PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS: TOWARDS AN ECOLOGY OF METAPHOR*

by
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Metaphors are useful instruments of understanding despite (or maybe because) of their cultural diversity. The need for global freedom of conceptual diversity should not be divested from our basic situation with scarce resources and a power-dominated distribution of these. Metaphors are never substituted for the struggle for a better life; however, they can help to identify better ways to wage that struggle.

"In a garden, growth has its seasons.
There are spring and summer, but there
are also fall and winter.
And then spring and summer again."
Chauncey Gardener
in Jerzy Kosiński, *Being There* (1971:46))

0. Introduction

Recently, a renewed interest in metaphors has stressed their importance as instruments of *cognition.* Rather than focusing on them as literary tropes, tools to choose from when looking for an appropriate way to get one's message across, we now examine metaphors from the point of view of their central role in our perceptual and cognitive processes and, in fact, in our lives: 'Metaphors we live by', as the title of an influential study on the subject has it (Lakoff & Johnson 1980).

This cognitive 'revival' has its advantages, but also a number of major drawbacks. On the *positive* side, we can look at the many interesting results that bring together, under the common denominator of metaphor, findings from classical literary analysis, psychological investigations (e.g. on memory), and psychoanalytical methods (cp. the ways in which metaphors are seen as carriers of subconscious material in the works of Freud and Lacan, or as primitive cognitive structures, as in Jung's archetypes), or at the impact that new metaphors have had within the context of social and anthropological thinking. *Negatively,* one has to realize that

metaphors, after all, are ways of dealing with the facts of life, *paths* to truth, if one wishes: they should not be substituted either for those facts, or for life itself, for truth, social justice, or whatever other great human ideals.

Discussions on the aptness and necessity of metaphorical awareness usually concentrate on the problem of metaphor *content*: What does a particular metaphor express, and how felicitous can it be said to be in a particular context (e.g. solving a problem, obtaining consensus, elucidating difficult subject matter, and so on). There is, however, another side to the question: viz. the character of the metaphor *as such*: What do we do when we use, or coin, a metaphor? In a way, this is a *transcendental* question, since it touches on the cognitive, or epistemological, conditions for our use of metaphor, rather than on the appropriateness of the individual metaphor. I will address both issues in sequence: Section 1 will concentrate on the 'correctness' of metaphors seen socially (including interculturally): 'the metaphor is the problem', as the section title has it. Section 2 will deal with the problem of talking metaphorically as such: 'the problem is the metaphor': How do I know somebody is talking in metaphors, and what does it mean to deal with a 'problem' (itself a metaphor)?

1. *The metaphor is the problem*

How to find a good metaphor? What is required of a metaphor in order for it to qualify as 'good'?

Faced with the bewildering variety of metaphors that different cultures and languages display, one is tempted to consider the question as either irrelevant or unanswerable except in a pragmatic way: a good metaphor is one that serves its purpose. And whether or not the latter is the case, is simply a matter of looking around you: What do people do when they choose metaphors? How do they get at them? What resources do they tap in order to create metaphors, and what kinds of mechanisms are put in motion by the use of a particular metaphor?

This is essentially the way Lakoff and Johnson (1980) go about it. They observe that certain semantic dimensions are used for describing the cognitive field, for 'carving up reality', as one might say. Thus, e.g., the semantic field of 'high-low' is used to describe certain psychological states and power relationships: 'high' is indicative of

psychological well-being ('I'm on top of the world'), whereas 'low' denotes the opposite ('When you're down and out...'). Similarly, being 'on top' of a situation is the same as being in control, while being 'snowed down' by your work means that you're not coping too well.

