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Planetary Boundaries and Governance Mechanisms in the transition to the Anthropocene



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QUO VADIS HUMANITAS?*

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Introduction

In September, 2016, the Working Group on the Anthropocene reached the conclusion that “The Anthropocene concept...is geologically real” (AWG, 2016), therefore proposing the formalization of the term Anthropocene inside of the International Commission of Stratigraphy.

The recognition that “the human impact has now grown to the point that it has changed the course of the Earth history...” (Zalasiewicz et al., 2017) is the basis of the new denomination of the contemporary epoch. Notwithstanding, if, in one hand, inside of the international group of geologists, “a different trajectory for the Earth system” (Carrington, 2016) begins to find empirical evidence, on the other hand, particularly among the scholars of the social and human sciences, even though recognizing breaking elements in the history of Earth caused by the impacts of human activity over the global ecosystem (Hamilton, 2016), the concept of Anthropocene encounters many criticism over the fact that it operates a certain generalization and simplification of the problem (Malm and Hornborg, 2014; Brondizio et al., 2015; Bonneuil et Fressoz, 2016; Moore, 2017). According to those scientists, the word anthropocene can only be interpreted when contextualized, taking into consideration “the local variations and social inequalities” (Biermann et al., 2016).

To recognize scientifically that humankind (as the expression “anthropocene” suggests) had a decisive role in determining the course of Earth’s history leads us not to give enough importance to the fact that the change has occurred by the specific initiative of a small part of the globe able to impose its own economic and political view. Nevertheless, the critics do not tackle the scientific data itself.

*“Quo vadis?” is a Latin expression that means: “Where are you going?”. I thank professor Yara Magalhães, responsible for the Centro de Referência em Educação Integral e Ambiental – CREIA, and professor Rubens de Moraes Silva for the observations and suggestions to the previous versions of the text.

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If since always, the peoples of the Earth molded the environment to their needs (Turner et al., 1990), it has been only recently that mankind acquired such power to modify the fundamental structures of life on the planet. Since 1750, it has been launched, on the atmosphere, more than 555 billion of metric tons of carbon, a level that has not been yet known for the past 800.000 years. The exercised pressure over the non-human life reduces the existence of other species, enabling the start of a probable sixth mass extinction in the history of Earth; human action introduces new elements that alter the evolutive process on Earth: antibiotics, pesticides, genetically modified organisms, etc. (Lewis and Maslin, 2015).

The Weberian “disenchantment of the world” is no longer just the emancipation of the religious and metaphysical fundamentals that sustained western civilization, but the disenchantment of the world structured in reaction to those fundamentals or preceding them. The euphoria that marked the emergence and the way of Modernity is little by little substituted by the centrality of the risk of possible catastrophes¹. In fact, for the first-time humanity experienced its “impotent power” (Bonneuil et Fressoz, 2016, p. 34) and has to make an extreme appeal to the responsibility for the next generations present and future, more than for its technological genius (Jonas, 1990).

The more frequent use of the word “crisis” in all the areas of the complex contemporary system is for sure a sign very representative of the planetary impasse. Over the last decades, the perception of living a turning point² in history has inspired, first, the elaboration of a “crisology” (Morin, 1976) and, later on, the draft of a “colapsology” (Servigne, 2015). The consistent perception of a turning epoch, also confirmed by the introduction of the term anthropocene, has provoked a great literary production which content goes from the negation of the transformation in act to a catastrophic interpretation, most of the time aiming to instigate a responsible attitude facing the challenges of the moment. Even though recognizing the importance of rapid and efficient intervention inside of a relatively breath space in time, the present article proposes to contribute to a reflection that encompasses the slow way of cosmic evolution, in which the anthropocene is a step.

Braudel’s distinction between short and long times helps to understand the difference and the complementarity of the two diverse approaches (Braudel, 1958). The first is focused on the actuality of the presented facts, in a specific historical juncture, while the second considers a wide historic arch, “*l’histoire de longue, même de très long durée*” (Idem, p.11), as it is in the case of this text³. In fact, the novelty of the anthropocene, beyond resending to themes that

¹As Latour highlights: “What makes the Anthropocene a clearly detectable golden spike way beyond the boundary of stratigraphy is that it is the most decisive philosophical, religious, anthropological and [...] political concept yet produced as an alternative to the very notions of ‘Modern’ and ‘modernity’” (2013, p. 77).

²See the Greek origin of the word crisis and its various meanings in the works of Bauman and Bordoni (2014, p. 1).

³In a previous article I’ve tried to explain how the various crisis that followed each other in the contemporary world (the economic crisis, the social crisis, the environmental crisis) have revealed the “crisis of the ‘system’”, understanding with this word the complexity, the interconnection and the finality that characterize the civilizational project of the current epoch” (De Antoni, 2014).



interest present and next generations, offers the space to rescue the big questions that characterize the emerging of western civilization in ancient Greece and that Modernity sacrificed in the name of progress: who are we, where do we come from and where do we go. It is the theme of evolution that our epoch impels us to resume, not in Darwinian terms anymore, in which inspiring principles propelled the so-called development of the west, but in a wider optic, in a manner of urgency, in defense of the human species and of life in general.

At first, we will try to consider the contributions of some great contemporary historians and scientist over the limits that characterize each civilizational circle advancing the hypothesis that we are in the conclusion of the period inaugurated with the Modernity. So we will see how this hypothesis is shared by some great ancient traditions that base their knowledges on the sacred texts and millenarian experience. Finally, Bergson's and Whitehead's analysis will introduce us to the little-known problematic of evolution and, nevertheless, extremely important, to which visionaries like Teilhard de Chardin and Sri Aurobindo will give a rational-spiritual view, showing, therefore, how science and mystics meet.

Draft of a colapsology history

A quick exam of the authors that highlighted the entropic character of the civilizations naturally takes us to distinguish between two phases: the first, constituted by thinkers which the contribution have an analytical-predictive mark, product of the comparative study of past societies; the second, with its beginning in 1950, year indicated as the start of the Great Acceleration of the Anthropocene (Lewis and Maslin, 2015, p. 176), when the theme receives more attention and assumes the shape of a critical analysis of the dominant economical socio political and global system. Among the two phases, in the time-space that coincides with the First and Second World War, an intermediate period that will see three great authors as protagonists: Spengler, Freud and Toynbee. Under the influence of the current events that happened in Europe, they will evidence, in a way that is always more incisive, the decline of the West.

