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The Matrix Conspiracy

If one should believe the many conspiracy theories, the world looks completely different, than we usually imagine. Conspiracy theories are modern myths, which challenge the official truth. Some seem plucked out of the air, while others are based on serious and thoroughgoing research. Even though the greater part of the conspiracy theories are overinterpretations of suspicious circumstances and accidental coincidences, then it is important to make oneself clear, that parts of history, as we know it, are an illusion.

Furthermore there - especially known from Indian and Buddhist philosophy - is the idea, that the world, as such, is an illusion, or a dream, which it is about to wake up from. People who are identified with this illusion – and most people are - tend to create new illusions. The Matrix conspiracy is closely connected with this idea.

Many of the popular conspiracy theories come from USA. This is hardly because that the European governments, companies, institutions and organizations are more reliable than the American. However, the freedom loving Americans all feel a personal responsibility as the society's watchdogs. For better or for worse it is lying as a fundamental value within the culture, that you hunt the truth at any price. This mentality has created a line of interesting stories, which all point towards another truth, than the one we know – or have become deceived to believe in.

Many think, that all conspiracy theories have been made up by people, who can't accept the world as it is. That is undoubtedly true in some cases, but when the popular conspiracy theories live onwards, this is because the theories are based on suspicious events or incredible coincidences, which raise justified doubt about the truth, we know. It is therefore important to discriminate between the serious and the unserious theories. But even the serious theories are criticized and taunted by the established society. In this way the world still is medieval. It is namely worth to remember, that the first, who claimed, that the Earth is round, got a similar critique.

There also exist true conspiracy theories, since all scandals have begun as a suspicion and a theory. The Watergate case is a classic example of a scandal, where the involved were seeking to cover up the truth, and prevent an exposure.

When the exposures first begin to roll, it often happens quickly, but there also exist theories, which through longer time have challenged the official truth. Karl XII's

death is one of the most interesting examples, but also Napoleon's death and the tapping system Echelon are theories, which have managed to change the official truth.

We live in a postmodern society, where the distinction between reality and appearance/superficies is about to disappear. Reality is often the images, we receive through the stream of information. And it becomes more and more difficult to see, which objective reality that lies behind. It seems more and more to be the images, which are real, and not some behind lying reality. In that sense all images are equal true - (because there is no objective instance to decide what is more true than something else) - but they are not equal good, for some images are more fascinating than others, some images affect us more than others. Therefore the expression of the image has come in focus. The expression of the image – it's aesthetics – decides, whether it fascinates us or bores us. What apply for today, is the intensity and seduction of the expressions. The new truth criterion is, whether something is interesting or boring. Eternal values such as goodness, truth and beauty fall more and more away.

This postmodern society is the society of the new wandering Sophists, whom I have categorized as The Matrix Sophists. The Matrix Sophists are a common term for the tens of thousands of consultants, coaches, practitioners, identity-experts, therapists, sexologists, educators, teachers, social workers, spin doctors, psychotherapists and psychologists, who all share the ideas of The Matrix Conspiracy; that is: some kind of mix between postmodern intellectualism, management theory, self-help and New Age.

The death of the eternal values namely doesn't only apply for reality, but also the personality. The individual human being lives in a space without truth, in a time without direction, and with an information flow so huge, that the manageability beforehand has to be given up. How are we to live then? Well, these wandering Sophists say, you do this by creating yourself in a never-ending new production.

The personality then becomes a persona (mask), an eternal change of role, because when the role begins to stiffen, it becomes uninteresting and boring. New is good, as these Sophists say. What before characterized the personality's relationship to the world, was a call. Now the relationship has become a project (or as the Sophists say: a good story, a good branding, a good spin), which is formed, quickly is being carried out and dropped for the benefit of a new project, that can maintain the constant demand for intensity and seduction.

Such a postmodern society, which seemingly is without any truth, is therefore also a society of conspiracy theories. Because it is the strength of the conspiracy theories,

that they force us to think over the things, instead of just accepting everything, that historians, gurus, politicians, media and spin doctors tell us.