Elsewhere (Mey 1985:223), I have pointed out the dangers residing in an uncritical use of metaphor, as exemplified in a merely descriptive way of dealing with the issue ('See what there is on the market and describe it, but don't ask questions'). Against such an attitude, I maintain that questions do have to be asked: in particular, if Lakoff and Johnson, in the course of an odd page and a half (1980:15-16) routinely assign the female human person to the metaphorical 'low' position, whereas the corresponding 'high' is taken up by the male, then something has to be explained (and not explained away). Similarly, when it comes to discussing metaphors of the kind I myself indulged in a few lines higher up ('what's on the market?'), the question needs to be brought up of what such a metaphor represents, and in what way it affects our thinking – not to say: determines a particular mind-set (for which it was developed in the first place, in all likelihood).

While it may be true, as Lakoff and Johnson point out, that certain metaphors are necessary for us to survive in the world we live in (as repositories of our past experiences and for guidance in dealing with new ones), it is also the case that precisely the use of one's metaphoric resources can be a hindrance to understanding other people, both actively (because I cannot grasp the others' metaphorical language use) and passively (because the other party is unable to follow my metaphorical usage and identify it as intended). Both dangers reflect a common origin: namely, the fact that there are certain ways of thinking that mirror, but also exert their influence upon, our common social praxis, inasmuch as they have obtained recognition in the form of metaphorical status, and therefore have become acceptable means of dealing with the world – always within the limits of one's cultural community, of course.

Thus, metaphors are a way of life. No wonder, then, that different ways of life engender different metaphors, and that all understanding in a number of ways depends on, and even crucially presupposes, an understanding of metaphors as they are used in a particular case, as well as of metaphors as such.

Both aspects can be illustrated by Chauncey Gardener's famous quote, prefixed as motto to my article: 'There are spring and summer,

but there are also fall and winter.' Is this a metaphorical expression, as it is certainly understood to be by Chauncey's interviewers? How do we know that this is the case? And, if so, what does it mean? Clearly, the latter question is the easier to answer, given the context and the circumstances of the interview: Chauncey, as the President's advisor, is asked a question about the economy's future development. Actually, he doesn't speak in metaphors, but we don't know this (or prefer to disregard the fact). Instead, we concentrate on interpreting the metaphor correctly: an upward swing is predicted, the economy is picking up, like nature itself after a long winter of discontent. Clearly, the way we interpret this metaphorical utterance is material in determining its impact: we let ourselves be guided by the metaphor precisely because, and to the degree that, it fits in with our image of the world it is supposed to represent.

Thoughts such as the above are not simply a matter of 'rhetorical imagination' or poetic belief. Recently, researchers in various fields have begun to see the import of metaphorical thought as the key to our universe, and as a means of dealing with it. In a thoughtful article on 'incommensurable concepts' and their comprehension through metaphor, A.J.N. Judge (1988) draws our attention to the multifarious uses of metaphor in different cultures and to the ways that such congealed forms of thinking are relevant to mutual understanding. Judge speaks of a 'metaphoric revolution', by which he means a new openness to the diversity of beliefs and belief systems prevalent among the world's peoples and communities. Rather than forcing everybody to behave and think identically, we should open ourselves to the 'epistemological diaspora (1988:2) represented by the individual metaphorical systems. And rather than having everybody express him-/herself in one language (preferably – or at least presumably – English), we should allow for a diversity of conceptualizations. 'A situation in which if the concept cannot be articulated clearly in one such language (usually English) it cannot be considered meaningful', as Judge says (1988:1), is unhealthy and intolerable from the point of view of international collaboration and mutual respect.

