality: while AIDS has clear biological causes and consequences, i.e., it represents a medical condition with clear biological causes, SAIDA deals with broader and more complex social and cultural issues, making it important to distinguish specific mechanisms of action of AIDS from the broader metaphors of SAIDA that we use in present paper as a conceptual and metaphorical framework for understanding social and cultural trends. *The second* lies in the difference in manifestation level, i.e., *individual vs. collective*: while AIDS primarily affects individuals, SAIDA pertains to broader social and cultural phenomena. *The third* is the need not to forget ethics due to possible stigmatisation. In principle, comparisons that could stigmatise or marginalise individuals or groups defined as abnormal within SAIDA should be avoided. *The fourth* aspect to consider is *the contextualisation of cultural and social specificities to avoid overly universalising the concept of SAIDA*. What may be abnormal in one culture may be normal in another. What in one historical period was perceived as something completely acceptable, in



another can be the subject of universal outrage and, consequently, non-acceptance. Therefore, acknowledging the inherent limitation of the analogy we introduced into the discourse of understanding the complex phenomena of today's globalised society with the ultimate goal of discerning its direction in the near future, in our opinion, represents an interesting and potentially productive approach in future studies, as it can be argued that there are certain parallels between the loss of immunity at the individual level in AIDS and the loss of societal resilience to abnormality in SAIDA. For example, both can be associated with the erosion of traditional values and norms - while AIDS can weaken the immune system, SAIDA can weaken social values and norms that act as an 'immune system' against deviant behaviour. Furthermore, we witness increased vulnerability to *harmful influences*. However, while AIDS can make a person vulnerable to infections, SAIDA can make society vulnerable to destructive trends and behaviours. Finally, in both cases, we encounter *a serious difficulty in diagnosis and treatment*: however, while AIDS can be difficult to diagnose and treat in the early stages, SAIDA can be difficult to recognise and resolve because the boundaries between normal and abnormal can become blurred.

Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind the *following limitations* to avoid illogical conclusions or harmful generalisations: (i) the specificity of AIDS, which has clear biological causes and mechanisms of action, while SAIDA is a social construct; therefore, excessive extrapolation from one to the other can lead to incorrect conclusions; (ii) the dynamics and complexity of social phenomena, demonstrated by the fact that society is much more dynamic and complex than any individual organism. Epidemics such as AIDS have clearer lines of transmission and potential interventions, while SAIDA is more difficult to define, track, and resolve; (iii) the difference in treatment of these phenomena: while the fight against AIDS focuses on medical research, prevention, and treatment, the fight against SAIDA generally requires broader social and cultural changes. In summary, while the analogy between SAIDA and AIDS can provide useful inspiration for further thinking, it is important to approach it with caution and awareness of its limitations. Therefore, the awareness that we do not lack, thus we expect our potential critics not to use it as a pretext for attacking the idea itself. Because, after all, if they prefer it that way, we would not mind a standpoint in the form of an 'emergency exit' towards which it might be more productive, without excessive identification with a medical condition such as AIDS, to develop this analogy only as a metaphor rather than a strict comparison that stimulates open dialogue, leading to future research.

Among the authors who have explored our second topic of the deep-state or captured state (see 3.2 above), we encounter P.D. Scott, who first used the term 'deep state' (Scott 1993) to describe hidden political forces that influence public policies and events. The term refers to a *shadowy network of individuals and groups within the government and military that operate outside of the democratic process to influence policy and decision-making* (Scott 2014, 2017). The author examines how these hidden structures of power influence public policies and events, political processes by making decisions outside formal democratic institutions. Another author developed the theory of 'double government' to describe the phenomenon in which key national security decisions are actually made outside formal political institutions. In the United States, a 'double government' exists, where key national security decisions are made by a network of unelected officials within the military and intelligence community, operating outside of the purview of elected officials (Glennon 2016). The role of secret military operations and intelligence services in the deep state, particularly focusing on the operations of NATO's secret military services, was explored by Ganser, who found that NATO's secret armies, known as Operation Gladio, played a