But the paranoid conspiracy theories have thrown a bad light over conspiracy theories in general. It is actually a pity, because even if many theories are far out and have passed the borders of reason long ago, then there also are many serious theories, which are pointing towards official explanations, which we not directly ought to accept. And if a conspiracy theory is an attempt to create an illusion rather than an attempt to uncover the truth, then it is perhaps a conspiracy within a conspiracy. Then there are many examples of within the Matrix conspiracy.

In this way it has for a long time been looked bad at when someone is occupying himself with mysteries and challenges to the accepted history, but if you can do it without declining to easy arguments or fanaticism, then the hunt for the truth is a very noble goal. And conspiracy theories have this hunt for the truth, or love of the truth, in common with philosophy.

The Matrix Conspiracy

The background for the word Matrix, used in my context, is the movie Matrix (the word Matrix is actually a mathematical concept, which is too complicated to be explained here).

In our time it is the very popular to compare the consciousness with a computer. Among others in the supporters of the new materialism, which the development of computers with still more extensive programs, neural networks and so on, have been a source of inspiration for. For instance the American philosopher Daniel C. Dennett, who in his book - with the ambitious title *Consciousness Explained* - seeks to explain consciousness, partially through computer analogies, partially through neurology and psychology.

Within cognition psychology the so-called "information processing theory" has been dominating for a number of years. In this theory is focused on the "inner psychic" processes looked on as symbolic information processing in analogy with the processes which happens in computers.

Both in Eastern and Western philosophy they have always worked with the so-called Dream Hypothesis; the philosophers have always reflected over, whether life is a dream. These philosophical questions have always followed them: whether we sleep, whether we dream this long dream, which is life? How can we know that life not is a dream? How can we know, that we are not lying sleeping somewhere, dreaming the whole world?

The philosopher René Descartes created his own variant of the Dream Hypothesis, the Argument of the Evil Demon: How can I know, that I am not deceived by an evil demon concerning all realization?

In the discussion about the reliability of our realization you often meet a variant of Descartes' Argument from the Evil Demon. The variant (the so-called Brain-in-jar Hypothesis) says as follows: Some day surgery will have reached so far, that you will be able to operate the brain out of a human being and keep it alive by placing it in a jar with some nutrient substratum. At that time the computer research will perhaps have reached so far, that you will be able to connect a computer to such a brain and feed it with all kinds of data, so that the brain thinks that it is a human being, who lives in the real world with all the experiences, memories etc., this is implying, while the fact is that it only is a brain in a jar (read more in my article **The Dream Hypothesis and the Brain-in-jar Hypothesis**).

It is this hypothesis the movie Matrix is based on. Here humans are used as a kind of batteries (slaves) for machines, that get their energy by supplying them with a virtual reality, while the fact is, that they only are lying sleeping in a jar, giving their energy away.

There certainly exist computer scientists, who think, that you can understand the consciousness as "soft-ware" and the brain as a "hard disc" - (Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) is for example very close to this thought) - and that you in very few years will be able to decode a human being for its whole content of consciousness, immediately before it dies, and therewith provide its soul an eternal life – admittedly on a discette, but what the hell, it is after all always better than to pass into nothingness, and the discette will after all be able to be played again and again.

I don't talk about people as batteries for machines, but as batteries for an ideology: The Matrix Conspiracy. An ideology is a malfunction in the human mind, which functions with Machiavelli's implied, terrible, assumption, that the end justifies the means, and where the means to get there is to make people into slaves for this goal. Today people undoubtedly are being made into empty consumer machines. There is no doubt either, that we, through the teachings of the Matrix Sophists, are being supplied with some kind of virtual reality, that seems to justify Machiavelli's famous and notorious assumption – for instance through elimination of critical thinking, which thereupon is replaced by magical thinking.