The negative result of such an attitude is that the majority of the world's people are in principle disprivileged. This is so not only because they don't have the 'international' language (in case: English) as their mother tongue, but in addition, because at best, the way they perceive the world (that is, their metaphorical reality) is not

considered a valuable and valid one by the dominant speakers, at worst, their reality is declared a non-world by the others, inasmuch as it pertains to the sphere of ignorance, superstition, or just 'funny beliefs'. In extreme cases, even such material gestures as paying for services and goods can become a problem – not only because of non-convertible funds or bad exchange rates, but on account of the dominant culture's *metaphorical* belief in one currency as the mythical standard against which to measure everything else.[1]

While we thus must firmly oppose any kind of conceptual or linguistic 'imperialism'[2], we should also be careful not to attribute too much saving grace to its opposite, the 'epistemological diaspora'. On the one hand, there is the danger that the advantages inherent in using a diversified metaphorical 'vocabulary', such as identifying with different people across cultures and geographical distances and, as Judge calls it, encouraging 'people and groups to select, adapt or design their own conceptual frameworks and manner of perceiving their environment as well as their own way of comprehending and communicating about their action on it' (1988:3) are being offset and neutralized by the ultimate desire to expand one's own concepts of political and cultural hegemony, only in different, more effective guises: metaphorical manipulation rather than ham-fisted governance. This danger is intimately related to the question of how to *define* problems, metaphorically or otherwise, and how to *choose* the 'interesting' ones; I'll come back to these matters in the next section.

The other danger is related to the metaphors chosen to express a variety of divergent, yet unifiable approaches to comprehension and solution of world-wide problems. Here, Judge provides a good illustration in the metaphor he has selected to explain the political processes characteristic of many Western(ized) democracies. In a way, these processes could be illustrated, too, by Chauncey Gardener's season parallel: 'In a garden, growth has its season'; however, Judge has chosen a somewhat different, yet related metaphor from the same general area of the farmer's seasonal activities. He sums up his position as follows:

> There is a striking parallel between the rotation of crops and the succession of (governmental) policies applied in a society. The contrast is also striking because of the essentially haphazard switch between 'right' and 'left' policies. There is little explicit awareness

of the need for any rotation to correct for negative consequences ('pests') encouraged by each and to replenish the resources of society ('nutrients', 'soil structure') which each policy so characteristically depletes. (1988:38)

Here, the basic metaphor should be clear: Policy-making is a kind of farming, and just like in 'real' farming, one has to shift between different crops in order to obtain a maximum yield of the soil. In early agriculture, people let a rotating one third of the field lie fallow each year; however, this is not as good a solution as planting different crops, each with their typical flora and fauna of weeds and pests and natural friends and enemies. Such a crop rotation should not be haphazard, but calculated in accordance with what we know about each crop's typical features and the particular structure of each patch of soil. (See also footnote 3, below).

Just as agricultural homogeneity ('monocultural exploitation') is the root of all evil in farming, so the unchecked domination of any political system should be avoided: the latter is the case when 'voters are either confronted with single party systems or are frustrated by the lack of real choice between the alternatives offered' (ibid.). So, rather than let ourselves be frustrated by the seemingly haphazard changes in policy-making that come with democracy in its Western(ized) forms, even when it is at its best, we should realize that the very life of the body politic is dependent on a system of rotation by which left and right policies alternate, without any of them becoming domineering for too long a period at a time.

Despite Judge's manifest and avowed intentions to steer a fair middle course between the extremes of political commitment, he is unable here to avoid the strong cultural and historical biases that are inherent in the metaphors he uses. Ironically, he thus ostensively demonstrates (albeit unwillingly and implicitly) that the situation he set out to describe is real: however, his explanation is incomplete and his suggested solutions are insufficient. Assimilating a change in policies between left and right to 'essentially haphazard' crop rotation (1988:38) leaves out the content of the policies in question. Judge is correct in remarking that we don't know, at the present time, what kinds of 'cycles' and rotational schemes would be potentially most useful for world governance and prosperity; but the very fact that he implicitly recognizes the need for such a planning militates against

the metaphorical use of the changes in crop cultivation under a rotating scheme.

