

# Human society evolution: Driving actions

Jean-Claude Serge Levy<sup>1</sup>

Nowadays worldwide human society is evolving at a fast rate with the help of scientific and technical progress as well as with the incidence of crises. This high speed and this large extension early induced historians to introduce “Global history” or “World history,” a global view of human history, with a large comparative program involving large variations and fluctuations. One advantage of this global point of view is to detect a few main basic lines among a very large amount of local variations. Of course, many different political views can arise behind this new perspective where all nations are involved together, at the same level. Such a mixing between different ways of thinking provides a tremendous diversity and opens the path for other similar approaches such as the present one. From this chaotic space, a very few distinct phases, steps, of human evolution emerge: hunting and gathering civilization, H in the following, farming and livestock civilization, F in the following, industrial society, I in the following, and the creation era C which is now starting to happen. The nomad life of H and the sedentary life of F were early studied by Ibn Khaldun,<sup>2</sup> a famous precursor of the World History. The recent I society is also well known: large towns, a high level of competition, a new man facing the fate as “a romantic hero,” and more and more extended wars which led this society to its end. C era is starting now with fast and extended information. The point of interest in the present report does not concern these civilization details, which are rather well known, but consists in observing the mechanism of their transitions, a less studied part. For leaders, these transitions do not put any problem, they always surf on the wave. For the layman, these transitions induce some losses, which must be balanced by a driving action of the society. So, we are interested here in the layman loss and its social answer, the driving action, which stabilizes the transition. Such a search of the relevant action gives it a clear context, which

reveals to be an unexpected essential link for these numerous driving actions. In H, the tribal wild life is a little bit risky, but easy and happy in a convenient country full of permanent fruits and animals. According to anthropologists,<sup>3</sup> three hours of work a day is enough for tribal survival in such conditions. This was a “golden age” of mankind in front of the various works requested for F. Within F, there is nearly no permanent work, but there are many seasonal duties, with an average which sounds to be quite larger than three hours of work a day. Thus, in order to convince our layman to face this new hard life condition, serious driving arguments are required from the leading team. Searchers of “World history” noticed a lot of such used arguments all over the world. Fear of the wild life is a basic religious argument. Another trick is the partition into numerous different working classes, the casts, in such a way that most of people in F seem to share some advantages in this religious society.<sup>4</sup> Another argument consists in the hope of another life after the present one, and that this new life will keep some memory of the previous one. Many religions were created from a mix of these three kinds of arguments, even with interferences between different religious approaches.<sup>5</sup> A final optimization process of these “religions” allows nearly parallel approaches and variations. So, it was not only the brute force of “knights,” the land owners, which was the driving action of the H to F transition, but mainly this multi-facetted complex religion. This syncretic concept of religion was symbolized by “priests.”<sup>6</sup> As a consequence of this social status, these religions are contingent to F. This statement strongly restricts the validity of these religions, later, out of this context, mainly as social institutions. Quite similarly the power of land owners, “knights,” is contingent to F and will decrease when other civilizations come. In I, work is permanent in mining and industry. This new stability induces both the risk of an

unlimited work and the risk of a loss of a direct contact with nature, because of industrial specialization. The necessary large size of efficient mining and factories requires large investments and a special management of these new human enterprises. So, “investors and managers” are the new leaders of I. For the layman the risky power of investors must be balanced by another force, that of “labor unionists” who can obtain a practical social equilibrium when in conflict with managers and investors. The need of nature and natural life has several consequences on people involved in I, and among them is the emergence of psychoanalysis which enables people to face their new social condition in its full complexity. Thus, in I, the leaders are no more “knights and priests” but “investors and labor unionists.” From that viewpoint, the quite numerous wars which happened in I sound to be indirect ones between “investors” and labor “unionists” in a never finished dangerous battle.