It is a fact, that we today see an ideology behind the democracy, where true spirituality, philosophy and science systematical are seeked destroyed; that is: the destruction of the best tools Man has in his love of wisdom, and quest for truth.

The main theory of this ideology is relativism. There both exists an individual version of relativism, and a collective version. The individual version is called subjectivism. This version is often connected with a right-wing individualized liberalism. The other version is a collective relativism, cultural relativism, which often is connected to a left-wing socialism. However both are common in distorting both science and human rights. Both are demanding “alternative” views of science, and for example also human rights. And both are introducing intellectual apartheid in different ways, by seeking to eliminate critical thinking.

Both subjectivism and relativism claim, that there doesn't exist any objective truth. Truth is something we create ourself, either as individuals or as cultures, and since there doesn't exist any objective truth, there doesn't exist any objective scale of truth. Therewith they also say, that we live in a Matrix, a dream, a kind of virtual reality, we have created ourselves, and that there is no chance of getting out of this. Therefore the best is to be interested in finding ways of getting on in this world, rather than being interested in finding ways of discovering the truth.

To teach people this, is the main job of the Matrix Sophists. But this is in opposition to the message of the movie the Matrix, which is, that we should create a rebellion, and try to get out of the illusion. In that way you can say that the new Sophists are the “machines”, or the rulers of the Matrix, which keep people as slaves.

All truths are in this Matrix said to be equally true and equally valid, and if one person's truth, or one culture's truth, try to intervene in the truths of other individuals or cultures, then this is considered as an aggression.

Through this we have reached the highest level of postmodern development for better or for worse. The same fully individualized core of personality, which makes us able to step out of the past's fixed and subconscious attachment, has itself become our main interest, center for our identity in a degree, that almost all our awareness are directed inwards in a global seen exceptional narcissism. That is one of the ways the Matrix keeps us in the illusion.

But isn't narcissism what for example social constructivists try to avoid? Yes, but with the opposite result – they haven't examined the inner thinker's (the Ego's) ingenious ways of using thought-distortions in order to defend itself. Individually we have namely created a large scale self-image, which in a quite high degree is based on assumptions/ideas. This self-image we almost continuously defend, by filtrating

the impressions we receive from the world. We want to be in peace with our self-images, and quite convenient the Matrix therefore has created a cultural pluralism (=culture relativism), which forbid actual value judgment. I have my truth, and you have yours. Respect! Self-accept! I am Okay, you're Okay! It all run together in a fear of hierarchies, where it is political incorrect to claim that something is higher than something else. "You judge", is the same as "you condemn."

The Matrix has in this way succeeded in creating an illusion of, that it is a kind of sacrilege (intolerance/thought-crime/old-thinking) wanting to utter yourself about, what is good and evil, true and false, beautiful and ugly, at the same time as the Matrix Sophists do this themselves in all possible quibbling ways, under cover of concepts such as tolerance or new-thinking.

Ego-worship has in that way become a common accepted ideology. A whole time-tendency within school, folk high school and continuing education, focus on so-called "self-improvement". Inspired by for example Sartre and postmodernism you are being encouraged to an unrestrained and Egoistic self expression, where you are letting your choices (story-telling, self-branding) decide everything, in the belief that you through your choices (thoughts) can create a successfull life as it fit you. From the Matrix Sophists you hear slogans such as: "It is not facts, but the best story, which wins!"

The idea that we through the power of thought can create reality as we want to is the central message of The Matrix Sophists. Notice here the similarity with precisely Descartes' cogito-argument: *Cogito ergo Sum* (I think, therefore I exist). The Matrix Sophists are teaching people in thinking in terms like this: I think I am a success, therefore I am a success; I think I am a fiasco, therefore I am a fiasco; I think I am rich, therefore I am rich; etc., etc.