Left and right, in politics, are neither simple alternatives nor points on a scale equidistant from some postulated origin. In politics, left stands for planning, right for the anarchy of so-called 'free enterprise'. Here, the market forces are supposed to exert their beneficial influence for the common good, so that the economy, free from all outside interference and completely 'deregulated' (as current parlance has it) is able to find its 'natural' balance. However, what we used to see in world politics was not just a struggle between two powerful systems of societal organization, one capitalist, the other socialist, with the former now declaring an 'alternation' in the shape of a possibly premature, but certainly Pyrrhean, victory over the latter. Rather, we are witnessing a contest between those who are willing to sacrifice everything for profit, and the others who have at least a modicum of respect for the scarce resources on our planet and realize that in order to safeguard those essential reserves, we have to do some planning.

Planning, however, in the eyes of the right, is a socialist, hence leftist idea; vice versa, the freedom preached by the rightists is pure anarchy for those on the left. So, indeed, left and right do struggle, but we cannot possibly, as Judge suggests, envisage this struggle as a simple case of 'crop rotation', one alternative replacing the other, to be replaced again by the first, and so on *ad infinitum.* The limited resources of our finite world just do not allow any of this kind of 'infinity'; which is why the crop metaphor, in addition to being inaccurate, in principle, never can provide us with an effective and complete solution: each time the 'right' gains the upper hand, the forces of destruction will take one further step towards the annihilation of the planet, if only by the simple depletion of its natural resources. The 'complete' solution thus becomes a 'final' solution – the *Endlösing* to end all *Endlösungen*, pie-in-the-sky turned to ashes in our mouths.[3]

Thus, we see how a wrong metaphor may entail a wrong conception of important issues. More generally: metaphors are *always* wrong as long as they are not 'contextualized', i.e. placed within the proper situation of use, and 'revitalized' continuously with regard to their applicability or non-applicability. Indeed, the metaphor *is* the problem. But also, as we will see in the next section,...

3. *The problem is the metaphor!*

What's in a problem? An old question, but not one that is easier to answer because of its age. The problem is in the problem itself: the term 'problem' denotes a concealed metaphor. That which is seen as a problem, includes always somebody who does the seeing: either as the original 'seer', the person who 'puts' the matter in question 'before' us (as the Greek verb *pro-bállo*, lit. 'I throw in front' seems to indicate)[4], or as the subsequent 'fellow-seers', who agree that there indeed is something to look at, something 'thrown in front' of them to see.

The fact that the problem is a metaphor need not bother us, taken by itself. However, the ramifications and consequences of this fact are pretty far-reaching. They can be subsumed under the single question of: *Whose problem* are we talking about when we 'identify' *a* problem?

There are no problems in the abstract, wandering around like stray puppies looking for some prospective sponsor. If we want to know what a problem really is about, we have to focus on those who were the first to define it, and to whom the problem rightfully 'belongs'. Here, I'm not just talking about establishing some world catalogue of problems in terms of which particular organizations have defined them: such a purely descriptive method does not seem to be singularly illustrative of the point I'm trying to make, even though the procedure can be useful as a first step towards identifying what we are dealing with – as an enumeration, or even as an 'Encyclopedia' of 'World Problems and Human Potential' (actually an existing 'source book' published (1986) by the 'Union of International Organisations' in Brussels; Judge 1988:26).[5] I want to probe deeper: for me, the metaphoric value of being a pro-blem is in its being 'thrown' (to use a Heideggerian term). This 'thrownness', vice versa, is problematic inasmuch as it is defined *in use* and *by users* and consequently, as it is different *according to* the different users and contexts of use. As Donald Schön insightfully remarks, when speaking of the construction of 'generative metaphors' (i.e. metaphors that refer to 'problem setting' rather than 'problem solving'), '[t]hings are selected for attention and named in such a way as to fit the frame constructed for the situation' – that is, in building metaphors, we rely on our ways of *seeing* things (Schön 1984:264). Let me give some examples to illustrate my point.

