

98. Sketch of Contribution on Structural Violence in the Modern Globalizing Economy

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1. Violence is manifest by degrees and shows itself on a scale which runs from relatively powerless to a strong misuse of coercive power. Possible steps along that scale could be:

- enforced hindrance to one's own domain;
- systemic subjugation of (parts of) the domain of others;
- threat, the production of fear in relation to the annihilation of life;
- effective destruction of human life and nature;
- sacralised systematic destruction of life and of the conditions for life.

Our question here is: To what extent can we trace those elements/ steps in present economic life? Increasingly, this is an important question in relation to the emergence of imperial power. For instance, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in *Empire* distinguish the power of the bomb, of money, and of the media as the three major means of modern imperial control.

2. Some examples of the growing interference between military (M), political (P), financial (F), economic (E) and cultural (C) power in present global developments:

- the doctrine of vital interests of the hegemon, the return of Colonial aspirations in the Pentagon report 'Vision for 2020' (M>P>E);
- the influence of US treasury on several IMF/World Bank national decisions (P>F>E);
- the systemic efforts of (private) TNC's to mould public international law (Susan Sell) (E>P);
- the manipulation of information/media to create public acceptance (Iraq war, P>E>C);

Indeed, we see here the presence of elements of subjugation, threat, fear, effective destruction and even forms of sacralisation (demonisation, scapegoat-thinking (R Girard)).

This interference between the powers which are used complicates every

analysis, and also every effort to isolate any evildoers. The component of structural violence is obviously growing rapidly.

3. A step forward can be made by introducing in our analysis the elements of

- *exclusion* (many times referred to by the churches of the South)
- *inclusion* (especially if it is based on some kind of compulsion)

Subjugation for example can then be seen as enforced inclusion, enforced hindrance is an example of deliberate exclusion (think of the barriers of protection around western markets). Several forms of threat and fear are related to the power of normalisation (Michel Foucault), which by definition is a power of inclusion.

Possible thesis: most violence in modern economic life rests on the powers to include and to exclude, and often that power is shown in that order - turning globalization into a *project to exclude on the basis of a prior inclusion*.