All this is a part of the Matrix Conspiracy. But why is the Matrix Conspiracy so focused on the ego? Because the ego is the central element, that is feeding the Matrix with energy. The ego is the main battery of the Matrix. The reason is, that the Ego always is in a state of becoming. Becoming is the central concept in personal development: all the time to be in a state of becoming something else than what you are, a constant striving from past to future, where the goal is constantly increasing success. In this you give your energy to that part of the Matrix ideology, which is Consumer Capitalism.

Contrary to true spirituality where being is the central, being in the sense studying what you are, to be what you are, to give up past and future, and be in the Now with what you are. In this the energy is flowing away from the Matrix, back to yourself. That is also why I consider the art of loafing as a part of the rebellion against the

Matrix Conspiracy (see my article **The Hermeneutics of Suspicion (the thought police of the self-help industry) and why I am an apostle of loafing**).

Becoming is the central concept in the false spirituality of the Matrix Conspiracy. Being is the central concept in true spirituality.

So, the main mover of the Matrix Conspiracy is subjectivism and relativism. You could call subjectivism and relativism for the main Matrix philosophy.

I have connected the Matrix Conspiracy with three other known conspiracies. Note that though there might exist groups/societies with these names then I don't concretely refer to these (The bilderberg Group does exist). I use the names as metaphors for tendencies in the postmodern Zeitgeist, which otherwise would be very difficult to explain.

Also, I don't think there exists any organized control coming from without; that is; secret societies, or groups of people who are speculating in what I here present. The control is coming from within; it is coming from individuals who share the same ideas, namely that they are free and authentic humans, who help other people to become free and authentic humans (about this illusion: read my article **Self-help and The Mythology of Authenticity**).

Here is a short introduction:

1. The Bilderberg Group
2. Illuminati
3. The 666 Conspiracy

1. The Bilderberg Group

Every year 100 of the most powerful men of the world is gathering in an informel talk about politics and economics. Of these men are 1/3 politicians and 2/3 intellectuals and leaders of multinational companies. Their ideological results? Facts about these are:

- A) The main political tool is economics and Consumer Capitalism.
- B) The main intellectual tool is subjectivism and relativism.
- C) The main pedagogy is based on psychology.

All these support each other in the five education-instruments of Consumer Capitalism; which you also, with inspiration from Neuro-linguistic Programming, could call the five main programming-technologies of the Matrix:

- 1) Management theory (see my article **Management theory and the self-help industry**)
- 2) New Age (see my article **Six common traits of New Age that distort spirituality**)
- 3) Nonviolent Communication (see my article **Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is an instrument of psychic terror**)
- 4) Neuro-linguistic Programming (see my article **Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) and Large Group Awareness Training (LGAT)**)
- 5) New Thought (see my article **The New Thought movement and the law of attraction**)

A headline for these technologies could be the concept of self-improvement (personal development). A concept you as a fact see described in EU's project on lifelong learning and education. Management theory and its self-help tools are directly described in EU's project. More or less accepted are also Nonviolent Communication and NLP, which in many educations are on the fixed curriculum. New Age is a more popular, common movement. But they all include the same ideas.

2. Illuminati

The Bilderberg Group is said to be runned by Illuminati, which is a secret society, that goes way back in history. The background is real. This organisation has in fact existed. The goal was a challenge to for instance the church, working towards a new world order, and with connections to occultism. The goal was a world without religions, often referred to as the New World Order.

Illuminati is said to be an advocate for a scientific world-view, but this has nothing to do with true science. True science can't be connected with certain political views, and/or occultism. But there is an ongoing strong demand that science has to be integrated with New Age (occultism and spirituality) and/or reductionism (postmodernism and politics). You see these demands all the time, especially in New Age magazines and books.

So the "scientific" in Illuminati is rather pseudoscience. Note that I don't discriminate between the pseudoscience of New Age - (demands for that science has to be integrated with certain alternative "spiritual" sciences) - and the pseudoscience of reductionism - (demands for that science has to integrated with, or is the same as,

certain atheistic/political/postmodernistic point of views) - though these views can disagree highly in between. They all advocate subjectivism and relativism, and certain occult and/or political views (see my articles **The pseudoscience of New Age and reductionism** and **The pseudoscience of reductionism and the problem of mind**).