In 1983, Pope John Paul II visited Central America, and stopped over, among other places, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. (This was just after his whistle-stop visit to Nicaragua, where he had spent most of his limited time being unpleasant to his Nicaraguan hosts, in particular the three Catholic priests who were Cabinet ministers in the Sandinista government, and whom the Pope had tried to order out – but without success). In Honduras, the Pope spoke about the evils that had befallen that part of the world: internecine strife, poverty, lack of social services and education, and so on. However, what the Holy Father perceived as the biggest problem of them all (and of course, not only in Central America, but all over the world) was Sin. That 'problem' had to be dealt with before anything good at all could happen in the other spheres.

What we are witness to here is that somebody (in this case, the Pope) carves out a piece of reality (here: poverty) and identifies it as a 'problem' – however, not as one pertaining to the context of those who suffer from it (the poor), but as a matter to be dealt with in terms belonging to some *metaphorical* sphere, in this case of religion. The notion of 'sin' itself can be understood only if one accepts the context of religion with its concomitant metaphors: God's will, Man's disobedience, Heavens above, hellfire and brimstone, and the whole lot. Strictly speaking, 'sin' itself is a metaphor, being defined as the mother of all problems, on which all our other evils are dependent.

Dealing with people's very real problems in terms of religious metaphors is, of course, not the same as solving them; but (harking back to our earlier theme) one can, of course, *govern* people in this way. And now we can see the dangers of 'governance through metaphor' (Judge 1988:15ff): we risk 'selling' our way of viewing the world to the less fortunate and less cultured by relying on the universality of the process of 'problem perception'.

This is, of course, exactly the opposite of what Judge set out to achieve by introducing the 'epistemological diaspora', in which all approaches to problems were judged to be equally justified. But disregarding the facts of life, in particular the way the problems are defined by those in power, be they Popes, Presidents, or humble Professors, is exposing oneself to the danger of manipulation under the guise of governance. Replacing necessary social changes by some vague notion of 'comprehension' of the appropriate instrumental design (cp. Judge 1988:6) is really pie-in-the-sky. Therefore, we have

to answer Judge's rhetorical question (ibid.:14): 'Is it possible that social transformation is essentially a question of offering people (and empowering them to discover from their own traditions) richer and more meaningful metaphors through which to live, act and empower themselves?' by maintaining that indeed such a transformation is possible, but that it won't be very *social*.[6]

The other example I want to discuss is that of terrorism, one of the plagues that beset our modern, affluent society. In its various forms, such as kidnapping, hijacking, or even outright armed attacks on private, corporate, and governmental bodies, terrorism has become a 'problem' for us, to be dealt with and 'solved' somehow.

Notice the wording 'for us'. If we look at the problem globally, and ask how many of the world's people are affected by it (directly or indirectly, but in personally noticeable ways), I would be amazed if this figure were much higher than, say, 10%. And if we take one minor, but very spectacular form of terrorism, viz. airline hijacking, as our particular instance of a 'problem', then the percentage may range as low as one percent: airline terrorism affects, by definition, just those people that are affluent enough, and enjoy sufficient personal freedom (including leisure), to be able to board a plane, be it for business or pleasure or other reasons.

The 'problem' that is discussed here can be described in different ways: in terms of air security, of personal safety, of integrity of the individual, or even of waste of material resources (the incidental costs of hijacking being extremely high, no matter what the outcome); whatever way we choose to describe it, airline hijacking *is* a problem for us. However, if we ask ourselves the candid question why we are so interested in, say, the terrible fate of the nearly three hundred people that went down with their plane over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December of 1988, as the result of a terrorist bomb planted in the body of the plane, the only way to answer that question is with another one: Whose problem are we talking about? Clearly, we identify with those 'innocent bystanders' in an international conflict because *we* could have been in their places, *we* could have been those people, *we* could have been dead; *that* is the reason why terrorism, in particular airline bombing or hijacking, is such a big issue among the people of the First and (to some degree) the Second World.[7]