The idea that any given civilization would always come to an ending point is not new to the philosophical-scientific reflection. Perhaps, after Heraclitus's *panta rei*, the man who first deepened the relativity of the great civilizations is, in 1300, Ibn Khaldun, a great knowledgeable of the four influential civilizations of the time: the Arab and the Berbera on the north of Africa, the Western Europe, and the Mongol civilization. According to the Islamic scientist, civilizations are born, grow and decay within a cyclical process that generally extends itself for the duration of four generations (Ibn Khaldun, 1967, p. 183). The reached state of great comfort, of luxury and prosperity, with the relative corruption of its citizens, would inevitably lead to the decline (Idem, p. 468).

Centuries after, Giambattista Vico, the great historian who questioned the principles of the northern European Enlightenment, in his monumental work "New Science", in 1725, observed that civilizations, when reach the point of maximum development, start a period of



decline and decadence. The cause of this terminal phase, according to Vico, has to be attributed to the abuse of the laws by the responsible and to the subversion of the natural order with acts contrary to those of justice⁴ that drives societies from “barbarism of sense”, in which societies have fought against in order to affirm themselves, to “barbarism of reflection”, due to the fact that “each follows his own pleasure or caprice”⁵.

In 1800, the swiss historian Jacop Burkhardt observed that in order to better understand our civilization it is indispensable to know the crisis that allowed the passing from the Middle Ages to Renaissance (Burkhardt, 1960). His critique of Modernism is exactly against the ideology that tries to make this moment a new beginning of history by rejecting the pass and the previous knowledge (Hinde, 2000, p. 12). In his work “Reflection on History” (1950), on the fourth chapter about “The Crisis of History”, he does not leave unnoticed the positive value of a crisis: “Crises bring out greatness, but it may be the last” (Idem, p. 136). In addition, the final act is usually provoked by a disequilibrium among the main institutions of a society. To Burkhardt, the three central powers of a civilization are the State, Religion and Culture. While the first two try to conserve the stability, the third is unpredictable because it is connected to human nature⁶. Since the dawn of time, nations have failed by the revolts “of classes and castes against a despotism or the oppression of a sacred law” (Idem, p. 139). It is interesting to notice in “Judgement on History and Historians” a reflection, placed in a parenthesis that anticipates the inherent challenge of the Anthropocene predicting the vanishing of humankind⁷.

Burkhardt’s thoughts about history becomes particularly important once it attracted the interest of Nietzsche, that having arrived at the University of Basel as to be professor of Classical Philology, have watched the classes of the swiss historian about the study of history. The preface of Nietzsche’s last book “Will to Power”, conjecture the end of the European civilization:

What I relate is the history of the next two centuries. I describe what is coming, what can no longer come differently: *the advent of nihilism*. This history can be related even now; for necessity itself is at work here. This future speaks even now in a hundred signs, this destiny announces itself everywhere; for this music of the future all ears are cocked even now. For some time now, our whole European culture has been moving as toward a catastrophe, with a tortured tension that is growing from decade to decade: restlessly, violently,

⁴«[...] since without order [...] human society cannot stand for a moment [...] » (Vico, 1948, §1100).

⁵« [...] In this way, through long centuries of barbarism, rust will consume the misbegotten subtleties of malicious wits, that have turned them into beasts made more inhuman by the barbarism of reflection than the first men had been made by the barbarism of sense. For the latter displayed a generous savagery, against which one could defend oneself or take flight or be on one's guard; but the former, with a base savagery, under soft words and embraces, plots against the life and fortune of friends and intimates» (Idem, §1106).

⁶« In praise of crises, we might say that passion is the mother of great things, real passion, that is, bent on the new and not merely on the overthrow of the old » (Burkhardt, 1950, p. 158).

⁷« (It is a moot question how long our planet may still tolerate organic life and how soon its solidification, the exhaustion of carbonic acid and of water, will be coupled with the disappearance of tellurian mankind.) » (Burkhardt, 1999, p. 238).



headlong, like a river that wants to reach the end, that no longer reflects, that is afraid to reflect. (1968, p. 3).

Burkhardt's positioning in the analysis of history has distanced itself from the Hegelianism as much as from the positivism leaving a space for a new critical view in which Nietzsche could take advantage in a manner totally unexpected and original. Nihilism, as destruction of the culture and of the values of the West, constituted, in the thoughts of the author of "Thus spoke Zarathustra", the destruction of the Western civilization.

In 1918, Oswald Spengler, a reference in the field of colapsology, would make the starting point of his work "The Decline of the West" out of the Nietzschean interpretation, as he himself attested in the conclusion of the speech done in the occasion of the eightieth birth anniversary of Nietzsche: "No one writes history any more without seeing things in his light. [...] he [Nietzsche] showed history as it really is. His heritage is the obligation to live history in the same way" (Spengler, 1924, pp. 8 e 10)⁸.

Spengler's central point of analysis of the universal history is the concept of Culture understood as an organism, a set of aspects (religion, art, science, philosophy, political and social forms) that expresses the specific worldview of a human group. One thing is Culture "as total sum of its profound possibilities", another is "the sensitive phenomenon or the appearances" that are conceived in reality (1927, p. 104). As the body, Culture as a whole also has a soul (Idem, p. 9) from which it receives a creative impulse, the extraordinary capacity to inject innovative elements in the static juncture that are going to transform the space and the society in which it emerges. The development of Culture, under this perspective, correlates to the biological process: "Each Culture has its own new possibilities of self-expression which arise, ripen, decay, and never return" (Idem, p. 21). To Spengler, the civilization is the final phase of a Culture, its inevitable fate – distanced perception from the linear view of history that predominated in the mindset of the epoch.

The symptoms that reveal the decline of the West are visible in the importance that the external world grants to the profound forces of the soul⁹: "Being as been confused with waking-being, life with the means by which it expresses itself" (1928, p. 55). Product of this transformation is the mechanization of the intellectual activities and the enslavement to the machinery (Idem, p. 504), the dictatorship of the money (Idem, p. 506), and the triumph of the will of power over the truth and justice (Idem, p. 507).

The Spenglerian philosophical pessimism over western history has been shared by the recent psychoanalysis' discipline inaugurated by Freud. In his book "Civilization and its Discontents", first published in 1929, he explains that, if the civilizing process, in one hand,

⁸After his death, Spengler was buried with a copy of Goethe's "Faust" and a copy of Nietzsche's "Thus spoke Zarathustra", the two authors that he considered the most representative of the German culture as explained in the cited speech.

⁹See diagram in Spengler, 1927, p. 154.



allows humankind to advance in science and in the organization of the world, on the other, it inhibited the natural profound drives.