You can in that connection talk about the treatment society, where both the coaches and psychotherapists of the self-help industry, as well as the psychiatrists and doctors of the pharmaceutical industry, function as a kind of thought police, though these people most often are in opposition to each other, as seen in the movie *The Cuckoo's Nest* (read more about this in my article **The hermeneutics of suspicion (the thought police of the self-help industry) and why I am an apostle of loafing**).

They have, in the society, already succeeded in reducing religion to psychology, spirituality to biology, and philosophy to ideology (Consumer Capitalism). About the psychologizing tendencies, see my articles **Humanistic psychology, self-help and the danger of reducing religion to psychology** and **Self-help and the Mythology of Authenticity**.

So, there is in fact, a New World Order emerging: the world of Alternative History, Alternative Physics, Alternative Medicine and, ultimately, Alternative Reality. How, given the recent and sorry story of ideologically motivated conceptions of knowledge – Lysenkoism in Stalin's Soviet Union, for example, or Nazi critiques of "Jewish science" – could it again have become acceptable to behave in this way? In my article **The Sokal Hoax** you can read more about this development.

3. The 666 Conspiracy

This conspiracy is about Evil's plot against mankind. Is the third Antichrist among us, and will our worship of him be a sign of Judgment Day? (In my article **The four philosophical hindrances and openings** I have investigated the 666 turn in depth).

The relevance of this conspiracy has five aspects:

A) That some of the subjectivistic and relativistic theories on the universities, which seek to undermine truth (and for instance philosophy and science) are so absurd, that there is nothing behind them than chaos (see my articles **Constructivism: the postmodern intellectualism behind New Age and the self-help industry**, and **The Sokal Hoax**).

B) That ideology is a malfunction in the human mind.

C) That there is introduced a false spirituality where the main worship is the Ego, contrary to the traditional spiritual directions, where the main goal is the elimination of the Ego (see my article **The ego-inflation in the New Age and self-help environment**).

D) That occultism within New Age creates spiritual misguiding, often with deep spiritual crises as a result (see my article **Spiritual crises as the cause of paranormal phenomena**).

E) That the Ego-extreme according to the true spiritual traditions will be contrabalanced by the laws of energy (hybris-nemesis, karma, the will of God, etc.) This will happen through crises, illness, natural disasters, etc. – see for example my articles **What is karma?** and **Humanistic psychology, self-help, and the danger of reducing religion to psychology**.

The Sophists

After centuries of successful trading, the local gods and festivals could no longer satisfy the religious needs of the ancient Athenians. Their spiritual hunger was exacerbated by the stress of city life, by the constant threat of destruction, and by the grim vision of totalitarian Sparta: the vision of Greeks living without light or grace or humour, as though the gods had withdrawn from their world.

Into the crowded space of Periclean Athens came the wandering teachers, selling their “wisdom” to the bewildered populace. Any charlatan could make a killing, if enough people believed in him. Men like Gorgias and Protagoras, who wandered from house to house demanding fees for their instruction, preyed on the gullibility of a people made anxious by war.

To the young Plato, who observed their antics with outrage, these “Sophists” were a threat to the very soul of Athens. One alone among them seemed worthy of attention, and that one, the great Socrates whom Plato immortalised in his dialogues, was not a Sophist, but a true philosopher.

The philosopher, in Plato’s characterisation, awakens the spirit of inquiry. He helps his listeners to discover the truth, and it is they who bring forth, under his catalysing influence, the answer to life’s riddles. The philosopher is the midwife, and his duty is to help us to what we are – free and rational beings, who lack nothing that is required to understand our condition. The Sophist, by contrast, misleads us with cunning fallacies, takes advantage of our weakness, and offers himself as the solution to problems of which he himself is the cause.