Notice that what is at issue here is not, say, 'the violent death of some three hundred innocent people'. That, in itself, is not a problem for us at all: we are accustomed to people in Bangla Desh drowning by

the tens of thousands, to the inhabitants of certain regions of Uganda having been decimated to the tune of a hundred thousand a year, to Bosnians, Serbs, and Croats killing each other off with truly barbaric proficiency. Yet, the same indignant U.S. newscasters that report on the latest piece of airline terrorism seem totally unruffled by the fact that in their own backyard, the routine murdering of hundreds and thousands of *campesinos* was not only condoned, but aided and abetted by the same humanitarian and enlightened people who protest genocide when it occurs other places on earth. Clearly, the well-being of the Central American native populations is not on the agenda when it comes to combating godless communists or indigenous independence fighters; which brings us back to the people who tell us that the real question is not some dead peasants in Central America, but the establishment of some metaphorical empire (whether it is envisioned as a 'Reign of God' or a free trade treaty) throughout the entire region, and the punishment of some rebellious politicians-priests or recalcitrant bishops. The world-wide fight for freedom (including the right to purchase Coca-Cola) must go on.

4. Conclusion: Consensus and integration, or....?

How, in what Judge (1988:2) calls an 'essentially schizophrenic domain of discourse', can we hope (and strive) for some minimum (or even modicum) of understanding, not to speak of consensus?

The first condition is that we realize what those schizophrenic conditions are caused by, and how they relate to the rest of our context.

The second condition (maybe even more essential than the first) is that we make one thing perfectly clear (as Richard Nixon used to say): What is it we want, and what are the costs of getting there? Suppose we do want 'consensus and integration' (Judge, ibid.), are we willing to pay the price, and enforce that price also on others who may not be willing, or able to pay for, yet need, the goods?

As to the first condition, the reason for our schizophrenic condition is not in ourselves (one may even doubt that the term 'schizophrenic' is proper in this connection). Yet, one can make some sense of the term in the following way:

Given that a particular situation in which we find ourselves is

such that demands are made which we cannot possibly honor, will the result not be a certain schizophrenic attitude, a 'double bind', as it is often called, following Gregory Bateson?

Clearly, one cannot obtain consensus unless there is a common basis for reaching an agreement about motives and objectives, as well as about ways and means. As Judge remarks, 'it is extremely difficult for such changes [viz., in material conditions with a view to social transformation] to be implemented so as fully to meet the perceived needs of all on a socially and culturally diverse planet.' (1988:2) While this is true, the reasons for this difficulty, however, are not indicated, only its consequences: 'This is a major reason for the fragmentation of conceptual and belief systems and their associated institutions' (ibid.).

Here, the 'schizophrenia' of conceptual and belief systems is rightly attributed to the socially and culturally diverse needs that people perceive as theirs; but again, the question is *why*. Any person who pretends to answer this question, but leaves out the material conditions for the answer to be valid (which is precisely what Judge does, when he talks about the social and cultural diversity on our planet, but disregards economic inequality and exploitation of the poor by the rich) must find him-/herself in such a double bind. Pretending not to pay attention to the material conditions that govern our existence, yet trying to perform social transformations involving material changes necessarily puts one into a dizzying loop, exactly like a frustrated mouse in a schizophrenia-generating type experiment.

The other condition is that we understand *what* consensus and integration are all about. As I said above, we cannot pretend to deal with any form of social transformation or social experiment without taking the full set of conditions into account that govern the possibilities of such experiments and transformations. Failure to do so not only results in the frustration of 'schizophrenic discourse'; in addition, if we take 'consensus' seriously, then the objectives of our attempt are clearly outside our possibilities.

What, then, is to be sought after? Consensus for its own sake? Integration at all costs? If we use 'epistemological divergence' as a vehicle for realizing our own ends, we are clearly manipulating our fellow human beings, and this is not what Judge intends to do. On the contrary, his ideal picture of the world is one where different and varying approaches coexist side by side, in an 'epistemological

diaspora'. However, if one asks: Approaches to what?, the answer again seems to be: To consensus and integration!