If civilization imposes such great sacrifices not only on man's sexuality but on aggressivity, we can understand better why it is hard for him to be happy in that civilization. [...] Civilized man has exchanged a portion of his possibilities of happiness for a portion of security (Freud, p. 4507).

According to Freud, the mismatch between the drives of the man and his repressive conditionings imposed by civilization generates "a sentiment of unconscious culpability" (Idem, p. 4523) that is in the origin of all neuroses. This sense of guilt will perhaps reach heights that the individual finds hard to tolerate (Idem, p. 4522), threatening the civilizing process as a whole.

Years later, another macro historian, Arnold Joseph Toynbee, in 1934, was starting the publication of his masterpiece "A Study of History" that would end in 1961. To him, the cause of civilizational collapse is a sort of social malady like a war or a revolution (1951, p. 128); and never a result of external aggression¹⁰, a homicide, but the consequence of an internal degeneration, a suicide.

In the years that followed Toynbee's contribution, the years of the Great Acceleration within the Anthropocene, the theme of civilization is resumed by Braudel, in 1963, in his book "Grammaire des Civilisations" (1993), and, in 1997, Huntington, with the publication of The Clash of Civilizations, inaugurates a new interest about this topic that rises progressively, instigated by globalization and by the revival of the regional cultures and autonomies. But, without a doubt, the first author to call the attention, in the second phase of this quick draft of colapsology, is the archaeologist Joseph Tainter, for his particularly incisive analysis linked to the typical production and complexity of the developmentalism phase initiated in the 60's.

In 1988, Tainter tried to offer a general explanation of the collapse of complex societies and its implications today, exposed in the book "The Collapse of Complex Societies". On the counter flow of the dominant thesis that points to the destruction of the environment as the main cause of the implosion of a civilization, Tainter shows that:

Collapse, as viewed in the present work, is a political process. It may, and often does, have consequences in such areas as economics, art, and literature, but it is fundamentally a matter of the sociopolitical sphere. A society has collapsed when it displays a rapid, significant loss of an established level of sociopolitical complexity (1988, p. 4 [sic]).

In order to understand the sociopolitical complexity, a recent experience in the history of humankind, it is necessary to consider two fundamental concepts: inequality and heterogeneity. A high degree of heterogeneity is the factor that determines the complex society (p.23). One of the characteristics of complexity is the focus around a center, not

¹⁰« [...] civilizations have not met their death from an assassin's hand [...] we have been led [...] to return a verdict of suicide» (Toynbee, 1951, p. 120).



necessarily geographical, that legitimates (p. 27) the entire social, political and economic system. The collapse corresponds to a process of decline of complexity (p. 31) and of increase of inequality, whose trajectory Tainter describes in four points:

1. human societies are problem-solving organizations;
2. sociopolitical systems require energy for their maintenance;
3. increased complexity carries with it increased costs per capita, and;
4. investment in sociopolitical complexity as a problem-solving response often reaches a point of declining marginal returns (1988, p. 194).

Once a certain level has passed, the costs of complexity begin to rise in the field of food, energy and raw materials used. The information sector tends to be more and more specialized, making access expensive and higher investment in bureaucracy for the organization of society. Thus, while the number and costliness of organizational investments increases, the proportion of a society's budget available for investment in future economic growth must decline (p. 195).

In substance, Tainter associates the Declining Marginal Returns¹¹ to the rise of complexity. The decrease in gain will lead to less investment in complexity, considered less attractive, causing "separation or disintegration" and thus making society vulnerable to collapse (p.195 and 198). Bonaiuti, based on this theory of Tainter, advances to the hypothesis that "the developed capitalist societies entered a phase of decreasing rent - in spite of the silence of the official sources"(2013, p. 72).

After the original contribution of Tainter, a fecund scientific and cinematic¹² on the subject production exploded in the 2000s (Diamond, 2007, Fagan, 2008, Stenger, 2009, Morton, 2013, Oreskes and Conway, 2014, Servigne, 2015, Angus, 2016 ...). A study, partially sponsored by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, approaches the subject by concluding that our civilization is bound to collapse if nature's rates of depletion are not reduced and resources are not distributed more evenly (Motesharrei and al., 2014). Of all the publications, it is worth mentioning the work of Jared Diamond, published in English in the year 2004, and found ample consensus in the public opinion for being one of the first at the turn of the century to present the thesis of the civilizational collapse due especially to environmental issue. Indeed, after a comparative study of extinct past civilizations, Diamond concludes that there are five causes that can lead to the end of a civilization - namely: environmental damage, climate change, hostile neighbors, decline the support of friendly neighbors and the way in which society responds to its environmental problems (2007, 13). However, while ancient societies were delimited by territory and space of influence, today "they are so integrated that we run the risk of facing a worldwide collapse" (Idem, 455). Two choices will be crucial: the courage to practice long-term reasoning and the willingness to reconsider old values (Idem, 457).

¹¹ « The marginal return on investment in complexity is at present the best explanation of collapse » (1988, p. 203).

¹² [1] Cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_environmental_films there is a list of movies that deals with the environmental situation and the humanity future.



The different and often complementary contributions of the colapsologists led some authors, albeit with different approaches, to talk about the Great Transition¹³ (Raskin et al., 2002; Hopkins, 2008, Bonaiuti, 2014, Karlberg, 2014), understood as "transition to another model of society" (Bonaiuti, 2014, 24) or the entrance of history into "Planetary Phase of Civilization" characterized by "a profound shift in the condition of society and the dynamics driving change"¹⁴. There begins to be an ever-greater recognition in the scientific world of the awareness that we find ourselves not only in the "Great Transformation," described admirably by Polanyi, but in a Great Transition: the first, occurred within the same society and civilization; the second, from one civilization to another. His encounter with the analogous conclusions of some great millenarian traditions deserves to be remembered here.

The present historic moment in the light of ancient knowledges

Any approximation between science and traditional knowledge implies a certain availability to integrate the positive and analytic criteria of the first with the spiritual and intuitive view of the second, which does not make distinction between sacred and empirical. The great question raised by Pascal in the beginning of Modernity¹⁵, a triumphant rationalist context, comes back to the fore in a more disenchanted atmosphere: the tension between *raison* and *coeur* repropose itself, this time, between the principles of Western rationality, in one hand, and those of the heart, of the non-Western¹⁶ cultures, on the other. In fact, the crisis or the collapse, more or less perceived, of the Western civilization, presents itself as the proper moment to acknowledge the limits of reason¹⁷ and highlights the importance of the heart logic and other world views (Mignolo, 2005). It is inside of this resumed dialogue (Grof, 1984, pp. 1-32) that the contribution of great traditions assumes bigger importance.