This new life condition of I was well observed in all arts, literature, music, painting, architecture which gave quite numerous “selfies” of themselves to people enduring I, with a rather continuous flux. As already noticed, the high level of competition, the fighting spirit of I, simultaneously with scientific and technical progress led to strong social changes and to the present emergence of a new creation era C. Quite similarly as for “knights” and “priests” of F, the recent leaders of I, “investors” and “labor unionists,” are contingent and submitted to the next transition, becoming now past institutions. This transition from action to memory is hard and brutal but still can benefit sometimes to former leaders,<sup>7</sup> at least in literature!

The new coming era C is characterized by creation units, which are expected to be small, well connected to other similar units, but waiting for advices before effective realization which will be done mainly by robots, anywhere, since information is extended everywhere. This wonderful fast extension is restricted by global considerations. Because of the real dangers of pollution and of the practical restriction of mineral resources on earth, the advices of warning people with extended view are essential in era C. In such conditions

the effective leaders of C will be these “warning people” as well as people who are aware of the main needs of this new society, “prospectors” in some sense, in order to reach a practical social equilibrium.

In C, “investors” and “labor unionists” are no more leaders, since most of enterprises are small ones, even if for the time being there are still some worldwide giants which are more or less linked with information. The real nature of C is not known up to now. This is both a difficulty and an opportunity for arts to guess about this near future. It is a real challenge for *LINKs* to develop an artistic picture of incoming C! A nice game to play, to give a selfie to the unknown C to come!

These three transitions are deeply linked with the idea of “World History,” since they happened everywhere through the world, with a large lot of geographic travelling centers which appear in a rather complex order. In H equatorial forests were and are still the right places. For F, main rich valleys were essential for its development. Such conditions occurred in China, Mesopotamia, Egypt and later around Mediterranean Sea.<sup>8</sup> The very early days of I showed the unexpected creation and large expansion of Portugal and Spain. Later England and Germany became the leaders of industrial expansion in Europe where the wind of the Enlightenment had been propagated through the French Revolution. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the progressive emergence of the United States of America, of Japan and later China as well as of Russia. India, Brazil are now joining these leaders in this now nearly complete worldwide expansion.

With the plain perspective provided by World History, the weight of numerous past institutions such as religions, land owners, industrial investors and managers, labor unionists must be considered in their own contexts. These past social institutions were strongly involved in their own society as their elementary bricks. They were an essential part of this society. Now since these societies progressively disappear, these institutions belong to the past, just as pieces of an infinite virtual museum of human life. This can be a goal for *LINKs* both to define this infinite virtual museum of human



life, and by the way, to introduce the art of the new C era in a new performance.  
Good luck to past and future creators of the representations of C.

<sup>1</sup> Lab. MPQ, UMR CNRS 7162, Paris Diderot Université, 10 s. A. Domon & L. Duquet, Université de Paris 75013 Paris, France.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), a philosopher and historian wrote “The Muqaddimah, an introduction to history” which is translated into many languages.

<sup>3</sup> Pierre Clastres (1924-1977), an ethnologist and anthropologist noted that three hours a day were enough ensuring survival in an active Guayaki tribe, leaving time for art and leisure. See P. CLASTRES, *Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> See the historian S. SUBRAHMANYAM, *Europe’s India. Words, People, Empires, 1500-1800*, Cambridge-London, Havard University Press, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>6</sup> Georges Dumézil, a linguist, and Georges Duby, a specialist of the “Middle-Ages” found the worldwide extension of the three classes “knights,” “priests,” and “laymen” in F.

<sup>7</sup> In some sense, Marcel Proust’s main work, *In search of lost time*, reports the transition from F to I. “Knights” become just social institutions, and I leaders are proud to be involved in such past institutions in a final wedding with them, a happy ending.

<sup>8</sup> See the historian F. BRAUDEL, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l’époque de Philippe II*, Paris, Flammarion, 1949.



Proust par Nice Art, pochoir, Belleville, Paris, 2019. Photo © Marion Dupuis.