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THE ESSENTIAL CONNECTION BETWEEN MODERN SCIENCE AND UTOPIAN SOCIALISM

I take as the starting point for this paper a claim that, toward the end of his excellent, recently-published book, *The Nature of Scientific Explanation*, Jude P. Dougherty makes about F. A. Hayek. Dougherty says that Hayek had concluded a connection exists between modern science, or perhaps better, scientism, and socialism. Dougherty states Hayek “believed that the positivism associated with the Vienna Circle led directly to a dangerous socialism.”¹

If that is what Hayek maintained with no qualification, I disagree with him. He has the relationship between modern positivism and modern socialism backwards. If the positivism of the Vienna Circle caused any dangerous socialism, it did so secondarily, as a species of a higher, more dangerous socialism: a utopian socialism generated chiefly by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his progeny.

In my opinion, for much of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with some exceptions, Western institutions of higher learning (chiefly colleges and universities) were, and still are, largely socialist re-education camps mostly “unwittingly” inclined to propagandize unsuspecting students into accepting the metaphysical principles of the Enlightenment masquerading as different theories of knowledge (like positivism and pragmatism) and grandiose historical systems of consciousness (like Rousseauian-

¹ Jude P. Dougherty, *The Nature of Scientific Explanation* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 101.

ism, Kantianism, Hegelianism, Marxism). These theories and schemes falsely proclaim that the whole of truth is contained within (1) science generically understood (the utopian socialist fictional account about human nature and history of human consciousness: the science of man) and (2) science specifically understood: the ability to apply mathematical/physical theories about the physical universe to force nature to submit to desires of the human will.

In short, I maintain that the whole of modern and contemporary science as popularly understood and generally presented to Western college and university students is essentially connected to, essentially depends upon, utopian socialism as a historical/political substitute for metaphysics to justify the false claim that the whole of truth is contained within modern science generically and specifically understood.

In the contemporary age, the popular Western understanding no longer considers truth to be a property of the intellect. In the West today, the popular understanding tends to identify truth with a property of the mathematicized, and socialistically and technologically regulated and restrained, will. In addition, science is no longer chiefly considered to be a habit of the human soul, an intellectual or moral virtue. Instead, violent, technologically-imposed restraint and regulation by centralized bureaucrats, number crunchers, tends to replace science as intellectual or moral virtue.²

To understand how this radical change has slowly occurred over the past several centuries, we need to start by remembering that, when René Descartes first inaugurated modern philosophy “falsely-so-called” (to borrow a phrase from my friend John N. Deely), he did so by famously limiting truth to clear and distinct ideas. Hearing this many students of Western intellectual history mistakenly think that Descartes located truth chiefly in ideas.

He did not. Descartes located truth principally in strength of a free will, like his, powerful enough not to over-extend its judgment beyond the capacity of human reason (human imagination emerging into pure reason). By strength of free will attached to the idea of the one true God arresting the human imagination’s inclination to wander, by forcing unrestrained

² For a detailed defense of this claim, see Peter A. Redpath, *A Not-So-Elementary Christian Metaphysics: Written in the Hope of Ending the Centuries-old Separation between Philosophy and Science and Wisdom* (Manitou Springs, CO: Socratic Press, Adler-Aquinas Institute Special Series, vol. 1, 2012).

imagination to “attend” to what is in front of its sight, Descartes maintained that, indistinct images of human imagination can gradually become transformed into clear and distinct ideas of pure reason (imagination thereby becoming transformed into pure reason).³

While Descartes starts his *Discourse on the Method* by noting the equitable distribution of reason among human beings, while he considers reason to be present whole and entire within each individual human being, he says that having the ability to judge rightly is not enough to guarantee we will do so. What we think about and the method we use to think about it eventually cause an accidental difference among human beings that enables some of us to make better progress than others in the pursuit of truth and making right judgments.⁴

In Meditation IV of his *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Descartes explains that what eventually causes unequal excellence in use of reason is chiefly a person’s deliberating faculty, which Descartes identifies with the human “will.” He does not think the chief cause of making mistakes lies in will or in reason. It lies in a relationship between them initiated by a failure on his part to restrain his will within the same limits of his reason, or understanding. When he restrains his will within the narrower scope of his reason, he says he understands perfectly, never makes mistakes (somewhat like people accustomed to accept their fate to occupy their proper lower level on Plato’s divided line, or a seeker after truth about which Averroes speaks who has the good sense to remain content not to try to rise above his class of understanding).⁵

Properly speaking, Descartes claims that making a judgment or choice (affirming or denying, pursuing or avoiding) is an act of will and reason, but chiefly an act of free will. He adds that when we freely restrain the will within the limits of personal understanding, we do not feel as if our choice is imposed upon us by an external force.⁶

³ René Descartes, “Meditation Four,” in his *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, 3rd ed., trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Co., 1993). For an extensive critique of Descartes’s teaching about truth and falsity, see Peter A. Redpath, *Cartesian Nightmare: An Introduction to Transcendental Sophistry* (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Editions Rodopi, B. V., 1997).