The study of ancient science is always propelling more interest among contemporary researchers. The extraordinary capability of the ancient people of calculating the time having as reference the astronomy gave the starting point, starting from the 1970s, to a research field called Archaeoastronomy, that is the study of the practice and the use of astronomy in ancient cultures (Teresi, 2002, p. 91). Among others, three millenary traditions are particularly interested and competent in the calculus of long, very long duration: The Mayas, the Hindus and the culture of the Andean People in Latin America.

¹³Cf. <http://greattransition.org/>

¹⁴ <http://greattransition.org/about/what-is-the-great-transition>

¹⁵ « *Nous connaissons la vérité non seulement par la raison mais encore par le coeur, c'est de cette dernière sorte que nous connaissons les premiers principes et c'est en vain que le raisonnement, qui n'y a point de part, essaie de les combattre* » (Blaise Pascal, §110: <https://www.ub.uni-freiburg.de/fileadmin/ub/referate/04/pascal/pensees.pdf>)

¹⁶Cf. Guerrero Arias, 2010.

¹⁷About the "epistemological fallacies" of the scientific knowledge see Bhaskar (2008, p. 26), also Latour (1987) and Stenger (1997).



In the great ancient cultures, the relationship with the time constitutes a fundamental element in the social and religious life. The Maya civilization excelled in the chronologic representation by the high astronomical and mathematical knowledge reached, that found in the Maya calendar its maximum expression, considered a jewel of Maya crown (Aveni, 2009, p. 65). In the years before 2012, the Maya Calendar has fomented a big interest because of a recently deciphered text (in 1996), that marked a correspondent data of the end of the world. The North American society got itself particularly sensitive and vulnerable to this information, at the point of some scientists (archeologists, astronomers) get in the field to bring some light on the subject.

The fast diffusion of the belief had origin in the so-called Maya Long Count calendar, one of three calendars used by the Central American civilization. According to one of the possible translations of the text found in the Monument 6 of El Tortuguero, an ancient Maya city, the date of December 21 (or December 23, according to calculation moment) of 2012 would correspond to the 13° B'AKTUN¹⁸, a time were the Maya Long Count calendar will be reset to restart a new cycle of 5.125 years. Many scientist including Restall and Solari, considered the apocalyptic view inappropriate, due more to the Christian-Western cultural heritage of the Milenarismo idea, than to the original signification of the Maya culture (2011, p. 49). Indeed, the prophecy described in the El Turguero were lately resized by the successive archeological documents found, showing the predictive behavior of the sculpted phrases and the importance that the Mayas attributed to a cycle conclusion. The scientist's hypothesis was corroborated by the words of a shaman that, interpellated about the sense of the data of December 21 of 2012 taken from the Maya Long Count calendar answered: "Only the cycle will end. Time will continue, and we will learn to live in peace and harmony, for we are all a part of a plan to help the gods complete the creation and perfection of the world" (2009, p. 165). Contrary to the expectations about the end of the world the Maya people interpreted and interprets this data as the start of a new cycle; in the same sense that the anthropologist John Hoops commented the millennial chronogram of the Maya Calendar: "It's a time when there is an opportunity for spiritual rebirth and a transformation of consciousness, which has to do with the identification of metaphysical realities, which will help manifest a global culture of Peace" (Pappas, 2012).

The Hindu culture, one of the oldest in the word, is known for being the only religion to have a schedule of the universe with time scales that correspond to the modern cosmologic science, and to believe "the idea that the Cosmos itself undergoes an immense, indeed an infinite, number of deaths and rebirths" (Sagan, 2001, p. 259). The Vedas, that was the biggest inspiring source of the Hinduism, and, later, the Rigveda, the sacred book, had a strong impact in the middle eastern culture (Das, 1958) to the point that John Bowle affirms, categorically, that Plato would have been influenced by the Hindu vision (1962, p. 91). From the point of view of the Vedic spirituality, the time perception is due to our dualism state, but through time despairing in the measure that we reach a state of unity.

¹⁸ 1.872.000 days correspondents to 5.125,3661 years, computable from the "zero date" of the Maya Calendar: August 13 of 3114 B.C. (Callaway, 2011).



The time is cyclical and goes repeating to the infinite the creation process, of which Brahama is responsible, while Vishnu take care of the life preservation and Shiva have the destruction power. The cosmic cycle are divided in Kalpas each one corresponding to a day and a night of Brahma, computing 4,32 billions of years. All the Kalpas are composed by 14 Manvantaras, a space of time between two deluges, that correspond singularly and in an approximated way, to 71 maha yugas, the minor cycle whose unity is calculated in 4.320.000 years, and subsequently subdivided in four ages. The Hindu cosmology indicates, in the end of each age, a process of dissolution of the world called pralaya, to which would follow the new age (Klostermaier, 2007, pp. 495-496). According to the cosmologic calculus of Vedas, we would be living the seventh Manvantaras, of 14, and the fourth maha yuga, called Kali Yuga. The 5.100 years of Kali Yuga correspond to the 2000 a.C and should reach to the cycle conclusion in 2025.

The Puranas holy texts, “describe the present age as close to universal chaos and final destruction” (Idem, p. 495), in broad pralaya.¹⁹

Pralaya, the end of a cycle of aeons, is the temporary disintegration of a universal form of existence and of all the individual forms which move in its rounds, but that is only a momentary pause, a silent interval followed by an outburst of new creation, reintegration and reconstruction in which they reappear and recover the impetus of their progression (Sri Aurobindo, 1997, p. 421).

In the Andean Cosmovision does not exist a supreme creator that gives origin to the Cosmos, nor the idea that the world is determined by mechanic principles. The Cosmos hit- or – miss is responsible by its own creation and continues to solve “intelligently” the problems that surges. The main motivation of the human being life is to tune with the Cosmos Force, feeling part of the Whole, and collaborate with the evolutionary process of the world (Gordon, 2011), not as knowledgeable, motivate by the analytic reasoning, but as “cosmoledgeable” (Gonzales y Illescas, 2002, p. 27), capable of embrace the Total Reality. The Andean cosmogony manifest itself through progressive cycles with breaks by a transition state called Pachakuti, a word *quechua* and *aymara* whose term *Pacha* means world, time and space or state of being; while *kuti* means change, turning or something that comes back to itself (Steele and Allen, 2004, p. 226). Pachakuti was also an Inca hero that reorganized and reestablished a prosperity epoch to the Inca people, and most likely, the founder of Machu Picchu (Gamboa y Ocampo, 2007). Since the cosmic transformation periods succeed each five hundred years, the ninth Pachakuti starts of in the Conquest “*que inicia la ruptura del orden cósmico [...], allí se inaugura un período de caos y destrucción, a partir de la muerte de Atahualpa em Cajamarca*” (Guerrero Arias, 2010, p.