There are many signs of the Sophists, but principal among these is that they are subjectivists and relativists. Their teachings are about how to get on in the world, and not about how to find the truth. Anything goes: not facts, but the best story wins. And the result is mumbo-jumbo, condescension and the taking of fees. The philosopher uses plain language, does not talk down to his audience, and never asks for payment. Such was Socrates, and in proposing him as an ideal, Plato defined the social status of the philosopher for centuries to come.

No one should doubt that sophistry is alive and well. The Matrix Conspiracy is permeated with it. We see it in the postmodern intellectualism, in the management culture, in the self-help industry and in the New Age environment. The Sophists are back with a vengeance, and are all the more to be feared, in that they come disguised as philosophers and scientists. For, in this time of helpless relativism and subjectivity, philosophy and science alone has stood against the tide, reminding us that those crucial distinctions on which life depends – between true and false, good and evil, right and wrong – are objective and binding. Philosophy and science has until now spoken with the accents of the academy and the laboratory and not with the voice of the fortune teller.

When Plato founded the first academy, and placed philosophy at the heart of it, he did so in order to protect the precious store of wisdom from the assaults of charlatans, to create a kind of temple to truth in the midst of falsehood, and to marginalise the Sophists who preyed on human confusion.

My mission is again to create such a temple to truth in midst of the falsehood of the Matrix Conspiracy.

The Matrix Conspiracy is my main term for the strange beliefs, amusing deceptions, and dangerous delusions, which today are manifesting in the outbreak of a culture of self-assertion, where the classical deadly sins have been turned into virtues. Self-assertion is the main tool used in order to keep us in the illusion.

It is a culture of personal development/self-improvement (Management theory, New Age, Nonviolent Communication, Neuro-linguistic programming, and New Thought), which is creating a “me-me-me-and-then-perhaps-you-if-it-serves-me-logic”, and a spirituality, where the object of worship is the ego.

It is a culture, where everything is psychologized, emotionalized and therapized, so that political incitation and social responsibility are removed by disguising social problems as personal problems. It is a culture where moral values only are based on what feels good. It is a culture of suspicion, that denies and renounce what people think, and the reasons they produce, in order to find the “real” reasons. It is a culture,

where debate is about playing down or directly offending other people. It is a culture, where science and critical thinking have been replaced by magical thinking (you can create yourself and the world as it fit you).

But it is also a culture (though it on the surface sounds individualistic), which is about to develop into a global, totalitarian meritocracy, where psychology is controlling people down to the smallest details. This might happen when Western Consumer Capitalism and Chinese Communism in all probability will melt together (read more about this development in my article **The Hermeneutics of Suspicion (the Thought Police of the Self-help Industry) and why I am an Apostle of Loafing**).

Civil disobedience

I claim, that the rebellion against this ideology must be philosophy. We must become philosophical rebels and spiritual anarchists, who not are afraid of for example practising loafing and civil disobedience; or said differently: who not are afraid of rejecting psychology in order to find our true calling in life.

A philosophical life-practice is a rebellion against the moral of society, against all images of life, both your own and the others'. If we shall save our humanity, and our democracy and welfare society, it is absolutely necessary, that we in relation to democracy-parasitic ideologies become philosophical rebels like Socrates, Henry David Thoreau, Gandhi, Martin Luther King or Krishnamurti – a kind of spiritual anarchists.

Also Albert Camus had this thought. In his book *The Rebel* he investigates the question of terror on many different levels, and have some distinctions, especially the distinction between rebellion and murder. He emphasizes that the rebellion – but not necessarily a violent – is necessary, if the world not shall stiffen, and if you at all shall be able to survive as a human being. A rebellion can cost human lifes, as in the resistance movement during the Second World War, but murder must not be a goal in itself. In that connection he mentions the role of art, which creates a space in the single person where he in a situation of rebellion can orient himself, so that the rebellion not becomes inhuman. The problem with Albert Camus' philosophy is though, that it ends in subjectivism, which really can't function as ethical foundation.