⁴ René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, in *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, 1–3.

⁵ Descartes, “Meditation Four,” 82–84. See Plato, *Republic*, Bk. 6, 509D–511E. For a summary of Averroes’s different classes of seekers after truth, see Étienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York: Random House, 1955), 218.

⁶ Descartes, “Meditation Four,” 83–84.

He claims that free will is the only human power within him that he cannot conceive to be greater than it is. In contrast to his faculty of understanding (which he finds “small and quite limited”), he finds the idea of his will much greater, even infinite. From the fact that he can form an idea of so perfect a faculty, he maintains he knows that free will belongs to God. He adds that it is chiefly this faculty that enables him to know that he bears “a certain image and likeness of God.”⁷

As an example of the power that the will exercises over making true and false judgments, Descartes notes that, in his prior meditations, when attempting to determine whether anything existed in the world, while the fact *he* was examining this question made evident to him that fact of his own existence was the conclusion *he had to* draw, no external force compelled him to do so. Instead, a strong inclination of his will following upon “the great light” of his understanding caused his assent.

Descartes claims that misuse of his free will constitutes the privation in which all his mistakes reside. Such being the case, right use of his free will must constitute the perfection in which all his right judgments reside.

Descartes says he has no right to complain that God has not given him a greater power of understanding because the natural light of his understanding shows him that he will always act rightly if he suspends his judgment about whatever he does not apprehend clearly and distinctly. He maintains that every clear and distinct apprehension is something necessarily produced by God. Hence, it must be true. As a result, Descartes concludes that, whenever he restrains his will to make judgments about those things his understanding clearly and distinctly apprehends, he can never be mistaken.⁸

According to Descartes, in the true God lie hidden all the treasures of the sciences and wisdom from which all progress in knowledge starts. Hence, as Descartes thinks about other things, so long as he has the strength of will to focus attention on God, the divine light illumines his mind with revelations (clear and distinct ideas that replace his confused ones).⁹ This activity closely resembles what Richard Taylor describes as Averroes’s account of human knowing in which *by will* “a transcendent, external, and ontologically distinct agent intellect” (in Descartes’s case, God’s divine light) that contains “a single collection of intelligibles in act”

⁷ Id., 84.

⁸ Id., 84–88.

⁹ Id., 82.

(in Descartes's case, a system of clear and distinct ideas) comes to exist "in the soul" and becomes "the form for us" by which each individual knows.¹⁰

Whatever be the case of an Averroistic influence upon Descartes, the transition he helped cause of truth from an act of intellect to that of will radically altered subsequent Western intellectual history and higher education. Following Descartes, in an attempt to defend and repair Descartes's false claim that, generically understood, science consists in a logical system of clear and distinct ideas, all the major proponents of modern philosophy and science locate truth in the will, or in emotionally-held convictions, thereby destroying the power of the intellect to be a repository of truth (consequently totally destroying the natures of truth and the intellect), and radically transforming the nature of education.

By transforming Averroes's three classes of seekers after truth from speculative observers of truth into practical seekers of a yet-to-be achieved scientific system that can only be effected through union of the unenlightened individual will with the enlightened General Will, more than anyone else, Jean-Jacques Rousseau became the chief shaping force of this modern intellectual history and revolution in higher education.¹¹

Since, in other works, I have discussed in detail how this relocation of truth from the intellect to the will, or emotions, was precisely effected in thinkers like David Hume, Thomas Hobbes, Rousseau, Georg Hegel, and Immanuel Kant, I will not take time to go into detail about this issue here.¹² Suffice it for me to reinforce the truth about what I have been saying by referring to some startling statements about modern science made by Albert Einstein, Mortimer J. Adler, and Étienne Gilson.