¹⁹The Historical Dictionary of Hinduism gives the following definition of Pralaya: “Dissolution. The end of a cosmic cycle or century of **Brahma**. At the end of a cycle, the forces of chaos and entropy overcome the forces of order, or **dharma**, and the universe dissolves, returning to a potential state. There follows the great sleep, or mahapralaya, after which a new **creation** will emerge and a new century of Brahama, lasting for trillions of years, will begin. The karmic states of the beings in the universe at a time of the pralaya will determine their character in the new cycle» (Long, 2011, p. 231[sic]).



230). According to the quechua and aymara traditions we are in the tenth Pachakuti which the indigenous nations of Abya Yala²⁰ are rescuing the mystic Andean patrimony and proposing its alternative vision to the traditional system of market economy (Huanacuni Mamani, 2015). The passage from the chaos to a new order, with the Pachakuti myth indicates, does not match totally with the old myth of eternal return well explained by Mircea Eliade (1993), but develop in a spiral way, advancing progressively and creatively, introducing complete unprecedented elements.

However, how was possible to keep the original set of Andean Cosmo vision after the westernization of the Latin America (Guerrero Arias, 2010), through the colonization process? The small people of Q'eros, because they live at 4.400 meters in the highest mountains in the southeast of Peru, stayed preserved of the European contamination and become legit depositary of the mystic of the Andean traditions. The interpretation of the millenary heritage in the current international context took the Andean spiritual guides to make manifest a prophecy that preannounced the "return of the Inca", not in the sense of restoration of the old empire, but as "a social transition to a new era of wealth and abundance the like of which has never before been experienced"²¹.

A specific phase known with the name of Taripay Pacha, literally "The Age of Meeting Ourselves Again"²² to be held in four moments: the first will be characterized by three years of cosmic change (Pachakuti); followed by seven years of growth of the practice Ayni which means "Sacred reciprocity. If you give you will receive and if you receive you must give back."; the third moment will hold a twelve years period of maturing aiming to create the indispensables conditions to the introduction to the new era; the last one will be a prosperity time and evolution of the consciousness. According with two great masters of the Q'ero population, Don Manuel Quispe e Don Jesús Qana the first Pachakuti moment would had begun in 1 August 1990; the second in 1 August 1993; third in the 2000 year and the last, the new era, from 1 de August of 2012.

Willaru Huarta, a shaman of the tribe Q'ero, comment the following text of the current epoch:

Native Quechan Incan prophecies predicted the white man's coming would bring 500 years of materialism and imbalance. But now they say that era is

²⁰ « **Abya Yala** » means « Continent of Life » in the language of the Kuna peoples of Panama and Colombia. The Ayamara leader Takir Mamani suggested the selection of this name (which in the Kuna use to denominate the American continents in their entirety), and proposed that all Indigenous peoples in the Americas utilize it in their documents and oral declarations. 'Placing foreign names on our cities, towns and continents, he argued, is equal to subjecting our identity to the will of our invaders and to that of their heirs.' The proposal of Takir Mamani has found a favorable reception in various sectors ». (<http://abyayala.nativeweb.org/about.html>).

²¹<http://www.inca-world.com/en/prophecy-inkas.html>.

²² The « The Inca glossary » presents also others complementary translations as: "A Quechua saying that means time to find yourself. This time is now.", ou "Alternately translated as the age of re-encounter, encounter of the universe, or encounter of oneself; refers to a prophesized golden age of human experience in which we encounter ourselves once more as being one with the universe..." (<http://www.incaglossary.org/t.html>).



coming to an end and the Age of Aquarius will signal the return of light to the planet and the dawn of a golden era. We live in a time of the fulfillment of prophecy. Humanity should ...return to the inner spirit, which we have abandoned while looking elsewhere for happiness (Field, 2011, p. 11 [sic]).

As it's possible to verify, through the fast excursus about the time vision of the three culture millennia presented, temporal dimension is never dissociated of the space dimension; one and other are the two faces of the same coin, as shown by Einstein in its general relativity theory. Additionally, the universe, the macro world is always interpreted as a hologram of the micro: know the universe is to know yourself, and the own personal evolution a lecture key of the cosmos. That is why the scientists were at the same time priests, because were mediators between the human history and the universe movement. The conclusions of three big civilizations about the unicity and originality of the current epoch, although with some differences, point to a phase of big transition and big change, according to the current astrological studies that are confirming the back of Saturn (Hollis, 1994; Svoboda, 1997) or the Aquarius epoch (Amao, 2012, p. xv). This unprecedented coincidence between the scientific reflections related to the civilization collapse and the detection of a Big Transition, and the ancestral knowledge according to which we would be in a conclusion of a big circle of history and in the beginning of another, constitute an important fact in the modern history that, if admitted, gives room to an ulterior question: Where is the humanity going to?

Groping in the future

When the theme of the future enters speeches and projects, it is generally technological progress in question, the appearance of the fourth industrial revolution and its consequences in people's lives²³.

Rarely the attention is directed to the transformation of the human by itself, in the advance of the way to be of the humankind. In the modernity spirit, the human spirit investment was mainly directed to the interests and objectives of the *homo faber*, after, *homo oeconomicus*, believing that the improvement of the *technê* would have modify the being of the individual. Lewis Mumford, an excellent investigator of the beginning of the industrial adventure, express himself in this way:

The modern men believe in the mechanic conception of the world, not as a usual instrument of order - which it is – but as a final revelation of the truth. All that cannot be put in this idolum is not real. Objective uniformity: subjective chaos.

The mistake of looking at its own identity out of itself, in the way of the mythical Narcissus, one more time, in the twilight of Modernity, could be fatal to the subjective and collective experience of humanity. In this sense, the insurgent peoples, rooted in its own

²³Cf. <https://www.weforum.org/focus/shaping-the-fourth-industrial-revolution> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbXJMAFRM7I>.



original millenary culture, perhaps are paradoxically advanced by facing the changes in the current epoch.

In spite of the powerful dominant ideology that accompanied the industrial revolution and its developments, it did not lack men endowed with extraordinary lucidity who knew how to put the problem of the limits of human knowledge and the need for an evolution of consciousness; and to point out the next stage of humanity. Among them, four big thinkers of the XX century will be objects of attention: Henri Bergson and Alfred North Whitehead, authors that go against of the *Zeitgeist*, on one side; and on the other side, Teilhard de Chardin et Sri Aurobindo authentic visionaries of the future world.