I constantly makes the distinction between ideology and philosophy/human rights. A rebellion must not be ideological, where you treat humans as means for a goal out in the future; that is: you must not treat human problems instrumentally. A rebellion must always be a philosophical revolution, where you treat humans as goals in themselves; that is: where you treat human problems in a communicative way.

In that connection the concept of civil disobedience is important. Civil disobedience describes the situation, where a person offends the law by referring to moral values, which the disobedient puts above all citizens' duty to obey the law. Civil disobedience is therefore closely connected with ethical practice – and not the use of violence.

On the constitutional plane civil disobedience can contribute to, that there happens a change of system, and yesterday's disobedience can thereby become the next day's heroic deed.

The concept of civil disobedience as it is known today, was created by the American author Henry David Thoreau in an essay from 1849, wherein he advocated the private conscience's right against the state's demands, for instance the refusal to pay taxes under the war against Mexico.

Civil disobedience is especially known from Gandhi and Martin Luther King, and in the campaign of protest against the Vietnam War. In Denmark it was seen during the Second World War, where some people helped Jews to escape to Sweden.

The reason why civil disobedience is a necessary political tool is, that any political ideology in some way is offending the human rights by making humans into means for a goal projected out in the future by the mind of the ideologist, and that the end therefore, with Niccoló Machiavelli's famous and notorious words, justifies the means (Machiavelli's work *Il Principi* is a textbook in statesmanship, and have been source of inspiration for, for instance, Hitler).

Ideology of any kind, political or religious, is - to cut a long story short - a psychic disease, a malfunction in the human mind.

The correct understanding of the human rights is healing this malfunction. The human rights deal with the idea about the individual human being's autonomy and dignity: You shall treat the other not as a mean, but as a goal. Therefore the exact opposite of Machiavelli's preachings. This doesn't mean though, that I advocate totally pacifism. I have investigated this in my book **Meditation as an Art of Life – a basic reader**, in the philosophical question How ought my attitude to war be?

The main goal of the philosophical revolution is the exposure of the Matrix Sophists. These Sophists use especially two kinds of pedagogy:

- 1) Ideology
- 2) How to get on in the world

1) Ideology

Let me explain with a distinction between two kinds of education: philosophical education and ideological education.

Philosophical education has its basic objectives, first, the disposition to seek truth, and, second, the capacity to conduct rational inquiry. Training scientists, for example, requires the inculcation both of an ethic of inquiry – do not fabricate or distort results, take care to prevent your hypotheses (or desires) from affecting your observations – and the techniques of inquiry appropriate to the discipline.

There are of course many different forms of philosophical education, corresponding to the numerous ways in which truth may be pursued. Nevertheless, these forms of education share two key features. First, they are not decisively shaped by the specific social or political/religious circumstances in which they are conducted, or, to put it the other way around, they are perverted when such circumstances come to have a substantive effect. There is no valid distinction between “Jewish” and “Aryan” physics, or between “bourgeois” and “socialist” biology; truth is one and universal.

Secondly, and relatedly, philosophical education can have corrosive consequences for political (and/or religious) communities in which it is allowed to take place. The pursuit of truth – scientific, historical, moral, or whatever – can undermine structures of unexamined but socially central belief.

Ideological education - (today through psychology) - differs from philosophical education in all these respects. Its purpose is not the pursuit and acquisition of truth, but rather the formation of individuals, who can effectively conduct their lives within, and support, their political (and/or religious) community. It is unlikely, to say the least, that the truth will be fully consistent with this purpose. Nor is ideological education homogeneous and universal. It is by definition education within, and on behalf of, a particular political (and/or religious) order. Nor, finally, does ideological education stand in opposition to its political (and/or religious) community. On the contrary, it fails – fundamentally – if it does not support and strengthen that community.