¹⁰ Richard Taylor, "Aquinas and 'the Arabs': Arabic/Islamic Philosophy in Thomas Aquinas's Conception of the Beatific Vision in his *Commentary on the Sentences* IV, 49,2,1," revision of an article initially presented at the annual spring conference sponsored by the *Commissio Leonina* and *Aquinas and 'the Arabs' Project*, "Thomas d'Aquin et ses sources arabes/Aquinas and 'the Arabs'" held at the Bibliothèque du Saulchoir 27–28 March 2009. I thank Richard Taylor for providing me with a revised version of this excellent article.

¹¹ For an extensive analysis of Rousseau as a neo-Averroist and his extensive influence upon the development of utopian socialism, see Peter A. Redpath, *Masquerade of the Dream Walkers: Prophetic Theology from the Cartesians to Hegel* (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Editions Rodopi, B.V., 1998), 68–99. See, also, Peter A. Redpath, "Petrarch's Dream and the Failed Modern Project: A Chapter Gilson Did not Write," Part 1 of 2, in *Contemporary Philosophy* 25:5-6 (2003): 3–9; Part 2 of 2, in *Contemporary Philosophy* 25:5-6 (2003), 52–57; and Redpath, *A Not-So-Elementary Christian Metaphysics*, 9–23.

¹² Redpath, *Masquerade of the Dream Walkers: Prophetic Theology from the Cartesians to Hegel*.

In an article entitled “The Scientist’s Responsibilities,” Einstein observed about contemporary scientists that

the man of science has slipped so much that he accepts slavery inflicted upon him by national states as his inevitable fate. He even degrades himself to such an extent that he helps obediently in the perfection of the means for the general destruction of mankind.¹³

The situation Einstein describes above is analogous to the one that, in the *Gorgias*, Socrates had described to Gorgias, Polus, and Callicles. Once we divorce science from virtue, especially justice and wisdom, the knowledge that had been science becomes reduced to a pandering to tyrants like Archelaus. The knowledge that had been science becomes essentially divorced from pursuit of the human good (human happiness) and becomes essentially violent, humanly destructive routine.

In “The Great Conversation Revisited,” the introductory article for the book *The Great Conversation: A Reader’s Guide to the Great Books of the Western World*, Mortimer J. Adler identified four goods of the mind: “information, knowledge, understanding and wisdom.”¹⁴ Glaringly absent from this list is “science.”

Moreover, a couple of things that their author says about the Great Ideas number 101 (“Wisdom”) and 83 (“Science”) in *The Syntopicon: An Index to the Great Ideas* suggest that the omission was intentional because, like Jacques Maritain, Adler knew that modern and contemporary science had separated themselves from the pursuit of wisdom.¹⁵

Regarding Adler’s knowledge of modern and contemporary science separating themselves from the pursuit of wisdom, the *Syntopicon’s* discussion of the Great Idea “Wisdom” indicates the author is well aware of this occurrence. It reads in part:

¹³ Albert Einstein, “The Scientist’s Responsibilities,” in *What’s the Matter?*, ed. Donald H. Whitfield and James L. Hicks, science consultant, (Chicago: The Great Books Foundation, with support from Harrison Middleton University, 2007), 501.

¹⁴ Mortimer J. Adler, “The Great Conversation Revisited,” in *The Great Conversation: A Reader’s Guide to the Great Books of the Western World*, ed. Robert McHenry (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. 5th printing, 1994), 24.

¹⁵ See Jacques Maritain, “Allocution du Président à la première séance plénière de la deuxième session de la Conférence générale de l’Unesco, 6^e novembre 1947, Son Excellence Jacques Maritain, Chef de la Délégation française,” in *Célébration du centenaire de la naissance de Jacques Maritain, 1882–1973*, no editor listed (New York: UNESCO, 1982), 9–33.

In the tradition of the great books, the moderns usually assert their superiority over the ancients in all the arts and sciences. They seldom claim superiority in wisdom. The phrase “modern science” needs no elucidation, but if anyone were to speak of modern wisdom, he would have to explain his meaning. As “modern” seems to have an immediately acceptable significance when it qualifies “science,” so “ancient” seems to go with “wisdom,” and to suggest that, with the centuries, far from increasing, wisdom may be lost.¹⁶

Clearly, the above paragraph suggests Adler accepted the claim that modern science had become separated from the pursuit of wisdom. And what the author of the Great Idea “Science” says about contemporary science strongly suggests that Adler did not precisely know where to locate contemporary science within the human person. Within that exposition, the attempt to explain just what modern science is belies Adler’s claim that the phrase “modern science” needs no elucidation.