The evolution theory of Darwin certainly shaped a great moment of human history, to the point that no scientific discovery equals in impact and in the way of thinking and judging during the Victorian epoch and in those that succeeded it (Hofstadter, 1955, p. 7). However, the time spirit silenced some scientific contributions that target a more complete view of the evolutionary process. Alfred Russel Wallace, well-known coauthor with Darwin of the evolution theory by Royal Society, rushed in the forgetfulness because of his ideas: one of those were that "the *raison d'être* of the Universe was the development of the human spirit" (Flannery, 2010, p. 36). The contribution of Henri Bergson who was born in the same year of the publication of *The origin of the species*, in 1859, can be considered the highest point of the attempt to integrate, in the Darwinian conception, sacrificed aspects by the fundamentally empiric and materialist epistemology of the epoch.

The main objective of the masterpiece of Bergson "*L'Évolution Créatrice*", which gave him the literature Nobel prize, in 1927, is to show, from Darwin and Wallace conclusion, that if life is evolution, so it has to explain not only men's formation, but also the knowledge and the intelligence that is designated to think the matter (2007, p. V). In this sense, our rationality, and the modern science as its product, are extremely limited because it proceeds as a cinematographic method, perceiving the series of angles that succeeds, but not its movements; the fragmentation of episodes, but not its dynamism, its *élan vital*. Always, according to Bergson, the mechanic explanations, despite its success, reveal only a small part of the real (p. 353). Contrarily to the Kantian affirmation, in which human intelligence is enough, it would need a intuition « *supra-intellectuelle* » (p.359). "*Pour penser le mouvement il faut un effort sans cesse renouvelé de l'esprit*" (Idem, p. 328). And the spirit, to Bergson, manifest itself by a movement of search of the meaning of life, in the sense of existence, of the human activity and the events, overpassing the mechanic and the spiritual inertia that it holds. It is the intuition that walks in the same direction of life and that introduces us in the immediate consciousness, soon, and after, in the expanded consciousness that puts us in contact with the unconscious, the interior world unknown.

To talk about the spirit is to talk about the consciousness, synonym of the freedom and choice, while the matter obey the laws of necessity.



Bref, les choses se passent comme si une immense courant de conscience [...] avait traversé la matière pour l'entraîner à l'organisation et pour faire d'elle, quoiqu'elle soit la nécessité même, un instrument de liberté. Mais la conscience a failli être prise au piège. La matière s'enroule autour d'elle, la plie à son propre automatisme, l'endort dans sa propre incoscience» (Bergson, 2006, pp. 19-20).

Evolutionary theory, in order to be such that, should take into account the *modus vivendi* of the structure of consciousness and matter, and the way in which the two have progressed through history by interacting with each other. The insertion in the process of evolution and the centrality of consciousness in this movement are the conditions to go beyond the human, thus continuing the route of the evolutionary process.

Si nos analyses sont exactes, c'est la conscience, ou mieux la supraconscience, qui est à l'origine de la vie. Conscience ou supraconscience est la fusée dont les débris éteints retombent en matière; conscience encore est ce qui subsiste de la fusée même, traversant les débris et les illuminant en organisme. Mais cette conscience, qui est une exigence de création, ne se manifeste à elle-même que là où la création est possible. Elle s'endort quand la vie est condamné à l'automatisme; elle se réveille dès que renaît la possibilité d'un choix » (Bergson, 2007, pp 261-262 [sic]).

According to Bergson, the whole history of life in the cosmos is a struggle between the effort of consciousness to elevate matter, and the overwhelming impulse of matter, which seeks to imprison, more or less completely, consciousness. Releasing consciousness, therefore, means dynamizing the movement of evolution, overcoming the natural tendency of matter to inertia and the status quo. According to the author of "*L'Évolution Créatrice*", where the evolution process may have found a dead-end street, starts the new challenge of humanity to acknowledge its strength and its unity inside an impulse capable of "*culbuter toutes les résistances et de franchir bien des obstacle, même peut-être la mort*" (Idem, p. 271). In essence, the path of human evolution, far from being finished, can continue its unfolding insofar as contemporary man moves from the primacy of matter to the primacy of consciousness.

Bergson's ideas had a strong impact in many scientists and philosophers, beyond those Whitehead, Teilhard de Chardin and Sri Aurobindo.

Whitehead, lately recognized as the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century (Stengers, 2011, p.9), was a great mathematician who, after his brother's death in World War I, went from a mechanical interpretation of the universe to an interest in Philosophy. Continuing Bergson's reflection, he also questions the foundations of modern science:

The progress of science has now reached a turning point. The stable foundations of physics have broken up [...]. The old foundations of scientific thought are becoming unintelligible. Time, space, matter, material, ether, electricity, mechanism, organism, configuration, structure, pattern, function, all require reinterpretation. What is the sense of talking about a mechanical



explanation when you do not know what you mean by mechanics? The truth is that science started its modern career by mechanics? (1948, pp. 17-18).

Regarding the theory of evolution, he asserts that the language of materialistic philosophy is incapable of describing the "creative" aspect of evolution as part of the assumption that all activities of organisms are external and underestimate complexity. Whitehead's contribution can be summarized briefly into two fundamental assertions: the first is concerned with demonstrating the creative movement of time by claiming that fact is first and foremost a process (Idem, 71), an act in continuous becoming that escapes the question of reason. "An actual entity is a process, and is not describable in terms of the morphology of a 'stuff.'" (Whitehead, 1978, p. 41), against the view of the "gross fact" or simply given (Idem, p. 42). The second seeks to synthesize the opposites and dualities that produce the creative moment: "In formal logic, a contradiction is the signal of a defeat: but in the evolution of real knowledge it marks the first step in progress towards a victory" (Whitehead, 1948, p.186).

Therefore, creativity is a multiple, unpredictable and synchronous process that escapes conventional scientific categories and appeals directly to intuition (Whitehead, 1978: 21), the only one that is able to reconcile opposites, to combine together the staticity and the flow at the same time (Idem, p.347). According to Whitehead, it is not possible to understand evolution without changing the laws that so far explain evolutionism (Whitehead, 1948, 45); nor can we think that the evolutionary threshold reached by modern man is the 'final' point of evolution (Ford 1984: 269). The elevation of consciousness, understood as the ability to synthesize what is complex (Whitehead, 1961, 269), will allow "the postulation of a more complex mental phase" (Idem, p. 172) that goes beyond the mental as is known. "Thus, the future of the Universe though conditioned by the immanence of its past, awaits for its complete determination the spontaneity of the novel individual occasions in their season they come into being" (Idem, 255). In Whitehead's thought, once again, the call to consciousness-intuition becomes indispensable and urgent for the future of the universe, surpassing the empirical-positivist view.