significant role in shaping post-World War II Europe, with operatives conducting covert operations to influence political outcomes (Ganser 2005). Former American Republican advisor Lofgren wrote the book in which he analyses the influence of corporate interests and intelligence agencies on political processes in the United States, describing how these hidden structures of power often operate outside the public domain (Lofgren 2016). In the Trump era, the American 'deep state', characterised as 'disloyal and undemocratic forces within and around government', became an increasingly compelling concept, 'a label that had practically no domestic resonance has been elevated to the status of public enemy number one' (Michaels 2017, 1653). In this case, the deep state has served as 'an all-purpose scapegoat, diverting attention from the mounting evidence of White House corruption and incompetence, demonizing and delegitimising critics of the administration, and jeopardizing the long-term health and vitality of the federal bureaucracy and myriad pillars of civil society' (Michaels 2017, 1654). Varoufakis made an effort to ensure that the European deep establishment would not remain under the radar of researchers in his seminal work *Adults in the Room* (2017), where he described his battle as the Greek Minister of Finance against the Brussels elite in an attempt to punish Greece because of its enormously high national debt so that it is brutally pushed his country to its knees (Varoufakis 2018). Finally, all the mentioned authors provide different perspectives and analyses of the syndrome of the deep state or captured state, and their research has contributed to understanding this complex political phenomenon that we will, of course, encounter every day in both the near and distant future.

If we move forward, let's illustrate the syndrome of *chronic insufficiency of receptivity to practical wisdom* with an example. After testifying at Eichmann's trial, Hannah Arendt was particularly surprised not so much by his horrific criminal acts in the Holocaust, but by his *thoughtlessness*. This term does not mean stupidity, but *the inability or failure to think from someone else's point of view*, in this case, people which he deliberately sent to death (Mueller 2009). He allegedly only performed his duty in a disciplined and efficient manner within the scope of the work he was given. And what's more, he firmly believed that he was doing it well. The question that arises when we want to clarify this phenomenon is what must be *the character of a person* who is capable of doing something so horribly thoughtlessness. From the perspective of virtue ethics, it is a character that tends to usually choose what is wrong, evil and morally unjust. And it is precisely here that the depth of the problem can be clearly seen: an action can be perfectly well calculated, but it cannot be good at the same time if it is not carried out with *phronêsis* (wisdom) that comes from the framework of Aristotelian practical philosophy (Abizadeh 2002). On that point, we completely agree with Mueller (2009) that *sole calculative deliberation is insufficient for practical wisdom*. Unfortunately, we are witnessing an excess of *thoughtlessness* in the today's world of human affairs, and an incredible lack of practical wisdom at all levels. Hence, the need for its constant reconsideration or rethinking is all the more urgent, according to Mueller (2012). Scholars that address this topic in pertinent literature include those who write that from a protestant perspective, faith and love, reformulated as virtues of practical wisdom for modern management, can be understood as a receptive attitude and the ability to establish non-instrumentalised and respectful relationships to humans. If managers lived by them, they could contribute to keeping businesses and the economy as a whole from being entangled in self-referential, intrinsically unstable feedback cycles (Weber-Berg 2010).

Finally, we will now proceed directly to the examination of human chronic vulnerability to natural forces syndrome. For instance, a comparative analysis of several vulnerability concepts offers the study of Hufschmidt (2011), an examination of the impact of climate change and natural disasters



on vulnerable populations is discussed in the recent study by Benevolenza and DeRigne (2019), while the concept of vulnerability itself is elucidated by Adger (2006) and its needs to revision by Delor and Hubert (2000) or addressing social vulnerability (Singh et al. 2014), as well as the nexus between natural hazards, people's vulnerability, and disasters can be find in a comprehensive review article garnering 15,886 citations (Blaikie et al. 2014). Specific themes are explored in the body of literature focusing on temporal and spatial changes in social vulnerability to natural hazards (Cutter and Finch 2008), vulnerability and resilience in natural disasters from a public policy perspective (Baker 2009), physical vulnerability modeling in natural hazard risk assessment (Douglas 2007), research on pathways and key players and partnerships linking vulnerability, adaptation, and resilience science to practice (Vogel et al., 2007, 2012), theorising vulnerability in a globalised world from a political-ecological perspective (Oliver-Smith 2013). Taking into consideration that *vulnerability, resilience, and adaptation* are three fundamentally different yet interconnected concepts, the study by Y. Lei and colleagues feel the need to reconsider the relationships between these notions as they have remained insufficiently clear so far, especially in the field of disaster risk reduction, somewhat hindering a rational risk analysis and scientific decision-making. In attempting to integrate the analytical frameworks of these three concepts, the study suggests that a sustainable strategy for adapting to inevitable disasters or changes 'should not only seek to reduce the vulnerability of a social-ecological system but also to foster its resilience and adaptive capacity *to future uncertainties and potential risks*' (Lei et al., 609-610). These works, along with numerous others not explicitly mentioned here, have served as sources of inspiration for our contribution to this discourse, as formulated in paragraph 3.6 of the preceding subsection of current article. Our agreements and disagreements with these perspectives are readily discernible to any expert in this field upon perusal, rendering further elaboration redundant.