On the one hand, the *Syntopicon*’s exposition of science tends to identify science with the property of a theory to fit the facts. On the other hand, it appears to identify fitting the facts with scientists collectively agreeing that a theory is beautiful. That is, for scientists, theories appear to be forms of scientific expression analogous to forms of artistic expression, both of which are linguistic categories through which, over the centuries, scientists have come to talk about remote parts of reality. If this be so, a scientific theory would appear to be a subjective feeling; and scientific theories would appear to be true because scientists have agreed to talk about them as expressions of scientific beauty.

Even if Adler maintained that contemporary scientific theories are true because they fit the facts, contemporary “scientists” and “philosophers” of science tend to agree that contemporary science is essentially nominalistic, that no forms (principles of intrinsic unity) exist in things, including human beings, other than individual differences of quantity and mathematical, or mathematically relatable, qualities. If that be the case, then, since these same thinkers agree that scientific knowledge is “of the universal,” social contract, the way scientists (systems of feelings, not facultatively-possessed substances) have agreed to talk about things, would

¹⁶ Mortimer J. Adler, “101 Wisdom,” in his *The Syntopicon: An Index to the Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 2 (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 3rd printing, 1992), 873.

determine the universality of scientific statements (precisely what are the universal facts, “the right way of naming things”).

The people (systems of feeling) who finally determine word use in such a universe would not be mathematical physicists. Ultimately, they would be the sophists involved in determining the nature of science understood as a genus, those involved in determining the proper use of words (especially the use of “abstract” words), semanticists who inhabit Social Science, Psychology, Literature, and misnamed “Philosophy” departments at colleges and universities and the politicians to whom they pander.

I make the claim I do in the preceding sentence because these are the main cultural groups that control the meaning of words used in public discourse, who determine “politically” and “scientifically” correct speech. These are the groups who determine how to express in native language precisely what is a fact and to whom, along with the political minds they conceive, contemporary “scientists” chiefly have to pander for their jobs and foundation grants.

The truth of the claim in the last sentence of the paragraph immediately above is evinced in Einstein’s article entitled “The Scientist’s Responsibilities,” in which Einstein observed about contemporary scientists slipping into a form of slavery.¹⁷ What Einstein said strongly suggests that the scientific aesthetic about which the *Syntopicon* speaks is little more than sophistry, political correctness, that eventually places scientists falsely-so-called in the position of pandering to despots.

Just why contemporary mathematical physics would necessarily tend to slip into this sort of slavery is easy to understand. Once we replace intellectual and moral virtue as the chief, proximate, intrinsic principles of science within a human being with socialistically-enlightened and mathematically-regulated-and-restrained efficiency of will, what had been real science becomes essentially separated from natural pursuit of the human good, human happiness, and becomes essentially subordinated to the arbitrary social agreements of utopian socialists: to sincere, enlightened, feelings that some self-appointed intellectual elite (like university presidents and politicians) agree they share. In such a situation, by nature, human beings no longer incline to pursue science. Science must be imposed upon us against our natural inclination, by collective political fiat, collectively-determined, mathematically-regulated technologies of violence.

¹⁷ Albert Einstein, “The Scientist’s Responsibilities,” 501.

Beyond what Socrates says in the *Gorgias*, the situation Einstein described chillingly matches what Gilson had to say about science shortly after World War II in an article entitled “The Terrors of the Year 2000.” In that work, Gilson maintained that, with the bombing of Hiroshima, “The great secret that science has just wrested from matter is the secret of its destruction. To know today is synonymous with destroy.”¹⁸ He prophesied that, in the future, “science, formerly our hope and joy, would be the source of greatest terror.”¹⁹

Gilson considered this bombing to be a dramatic sign revealing the essentially Nietzschean nature of contemporary science. He considered Nietzsche’s declaration of God’s death a declaration that signaled a metaphysical revolution happening in the West more destructive than the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. From time immemorial, all Western cultural and intellectual institutions, including science, had presupposed the existence of gods or a God. No longer. From now on Nietzsche was signaling, “We shall have to change completely our every thought, word, and deed. The entire human order totters on its base.”²⁰ If the entirety of Western cultural history had rested upon the conviction of the existence of God, or gods, “the totality of the future must needs depend upon the contrary certitude, that God does not exist.”²¹

The implication is clear, “Everything that was true from the beginning of the human race will suddenly become false.”²² To build the brave, new scientific world order, the West will first have to destroy every vestige of the old one. “Before stating what will be true, we will have to say that everything by which man has thus far lived, everything by which he still lives, is deception and trickery.”²³

Modern man’s project has thus become universal surrealism, total release of human reason, of creative free spirit, from all metaphysical, moral, and aesthetic controls, including those enlightened aesthetic feelings that might have guided Einstein: the poetic spirit, the spirit of the artist gone totally mad with the intoxicating, surrealistic power of destruction. Once we destroy everything, nothing can stop us. Since the beginning of recorded time, God has gotten in the way of the artistic human spirit, has

¹⁸ Étienne Gilson, *The Terrors of the Year 2000* (Toronto: St. Michael’s College, 1949), 7–9.