Objective and means thus appear to be identified in some sort of higher unity; but what does this give us, and where does it lead us? True, there may be more elegance in 'moving with the process of fragmentation rather than attempting vainly to oppose it ... in accord with a fundamental principle of Eastern martial arts' (ibid.), but the question still remains: For what purpose? For Judge, this purpose is precisely '[t]he integration and consensus so desperately sought after' – only 'achieved in a more subtle and elegant manner.' (ibid.) However, even presupposed that we do obtain what we wanted in this way, what we get is not what we set out to achieve; that which we obtain, has changed in the very process of being achieved. What we wanted was a transformation of the social and cultural conditions on our planet in order to benefit the underprivileged segments of our population, but in the end, all we get is 'integration and consensus' on the *metaphorical* level.

In the final analysis, what it all boils down to is this:
There are, in this world of ours, more problems than resources. Perceiving those problems may be a necessary condition in order to start solving them (and this is where the work of such bodies as the Union of International Organizations is helpful), but it is by no means a sufficient one. A 'metaphoric revolution' will not bring about any further resources; neither will it change, by itself, the present skewed distribution of the existent means. The only way to achieve *that* change is for some nations and people to renounce on their privileges, and accept the fact that *if* there is going to be a new, fairer deal world-wide, then they too, will have to pay their share. That sacrifice is real, not metaphorical, whether we call our final aim a social revolution or 'sustained development'; and whether it is formulated either in terms of justice or on Judge's terms.

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Notes

* The author wants to thank Andrew Ortony for useful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

1. In the good old days of the Gold Standard, this used to be gold itself, or its fictitious representative, the 'gold franc'. In our own times, when we ask the notorious question, say, in Mexico (or other 'undeveloped' places): 'And tell me now how much that is in *real* money?' we are not always prepared for the strong reaction on the part of the 'natives', or willing to examine our own presuppositional foundations.
2. On this, cp. also the remarks on 'linguicism' by Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson (1994:2226) and its connections to what has been called 'linguistic imperialism'; see Mey (1989) and Phillipson (1992).
3. To avoid all misunderstanding: 'right' and 'left' are here primarily used to denote economic, not political doctrines. That means, among other things, that planning is not good simply because it is planning: as the Brundtland report (1987) admonishes us, we need good, that is *global* planning. Therefore, local deregulation in capitalism can have just as bad effects as does wholesale re-introduction of capitalist market principles into an otherwise oriented economic system.
4. With all the precautions that are in order when invoking the 'original' meaning of an expression (which not necessarily or always is the etymological one).
5. Second edition 1990.
6. Another problem with problems is that one cannot, in general, solve other people's. This statement flies in the face of much that can be read out (or into) advertisements for 'World Government' by Indian sages and their likes, such as in the following (from the Brazilian review *Veja*, September 6, 1983):

   > The World government of the Age of Illumination declares itself to be ready to solve the problems of any government, whatever the nature of those problems or the difficulties involved, no matter whether the problems are of a political, economic, social, or religious kind, and independently of the type of government – capitalist, socialist, democratic, or dictatorial. The world government of the Age of Illumination invites governments to negotiate the solution to their problems by way of a contract based on reimbursement of the costs incurred while achieving the objectives.

   (The World Government of the Age of Illunination is headed by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Source: *Bicicleta* (Santiago de Chile), 40, November 1983, p. 3).

   As the Swedish computational linguist Gunnel Källgren has remarked in another connection, computer tools should not 'take away the initiative and responsibility of the human user' – not even in solving her or his problems! (Källgren 1988:90)
7. I must confess that I don't have too clear a notion of what purpose the concept of 'Second World' is supposed to serve – except to exclude the 'Third', 'Fourth' etc. 'Worlds' from our discussions.

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