## **5. Instead of conclusion's lockdown - Unlock**

It is not out of sense to mention at the end that today's RHA is going through constant, irreversible, turbulent changes and rapid development, and the syndromes that we discussed above are undoubtedly a reflection of current social, intellectual, ideological and technological trends, and consequently, also real (and not fictional) problems that humanity must face in the epoch of TMT as well as to questioning them within the future studies. A deeper understanding of these relatively new form and mode of thinking about current phenomena-and-concepts allows us to better research, analyse and solve the puzzles that are placed before us. Critical thinking, life-long education and the open dialogue mentioned above are crucial, both in the fight against the negative effects of the identified and recorded indicative symptoms of the epochal crisis in the midst of which humanity is today, and in building a sustainable human society of the future. In its establishment, understanding and judgment, a key role will have to be played by the combined *theoretical and practical philosophy of history of the future*, which represent man's ability to think practically and apply knowledge in everyday, contingent, unrepeatable situations, regardless of their type. It is about a harmonious combination of theoretical knowledge and practical experience that only enables quick and efficient problem solving. Practical wisdom establishes and maintains a person's ability to successfully apply his acquired knowledge in RHA, to, in a word, combine the beauty (theory) with the usefulness (practice). This means that a human can rely on his/her experience and skill to find real-time solutions to challenges that arise in everyday life, the business world, public administration, civil society, etc. Practical philosophy of history, therefore, differs from the theoretical knowledge offered by the 'first philosophy' (=ontology, metaphysics,



epistemology, logic) as well as the science of nature or society, because it can be applied immediately without consulting literature or experts based on the collection of commonplaces of *its Actor*. It is the accumulated result of his / her life experiences and abilities, that is, a kind of 'mileage' from which the Actor as the 'helmsman of a ship' that is on its way to the future learns along the way, and he / she can use all of this in new, unknown, irreversible and contingent situations. Unlike theory, which always tries to find what is *universal and necessary*, in practice we are faced with unique situations, circumstances and events, in a word, with a kind of historical or temporal singularity. Hence, *prudence* is notoriously important for a successful life, as it enables us to solve problems faster and more efficiently. That is why it is such an important competence, i.e. *an intellectual virtue* (Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, 1103a) that every smart and honest man should develop throughout his life. Faced with today's Hamlet dilemma, this time in style - *what to do now?* - practical wisdom and at same time practical philosophy of history based on it (so called the 'second' philosophy) will never throw up its hands in surrender or despair. Because, it cultivates the right measure of self-confidence, not losing sight of the fact that we can and must deal with even the most challenging situations that befall us in our personal, business, political, public, etc. life. Business people (managers, leaders, investors, owners, entrepreneurs, etc.) and politicians (especially statesmen) who have practical wisdom at their disposal are able to more quickly notice and more correctly solve business or social problems and manage their work more efficiently and fairly. This opens up real opportunities for them to realise better results, allowing them to become more successful in their careers. At the end of the day, we can say that although practical wisdom represents a valuable ability to deal practically in unrepeatable and unique historical situations, it is not present in the 'global village' to the extent that one would expect it, given its importance for a person's authentic existence. Today, the excess of anything and everything dominates; the only thing which was almost completely absent is – *prudence*. The dire shortage of practical wisdom as our Fateful Companion in world history is that fatal fate from which humanity will not (in)quickly recover in foreseen future.

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