¹⁹ *Id.*, 7.

²⁰ *Id.*, 14–16.

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Id.*, 16–17.

²³ *Id.*, 17–18.

been the “eternal obstructor” to us being total self-creators. Now the tables are turned. With the advent of the postmodernity falsely-so-called announced by Nietzsche, we have entered “the decisive moment of a cosmic drama.”²⁴ Protagoras and Musaios have become Dionysus.

“Everything is possible,” Gilson tells us, “provided only that this creative spark which surrealism seeks to disclose deep in our being be preceded by a devastating flame.” Since “the massacre of values is necessary to create values that are really new,” André Breton’s description of “the most simple surrealist act” becomes perfectly intelligible and throws dramatic light upon the increasingly cavalier and mass destruction of innocent life we witness in our own day: “The most simple surrealist act consists in this: to go down into the streets, pistol in hand, and shoot at random for all you are worth, into the crowd.”²⁵

Part of that destruction essentially involves radical alteration of the subjects, methods, and chief aims of study of contemporary Western colleges and universities. In the US and most of Europe that change started in earnest during the early part of the twentieth century. During that time the chief aim of learning changed from learning for the sake of learning (to improve the quality of our knowing and choosing faculties) to learning for the sake of success as envisioned by utopian socialists.

In the process, especially during the 1960s, traditional colleges and universities started to dismantle, or radically alter, the nature of classically-rooted Theology, Philosophy, and History departments and studies in the liberal arts in general and to replace these with Humanities and Social Science divisions. These would now teach students about the Enlightenment vision of the “science of man” as conceived by illuminaries like Rousseau, Hume, Comte, Freud, Kant, Hegel, and Marx. Presently, these disciplines are becoming increasingly indistinguishable from each other. In addition, what replaced the liberal arts started to become increasingly reduced to what, today, is commonly called “political correctness” or “tolerance.”

In this new educational world order, instead of science residing in illumination of an individual intellect and will by an Agent Intellect as it did for Averroes, modern science resides in an enlightened social will: one scientific will for the entire human race manifesting itself in terms of tolerant feelings, feeling the same way about something as other people with enlightened feelings feel.

²⁴ Id., 20.

²⁵ Id., 21–22.

The chief reason for this change is easy to understand. Modernity has moved truth out of the individual human intellect and relocated it within the socialist will-to-power (socialistically-enlightened and mathematically-regulated-and-restrained efficiency of will). The traditional liberal arts curriculum was chiefly designed as a handmaiden to speculative philosophy, especially metaphysics, those habits of knowing that most liberate human beings from ignorance and propaganda. Training the will to become docile to taking direction from enlightened despots is no fitting role for the traditional liberal arts, or classical philosophy, especially metaphysics. But it is precisely what the enlightened colleges and universities of the new world order demand.

“Tolerance” in this modern sense has nothing chiefly to do with classical morality. It is not chiefly a moral category in the classical sense. It has nothing to do with the classical moral virtue of justice, which someone violates when treating another person in a vicious way. In its socialistically-enlightened meaning, “tolerance” is a metaphysical, hermeneutical quality for training the will or the human emotions, with which the will is largely identified today (in which truth, and, with it, science, have now been relocated) passively to accept whatever utopian socialists (who are the only ones who determine science, truth, and freedom) tell us about reality, especially about how to read history.

For, in the new world order, metaphysics is reduced to a quality of will that readily accepts Rousseau’s neo-gnostic narrative (fairy tale) that the whole of science is the historically progressive project of emergence of human conscience from backward states of religion to enlightened states of ever-inclusive feeling, of love for the utopian-socialist vision of humanity (a mindset I call “neo-Averroism”). And anyone who does not accept this narrative is essentially unjust, a bigot.²⁶

No place exists in this new world order for classically-oriented, liberal arts colleges and universities. From the new world order perspective, such institutions are backward, unscientific, medieval. What is needed in the new, global, “enlightened” college and university system is a vocational-training institute for success, in the utopian-socialist sense, within the new world order.