At the same time, the analysis of the boundaries of the dominant materialist ideology was also shared by Carl Gustav Jung, who, in 1931, in a lecture entitled "The Spiritual Problem of Modern Man", returned the subject by showing the consequences of this view in the psyche and confirming the importance of the role of spirituality, understood as the search for one's soul, a theme that, at that time, would be taken up and expanded by Teilhard de Chardin and Sri Aurobindo, albeit with different language and experience.

Teilhard de Chardin, priest and Jesuit, was before all a man of science, researcher in the geology and paleontology fields. This double identity of scientist and religious at the same time caused him many problems with the Church: one of his masterpieces, "*Le phénomène Humain*" was interpreted as a threat to the classic theology and for that, the Vatican refused the imprimatur to the publication. He himself would justify his religious and scientific pioneering with the following words: "*Je n'ai pas découvert laborieusement le Tout. Mais c'est lui, qui, par une sorte de « conscience cosmique » s'est présenté, imposé à moi »*. (1965, 61).



The cosmological view of Teilhard de Chardin puts man as the “key to the Universe”, trying to distance himself from the modern anthropocentrism: *“L’Homme, non pas centre statique du Monde – comme il s’est cru longtemps; mais axe et flèche de l’Évolution – c’est qui est bien plus beau”* (1955, p. 30). The importance of man derives from the fact that he is the highest point of the realization of the Universe and that consciousness, *“la substance et le sang de la Vie en évolution”* (Idem, p. 197), in him becomes completely recognizable. According to Teilhard de Chardin, the force of consciousness has propagated and continues to propagate in the Universe in successive stages: starting from cosmogenesis to continuing in geogenesis, to psychogenesis. The introduction of thought and reflection would have inaugurated a new phase, that of Noogenesis²⁴, the beginning and continuation of the development of the Spirit (Idem, 200): *« Perfection spirituelle (ou ‘centrité’ consciente) et synthèse matérielle (ou complexité) ne sont que les deux faces ou parties liées d’un même phénomène »* (Idem, p. 57). *“Nous passons, en ce moment même, par un changement d’Age”* (Idem, p. 237 [sic]), we are in a transition moment (Idem, p. 311), forwarded in the total realization path of Awareness, the Omega point.

How to face this phase of the history of humanity? Teilhard de Chardin points out three lines of action: first, the organization of research for a science at the service of man, in his dual material and spiritual dimension; second, the discovery of the human object as an element of the universe and key to all science of nature; and finally, the conjunction between science and religion (Idem, pp. 310-317). Faith in man as the manifestation of the cosmos fuels the march to the next stage of evolution.

To place faith in Man [...] we understand here the more or less active and passionate conviction that pure humanity, in its organic and organized totality, has before its eyes a Tomorrow. A Tomorrow formed not only of succeeding years, but of superior stages to be reached by a way of conquest. Not only survival, we understand well, but a certain sense, beyond life or super-life (Monestier 1967, 30).

To Teilhard de Chardin, the next phase of evolution of the planet will be the concentration of knowledge about humanity itself, getting thereby to discovery its collective mind, by its own nature connected to the cosmic awareness experience (Sethna, 1981, p. 21).

The view of the Jesuit and scientist is naturally rooted in Western culture and Catholic-Christian theology, from which he elaborates his own original interpretation of the evolution of the cosmos. Although element of rupture of the religious and scientific mentality of the time, the language used mirrors a specific *weltanschauung* of the world: the western and Christian. In this context, the contribution of Sri Aurobindo, considered “the Voice Incarnate of India's

²⁴ In or with reference to the writings of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: the development of the stage or sphere of evolutionary development dominated by consciousness, the mind, and interpersonal relationships, see: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/noogenesis>



Soul”²⁵ by the greatest Indian poet and writer Rabindranath Tagore is complementary to the Teilhard de Chardin’s thought. From the millennial Hindu wisdom, reaches the unity of conclusions in the diversity of cultures and peoples. In fact, Sri Aurobindo was not just a product of India. From an early age he studied in England, Cambridge. At the age of 21, he returned to India and, by his influence and writings, prepared the ground for Gandhi's action in the process of liberation from English domination.

The theme of evolution runs through all of his 37 books published, but is thoroughly treated in the seminal work of Sri Aurobindo "The Life Divine" where there are 12 chapters dedicated to the subject.

His interpretation questions the theory of evolution as insufficiently grounded (Sri Aurobindo, 2005: 858), while it is limited to the physical and biological aspects of Nature: we know that there is evolution but we do not know what it is (Sri Aurobindo, 1949, pp. 138). It is only possible to understand the phenomenon from a supramaterial, spiritual perspective. The *Agni*, Consciousness-Force, is the key to interpretation with its two main movements of involution and evolution (Satprem, 246): *Himself the play, Himself the player, Himself the playground* (Sri Aurobindo, 2005, p. 111). The involution would be the realization of the presence of the power of the Spirit in the Unknown Matter of its potentiality and its dormant consciousness. The word evolution, in its original sense in Latin, indicates a movement that rolls from the inside out. Now, without an a priori content, the evolutionary process becomes impossible: “Nothing can evolve out of Matter which is not therein already contained” (Idem, p. 95).

Evolution is the dynamic and concrete action of Consciousness-Force that gradually produces the manifestation of the soul in material existence: first the evolution/organization of Matter; then the evolution of Life in Matter; and finally, the evolution of Mind in Living Matter. Man is the highest point of this creation, ignorant because unconscious of the spiritual energy that inhabits him (Idem, 860); and, at the same time, "The human condition is a stage of transition" (Sri Aurobindo, 1999: 829). The next step will be a further progression of the human race, beyond itself, when it will have reached "a certain level or a certain point of stress of the evolutionary impetus" (Idem, 875). In this passage, the mean factor would be the transformation in a higher state of consciousness, from the mental to the supramental consciousness. To Sri Aurobindo, humanity has reached a crossroads where:

“A spiritual evolution, an evolution of consciousness in Matter in a constant developing self-formation till the form can reveal the indwelling spirit, is then the keynote, the central significant motive of the terrestrial existence » (2005, p. 856).

Mira Alfassa, companion and faithful interpreter of the message of Sri Aurobindo after his death, describes in other incisive words the grandeur of the moment: “[...] une heure

²⁵ http://www.sriurobindoinstitute.org/saioc/Sri_Aurobindo/tributes/namashkar_from_rabindranath_tagore



exceptionnelle [...], une époque unique [...], on a cet immense bonheur, ce privilège inestimable d'assister à la naissance d'un monde nouveau [...]" (La Mère, 2009, p. 178).