Ideology altogether is a psychic disease. You are not in doubt about, that ideology is a psychic disease if you look at its collective manifestations. It appears for example in the form of ideologies such as Communism, Liberalism, Conservatism, National Socialism and any other nationalism, or in the form of rigid religious systems of faith, which function with the implied assumption, that the supreme good lay out in the future, and that the end therefore justifies the means. The goal is an idea, a point out in a future, projected by the mind, where salvation is coming in some kind –

happiness, satisfaction, equality, liberation, etc. It is not unusual, that the means to come to this is to make people into slaves, torture them and murder them here and now.

That a thought-system has developed into an ideology shows in, that it is a closed system, which is shared by a large group of people. Such a closed system has especially two distinctive characters: 1) It allows no imaginable circumstance to talk against the ideology. 2) It refuses all critique by analysing the motives in the critique in concepts, which is collected from the ideology itself (an ideology always thinks black and white, and therefore always has an anti-ideology, an enemy image, which it attributes on to everyone, who don't agree).

An ideology is therefore characterized by, that it is not able to contain, or direct refuses, rationality and critical thinking. We all know how dissidents have been killed, jailed and tortured under totalitarian ideologies.

In philosophy you focus on, what cooperation and conversation require of you in order to that you at all can exist: that you speak true (don't lie), that you are prepared to reach mutual understanding and agreement (don't manipulate), don't make an exception of yourself (but treat others as equals). From this rises the eternal moral values (as for example that it is wrong to lie), and generally our ideas of right and justice: the so-called human rights, the idea about the individual person's autonomy and dignity: you shall treat the other not as a mean, but as a goal.

2) How to get on in the world

Ideologies are using propaganda in order to get their "truths" forced through. In that connection they use thought distortions.

The sophists were teachers of rhetoric, who against a fee, taught people how to persuade other people about their "truths". Rhetoric, or sophistry, is precisely the art of persuasion. Rather than giving reasons and presenting arguments to support conclusions, as Socrates did, then those who use sophistry are employing a battery of techniques, such as emphatic assertion, persuader words and emotive language, to convince the listener, or reader, that what they say or imply is true.

The sophists taught their pupils how to win arguments by any means available; they were supposedly more interested in teaching ways of getting on in the world than ways of finding the truth, as Socrates. Therefore any charlatan is welcome. And the use of thought distortions is seen as the best tool, when practising the mantra: "It is not facts, but the best story, that wins!"

Thought distortions are “techniques”, that, unconscious or conscious, are used from an interest in finding ways of getting on in the world, rather than an interest in finding ways of discovering the truth. Thought distortions are the background for poor reasoning, diversionary ploys, seductive reasoning errors, techniques of persuasion and avoidance, psychological factors, which can be obstacles to clear thought.

Critical thinking, or philosophy, is in opposition to thought distortions. Critical thinking is about spotting thought distortions, and examining them by presenting reasons and evidence in support of conclusions (see my book **A dictionary of thought distortions**).

Latest news!

Strasbourg, April 7, 2011. The 47 Member States of the Council of Europe are close to finalizing a new convention that defines “gender” as Social Construct.

So, a quite certain trend within a quite certain single branch of science (Sociology), shall from now on define what a human being is. This trend is called social constructivism (or social constructionism), and is the latest craze in reductionism; that is: a pseudoscientific point of view with a political agenda. It belongs on the left-wing environment side of the heredity and environment ideology (read more about this reductionism in my articles **Constructivism: the postmodern intellectualism behind New Age and the self-help industry** and **The Sokal Hoax**).

Also read my article **The new feminism and the philosophy of women’s magazines**. Here I show that The Matrix Conspiracy is a sign of the rising of a new Fascism (I consider the new feminism as playing a central role in the Matrix conspiracy).

So, we see, that my theory about the Matrix Conspiracy is very well alive and in progress.

My two books on The Matrix Conspiracy:

The Matrix Conspiracy – Part 1 (2014)

The Matrix Conspiracy – Part 2 (2014)

All articles and books referred to are available in free PDF Versions. Links can be found on my blog: www.MortenTolboll.blogspot.com

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