²⁶ For a detailed examination of this new understanding of “tolerance,” see Peter A. Redpath, “Justice in the New World Order: Reduction of Justice to Tolerance in the New Totalitarian World State,” *Telos* 157 (2011): 185–192.

To create such a global, secular college and university system, during the twentieth century, and even before, utopian socialists pushed for the creation of tax-subsidized government colleges and universities in the West. In the US and some other places, these colleges and universities, and private ones, which subjected themselves to periodic review by governmentally-approved accreditation agencies, could then control the curriculum content of colleges and universities, and offer students low interest-rate student loans for attending the programs of these institutions. Non-accredited programs were then generally stigmatized as inferior, and transfer of credit from these programs to other college and universities was generally impossible.

No knowledge that divorces itself from essential connection to the pursuit of wisdom and of improving the quality of the soul of the knower can possibly be science. It is foolishness. Science presupposes the existence of a moral culture rooted in minimum levels of professional honesty (professional ethics), especially justice, as a necessary condition for its existence. As Plato and Aristotle realized centuries ago, absent an individual knower who produces science through psychological habits that act as proximate, internal first principles of science advancing the knower closer to wisdom and happiness, no way exists to explain how the individual act of science exists and is generated by an individual knower and is humanly worth pursuing by nature or otherwise.

If science is a social system consisting of shared feelings of utopian socialist elites, and if possession of science must precede possession of truth and freedom, as well as the ability to make mistakes and lie, then we can well understand why this neo-Averroistic mindset of utopian socialism inclines to produce modernity's most simple surrealist act of mass murder: going down into the streets, pistol in hand, and shooting at random for all you are worth into the crowd.

If no individual human being possesses truth or freedom, if these consist in social-system feelings of an enlightened General Will, Pelagius was right: no one of us possesses original sin. Worse, unlike Pelagius, who thought that the natural human will could choose between good and evil, as individuals all of us in the new world order are immaculately conceived, innocent, and remain so throughout life. Any wrongdoing we might appear freely to cause is something totally determined by the Western social system.

If only modern scientists as social wills possess truth and freedom, then only modern scientists are the cause of all lies, all moral evil. For to

be able to lie or commit other moral evils, a person must first know the true and the good and refuse to tell the truth or choose the good. If such is the case, as the first principle of all modern science, the scientific culture of the West, the Western social “system” must be the only cause of all modern evil. Hence, shooting blindly into the crowd becomes perfectly comprehensible, makes logical sense.

The existence of politicians, husbands who cheat on their wives, and the existence of myriads of other examples of non-scientists who know how to lie, make evident that science has no monopoly on generating truth, freedom, falsehoods, and lies. Truth and freedom do not presuppose science. Science presupposes truth and freedom, as well as individual virtue.

In Book 1 of his *Republic*, through the character of Socrates, Plato maintained that, without virtue, without the habit of justice being practiced between or among them, human beings could accomplish nothing collectively powerful. Virtues are psychological qualities, internal first principles, that enable a facultative act to be exercised in an essentially powerful, or more powerful, way. For virtues advance the power of faculties of the human soul toward secure union with their proper objects, external first principles, thereby advancing human beings toward wisdom and happiness. Hence, some level of individual justice is a necessary cultural condition for the generation of science.²⁷

In the *Gorgias*, in his critique of Polus’ claim that sophists and tyrants have great power, Socrates argues that sophists and tyrants cannot have great power because they are fools, men without intelligence doing what appears best to them. While they do what they please, they do not do what they chiefly want, what they chiefly will by nature: advancement of their own human good. Their foolish actions cause them to conflate pleasure and natural desire and act against their own natural best interests. As Plato well understood, nothing is worse for a human being than for a fool to get what he wants. A person without intelligence doing what appears best to him, what he pleases, is no human success story, is not powerful in any properly human sense, and certainly not in a scientific sense.²⁸

Properly speaking, human power, the power of human science, is not brute animal force, nor the violence of Mother Nature. It is not like that of a bull in a china shop. It does not consist in pushing people around, nor in the ability, like Sir Francis Bacon thought, to force nature to reveal her

²⁷ Plato, *Republic*, Bk. 1, 351C–352B.

²⁸ Plato, *Gorgias*, 466A–480E and 491D–522E

secrets.²⁹ It works cooperatively, not despotically, with the natures of things to cause them to reveal their secrets. It is not Machiavellianism applied to the physical universe, even if directed by sincere, Enlightenment feelings.