However, what is the role of humanity in this cosmic conjuncture, in which man have the privilege of being able to walk towards the infinite?

It is only by rising toward a higher consciousness beyond the mental line [...] that [man] can emerge from his inability and his ignorance. His full liberation and enlightenment will come when he crosses the line into the light of a new super conscient existence [...]. It would mean a new creation on earth, a bringing in of the ultimate powers which would reverse the conditions here [...]. (Sri Aurobindo, 2012, p. 260).

The questions raised by Bergson, in a clear and systematic form²⁶, enriched by Whitehead's analyses and Teilhard de Chardin vision, has found in Sri Aurobindo the highest and lucid expression of the new stage that awaits humanity.

Conclusion

In the definition of the Working Group on Anthropocene, the Anthropocene, considered "a potential geological epoch", along with previous epochs, and the end of the Holocene²⁷, is a turning point that puts all humanity in a new situation, previously unknown. As Latour affirms "No postmodern philosopher, no reflexive anthropologist, no liberal theologian, no political thinker would have dared to weigh the influence of humans on the same historical scale as rivers, floods, erosion, and biochemistry", putting a conclusion to the omnipresent anthropocentrism and the past forms to interpret the nature (2013, p.77). Suddenly we are obligated to think in geopolitical terms (earth politics) and not only in scientific knowledge; in monogenism terms (the conviction of the oneness of this planet) more than monotheism (Sloterdijk, 2007 p. 34). Gaia, changed from only a decorum or supply of natural resources, becomes the main actor, demanding the emergence of a new *ánthropo* and a new political subject. But, the novelty, not just scientific, raised by the Work Group on Anthropocene is suffrage also by an ample literature, that identifies, in the crises of the contemporary world, the conclusion of a historic phase and the time of a Big Transition turned to change from one model of civilization to another.

Related to the scientific data, we searched an association with the chronological investigation of some millenary traditions, that through the mathematical calculus and the astronomical studies even predicted big transformations around the 21th century. Perhaps the profound difference between the conclusions of science and those of ancient cultures is the different highlight placed on the same fact: scientists in the comparative study of extinct civilizations and in the analysis of the destructive action of man; the great traditions

²⁶Was defined « *Le choc Bergson* ».

²⁷<https://quaternary.stratigraphy.org/workinggroups/anthropocene/>.



announcing the beginning of a new stage of history, corresponding to the opportunity of a personal and collective spiritual evolution. However, the coincidence of the two interpretations is a singular fact, a prelude to dialogue and mutual respect.

On the other side, the boundaries of knowledge driven by reason and the necessity of an ulterior expansion of the consciousness were well exposed by Bergson and Whitehead. However, what could the thinking of such excellent authors go against the dominant ideology, wholly impregnated with the social evolutionism espoused by Spencer, whose success in the Victorian era was unmeasured²⁸ ? The facts were in charge to uncover what the conventional culture had hidden. It is the message of the anthropocene, albeit cryptic or not entirely clear, whereas, as we have seen before, the subject is debated in a short space of time to solve conjunctural problems. But the anthropocene has not only this meaning. As it is known, the term, of Greek origin, is formed by two words, *ánthropos* (human being) and *kainós* (new). The same word anthropocene, used to designate the post-Holocene era, can be interpreted to mean "new human being" (*kainós ánthropos*)²⁹. In here is the sense of Teilhard de Chardin and Sri Aurobindo contributions, particularly incisive and originals. This does not mean denies the development, in all the fields that accompanied the modernity and accelerate vertiginously in the Post-Modernity. As well highlighted by Sri Aurobindo, the man has advanced in the knowledge of the physic world, in the science, in the control of the space around itself, in the particularly utilitarian and superficial of the nature laws. But, "he is what he always was in the early beginnings of civilization": continue fundamentally to manifest the same capabilities, the same qualities, the same flows, the same mistakes and the same frustrations (Sri Aurobindo, 2005, p. 864). The Barbarism³⁰, once defeated, is always there lurking, ready to come back and defeat the masterpiece of the civilization (Delpech, 2005). The men today are not wiser than the visionary and the old thinkers. In the Paul's Valéry words: "*Le monde moderne se façonne à l'image de l'esprit de l'homme*" (1945, p. 165). The cause of the progress in all the areas and a certain regress in the human values, does to the fact that such technological advance did not reach "the spiritual evolution, the consciousness evolution, the progression of the manifestation of the soul in the material existence" (Sri Aurobindo, 2005, p. 868). This progress did not take the human race beyond itself, overcoming the transformation of the mental being.

The notorious Israeli historian Harari, in his book "Homo Deus", notes that "This is all the fault of evolution. For countless generations our biochemical system adapted to increasing our chances of survival and reproduction, not our happiness." (2015, p. 34), toward which human evolution tends. According to Teilhard de Chardin and Sri Aurobindo, the next stage will be, to the first, "*L'Humanité; l'Esprit de la Terre; la Synthèse des individus et des peuples; la Conciliation paradoxale de l'Élément et du Tout, de l'Unité et de la Multitude* » (1955, p. 295) and to the Indian philosopher "A change of consciousness is the major fact of the next

²⁸Between 1860 and 1903 were sold 368.755 books of Spencer (Hofstadter, 1955, p. 34).

²⁹ This expression appears in one of the Plutarch's works, great Greek historian. (Liddel & Scott, 1901).

³⁰ Here the term is used to indicate a pre-civilization stage. On the discussion over "barbarians", "savages" and "civilized" see Levi-Strausse's "Race et Histoire" (1961).



evolutionary transformation, and the consciousness itself, by its own mutation, will impose and effect any necessary mutation of the body” (Saint-Hilaire, 1996), knowing that “[...] the progress of the mind, the growth of the soul, even of the mind and soul of the collectivity, depends on the individual, on his sufficient freedom and Independence ” (Sri Aurobindo, 2005, p. 721).

The sense of the new phase of the Anthropocene thus becomes manifest in its entirety. It is not only a matter of solving the crises that disturb human organization, of avoiding the extinction of species and the collapse of global civilization, of considering present and future generations, all attitudes indispensable for the preservation of life. But the Anthropocene is not just that. The purpose of this text, which is too brief for a theme as relevant as the future of mankind, was to highlight the propositional aspect, the noble perspectives that invoke the becoming of the human being, besides the *technê*, contained in the Anthropocene. Focus your attention on the path of *longue durée*, no doubt, will make easier the responses to the urgencies and the challenges that humanity faces.



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