Toward the start of his *Metaphysics*, following the historical progression of human knowledge in antiquity and individual human life, Aristotle realized that advance from sense knowledge and experience to wisdom follows a natural, architectonic order of human desire involving the sequential development of arts of manual labor; through the generation of habits of leisure and moral (religious) culture; to generation of the speculative habits, or arts, of the *quadrivium* and the *trivium*; to the birth of the speculative philosophical sciences of physics, mathematics, and, finally, metaphysics.³⁰ In his *Nicomachean Ethics* he unites this natural human desire of practical and productive forms of human knowledge progressively to generate the speculative sciences of physics and mathematics so that the scientific habit of metaphysics can come into being to advance the natural human pursuit of happiness (something that, in Book 7 of his *Republic*, Plato had seen as a role also played by the habit of mathematics) that consists in possession of wisdom.³¹

Modern socialism is not chiefly a political or economic theory that generates scientific positivism. Modern socialism, utopian socialism, is chiefly a metaphysical/historical fairy tale about the progressive evolution of human consciousness from backward states of religious and philosophical consciousness that attempts rationally to justify contemporary scientific reductionism by displacing the true description of scientific progress as growing out of a natural human inclination to liberate ourselves from ignorance through increasingly more perfect habits of knowing higher causes. Failure to recognize modern socialism for what it chiefly is (a metaphysical, not economic or political, fraud) is one of the most dangerous mistakes made by modern Western culture.

While the metaphysical teachings about human science of Rousseau and Thomas Hobbes will generally incline to generate totalitarianism more quickly than will those of John Locke, rationally consistent application of Locke's teachings will eventually tend to produce totalitarianism as well.

²⁹ Sir Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, Bk 1, "Aphorisms," n. 98.

³⁰ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Bk. 1, ch. 1, 980a20–983a25.

³¹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 10, ch. 6, 1176a29–1179a34; Plato, *Republic*, Bk. 7, 525A–527D.

After all, if Locke knows not what a substance is, Locke knows not who or what possesses science, other than some enlightened, social system of feelings. Scratch Locke hard enough metaphysically and underneath you will find a nominalist and skeptic.³² This helps explain why, unmoored from proper metaphysical foundations, even self-professed conservative Republicans and Democrats who tend to look upon modern natural rights theories championed by thinkers like Locke as bastions of defense against socialism, often wind up eventually pandering to dictators like Archelaus.

We human beings tend to be slow learners. While we have gotten out of the habit of talking about moral principles like “natural law,” we still hold onto its vestige in our enlightened, secularized appeals to natural rights. Such appeals help us to pretend not to understand the catastrophic consequences of the grandiose sophistry of the postmodern project falsely-so-called. If we pretend long enough that this sophistry does not exist, perhaps it will go away.

Unhappily, it will not. Gilson tells us that the father of our contemporary existential project is Sisyphus, not Prometheus. Our modern destiny has become “the absurd” and “truly exhausting task” of perpetual self-invention without model, purpose, or rule. Having turned ourselves into gods, we do not know what to do with our divinity or unlimited freedom.³³

But what will happen to us when more of us start to realize that, without conviction of the existence of a human nature really existing in things, natural rights are a reflection of nothing, convenient illusions moderns have created to maintain the intoxicating joy of our own poetic and sophistic project? Even drunkards, at times, tire of their alcoholism.

Gilson admonishes us that our modern story is really quite old. He recounts the story from the *Book of Samuel* (8:7–22) in which the Jewish people, tired of being free, asked the aging prophet Samuel to make them a king to judge them, like all other nations had. While Samuel was saddened by their request and saw it as a rejection of him as a judge, God told him to grant the people’s wish with the forewarning of the sorts of bondage that would beset them once their wish was fulfilled.³⁴

³² For my critique of Locke as a nominalist, see my *Masquerade of the Dream Walkers: Prophetic Theology from the Cartesians to Hegel*, 33–36.

³³ Gilson, *The Terrors of the Year 2000.*, 21–25.

³⁴ *Id.*, 26–27.

Having refused to serve God and traditional natural law, we have no one left to judge the State, no arbiter between us and the totalitarian State. Hence, Gilson tells us in 1948:

In every land and in all countries, the people wait with fear and trembling for the powerful of this world to decide their lot for them. They hesitate, uncertain among the various forms of slavery which are being prepared for them. Listening with bated breath to the sounds of those countries which fall one after the other with a crash followed by a long silence, they wonder in anguish how long will last this little liberty they still possess. The waiting is so tense that many feel a vague consent to slavery secretly germinating within themselves. With growing impatience, they await the arrival of the master who will impose on them all forms of slavery starting with the most degrading of all—that of mind.³⁵

Finding ourselves totally free to engage in the perpetual task of endless self-creation, Gilson thinks we resemble a soldier on a twenty-four hour leave with nothing to do: totally bored in the tragic loneliness of an idle freedom we no longer know how productively to use.³⁶ While we cannot create anything, we now possess the intoxicating power to destroy everything and the desire to have someone else tell us what to do. As a result, feeling totally empty and alone, we offer to anyone willing to take it what remains of the little freedom we no longer know how to use, “ready for all the dictators, leaders of these human herds who follow them as guides and who are all finally conducted by them to the same place—the abattoir” (the slaughterhouse).³⁷

While many, perhaps most, contemporary Western intellectuals, artists, and politicians might not think of ourselves as being propagandists promoting the cause of political totalitarianism and preparing the slaughterhouses of the future, as Gilson has well observed, we human beings think the way we can, not the way we wish.³⁸ Quite often the principles we apply to solve problems and difficulties often produce effects worse than the problems and difficulties we had initially intended to cure.

³⁵ Id., 28.

³⁶ Id., 24.

³⁷ Id., 28–29.

³⁸ Étienne Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), 302.

Just as no human being can with rational consistency defend as *definite* the claim that nothing in the universe *is definite*, no human being can, with rational consistency, be metaphysically a utopian socialist and scientifically, politically, or economically a defender of individual liberty. Metaphysical and historical experience teach that no form of nominalism or skepticism about moral and metaphysical principles inclines to promote science and individual freedom. Eventually, all forms of nominalism and skepticism about moral and metaphysical principles incline their proponents to adopt in their absence social practices that tend to generate political totalitarianism.

Consequently, nothing short of a total rejection of the popular modern reduction of truth to science generically and specifically understood as socialistically-enlightened efficiency of will can stop the tide of Western culture toward totalitarianism and all its attendant evils, including destruction of the individual freedom and the natural family, and a tendency to generate mass murder.

Human beings do not generate science by universal methodic doubt possessed by some amorphous collection of ideas nominalistically feeling themselves into a logical system, nor by Kantian impossible dreams, the Hegelian historical march of Absolute Spirit, the Marxist historical dialectic, nor any of the other fictions created by modern sophists to divorce the natural connection of science to human virtue, especially to wisdom. Science is an essential, natural, habitual stepping stone along the way to wisdom. Separating knowledge from wisdom and from habits of the human knower that generate science and wisdom eventually destroys science and individual liberty. Yet, this separation is precisely what modern scientists “falsely-so-called” have championed—and continue to champion. It is about time for students of St. Thomas to follow the lead of Jude P. Dougherty and to challenge their false claim to be scientists and to help better explain to modernity precisely what is the nature of science and scientific explanation.

THE ESSENTIAL CONNECTION BETWEEN MODERN SCIENCE AND UTOPIAN SOCIALISM

SUMMARY

The chief aim of this paper is to demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt how, through an essential misunderstanding of the nature of philosophy, and science, over the past several centuries, the prevailing Western tendency to reduce the whole of science to mathematical physics unwittingly generated utopian socialism as a political substitute for metaphysics. In short, being unable speculatively, philosophically, and metaphysically to justify this reduction, some Western intellectuals re-conceived the natures of philosophy, science, and metaphysics as increasingly enlightened, historical and political forms of the evolution of human consciousness toward creation of systematic science, a science of clear and distinct ideas. In the process they unwittingly wound up reducing contemporary philosophy and Western higher education largely into tools of utopian socialist political propaganda.

KEYWORDS: agent intellect, ancient, artist, colleges, creative free spirit, creator, destroy, explanation, false, fairy tale, force, freedom, general will, God, great idea, history, humanities, idea, illumine, imagination, intellect, light, Literature, meditation, metaphysics, modern science, modern socialism, morality, nature, philosopher, philosophy, positivism, propaganda, psychology, pure reason, reality, reason, science, scientific, scientist, seeker, self-creator, sight, social science, social system, socialism, sophistry, speculative, surrealism, system, theology, tolerance, totalitarianism, truth, universal methodic doubt, universities, utopian socialism, Vienna Circle, violence, violent, virtue, West, will, wisdom.