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In June 2021, emeritus professor at the University of British Columbia and a member of the Club of Rome, William E. Rees —the author of the ecological footprint concept— presented the conference “The Enigma of Climate Inaction,” which has been widely discussed. In this essay we join that discussion and, consequently, we present our point of view about the reasons that have led humanity to the situation in which it is trapped and from which, unfortunately, it seems it will not be able to escape. We end the text, however, proposing some alternative solutions to the socio-environmental crisis coming from the teachings of some indigenous peoples.

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Reasons for Environmental Crime

Luis Tamayo Pérez^a & Antonio Sarmiento Galán^o

RESUMEN

En junio del 2021, el profesor emérito de la University of British Columbia y también integrante del Club de Roma, William E. Rees —el autor del concepto de huella ecológica— presentó la conferencia “The Enigma of Climate Inaction”, la cual ha sido ampliamente discutida. En este ensayo nos sumamos a esa discusión y, en consecuencia, presentamos nuestro punto de vista acerca de las razones que han conducido a la humanidad a la situación en la que se encuentra atrapada y de la que, desgraciadamente, parece no podrá salir. Al final, sin embargo, plantearemos algunas alternativas de solución a la crisis socioambiental provenientes de las enseñanzas de algunos pueblos originarios.

Palabras clave: cambio climático, crisis social, colapso.

ABSTRACT

In June 2021, emeritus professor at the University of British Columbia and a member of the Club of Rome, William E. Rees —the author of the ecological footprint concept— presented the conference “The Enigma of Climate Inaction,” which has been widely discussed. In this essay we join that discussion and, consequently, we present our point of view about the reasons that have led humanity to the situation in which it is trapped and from which, unfortunately, it seems it will not be able to escape. We end the text, however, proposing some alternative solutions to the socio-environmental crisis coming from the teachings of some indigenous peoples.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Almost a century ago, the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan titled “Motifs du crime paranoïaque” his proposed reading of a crime that occurred in the city of Mans —Mrs Lancelin and her daughter were viciously murdered by their maids— and that, for the Psychiatry and the law of his time were difficult to understand. Similarly, in this essay we will approach the understanding of a phenomenon that William E. Rees calls “enigmatic”: the inaction of humanity in the face of that which threatens to end the conditions that make its very existence possible: Anthropogenic Global Warming.

II. ON THE CIVILIZATIONAL COLLAPSE

That humanity is approaching a large-scale global collapse is something admitted not only by the main institutions dedicated to the study of the Earth's climate —Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, World Meteorological Organization, Copernicus Marine Service, Potsdam-Institut für Klimafolgenforschung, among others— but by the Secretary General of the United Nations himself, António Guterres, who is taking advantage of every forum at his disposal to try to alert humanity because, as he indicated on July 27, 2023, we are no longer in the era of global warming but in that of global boiling.

The approaching collapse is not the one that Richard Duncan described at the beginning of the century —since oil shortages will not be its main component— but rather a socio-environmental crisis of

extraordinary dimensions. The predictions of the Club of Rome raised in *The limits to Growth* (1972) have proven accurate and in its most recent study, written by Sandrine Dixson-Declève et al., *Earth for All* (2022) indicates that, if the measures necessary to stop Global Warming, a socio-environmental crisis of such dimensions will occur as soon as 2050 that could reduce humanity by almost a half by the end of this century.

2.1 The stages of such collapse were described very convincingly by Peter Goodchild

The collapse of modern industrial society has 14 parts, each with a somewhat causal relationship to the next. (1) Fossil fuels, (2) metals, and (3) electricity, are a tightly-knit group, and no industrial civilization can have one without the others. The decline in fossil-fuel production is the most critical aspect of the collapse, and most of the following text will be devoted to that topic. As those three disappear, (4) food and (5) fresh water become scarce; grain and wild fish supplies per capita have been declining for years, water tables are falling everywhere, rivers are not reaching the sea. Matters of infrastructure then follow: (6) transportation and (7) communication, no paved roads, no telephones, no computers. After that, the social structure begins to fail: (8) government, (9) education, and (10) the large-scale division of labor that makes complex technology possible. After these 10 parts, however, there are four others that form a separate layer, in some respects more psychological or sociological. We might call these “the four Cs.” The first three are (11) crime, (12) cults, and (13) craziness; the breakdown of traditional law; the ascendance of dogmas based on superstition, ignorance, cruelty, and intolerance; the overall tendency toward anti-intellectualism; and the inability to distinguish mental health from mental illness. There is also a final and more general part that is (14) chaos, resulting in the pervasive sense that “nothing works anymore.”¹

Such stages are already beginning to occur in those places on the globe where natural-artificial catastrophes—that is, those that, like Hurricane Otis in Acapulco, which went from being a simple and natural tropical storm to a devastating category 5 hurricane due to the global warming generated by our greenhouse gas emissions— have taken hold and devastate entire towns and nations.

2.2 The effects of Anthropogenic Global Warming are also seen in other places:

We know well that, as predicted by the NOAA Climate Prediction Center, in the years 2023 and 2024, the meteorological phenomenon known as El Niño (ENSO) is causing a disproportionate increase in the frequency and intensity of all hydrometeorological phenomena (floods, heat waves, droughts and hurricanes). The forest fires that Canada suffered between April and June 2023 were the most extensive in its history, burning 10 million hectares and displacing 120,000 people. And the same thing happened in Greece, Türkiye and Portugal. Such fires did not fail to affect the permafrost of the northernmost regions of the earth, which, when melting, increased methane emissions and these, in turn, increased the overheating of the earth.

Such phenomena are slowing down the thermohaline current that circles the planet. In this regard, on February 9, 2024, the study “Physics-based early warning signal shows that AMOC is on tipping course” was published in the journal *Science Advances* by three researchers from Utrecht University: R. M. van Westen, M. Klipuis and H. Dijkstra. Their study shows that the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) could collapse if humanity continues to emit such enormous amounts of greenhouse gases (GHGs) as it does now. Since the AMOC is part of the thermohaline current that runs through all the seas of the world carrying heat, humidity and nutrients from the equator to the poles and the European subcontinent obtains its temperate climate thanks to the heat and humidity coming from the AMOC, if it did not exist, the European climate would be like that of similar latitudes on the

¹ Goodchild, 2010.

American continent. For example, the large cities of Norway, Sweden, Finland, the United Kingdom or Russia, since they are located on the same latitude as the vast uninhabited regions of Canada, would suffer the same intense cold that prevents such Canadian regions from being massively inhabited. The study also indicates that the phenomenon of the slowdown of the AMOC has already begun and, consequently, it has lost two thirds of the strength it had a century ago. And if greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are not significantly reduced, it could lose 90% of its strength in a period between 25 and 50 years, causing much of Europe to freeze.

The year 2023 has been described as “the warmest in all recorded history.” And 2024 is expected to be even worse as its first three months have already set record temperatures.

In the years 2023-2024 the earth is giving us a sample of what the “normal” climate will be in the coming decades if we do not stop the GHG emissions responsible for Anthropogenic Global Warming. In these months, humanity will enjoy one last opportunity that, perhaps, could make us wake up to the reality of global warming.

It is for no other reason that, as we indicated before, the current Secretary General of the United Nations Organization takes advantage of all the forums at his disposal to indicate that we are in a climate emergency that threatens to cause enormous suffering not only to humanity but to many other species. And Guterres is not the only one trying to alert humanity. Years before, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicated in its 6th Report (IPCC, 2021) that if in 2030, humanity does not manage to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by half, it will be practically impossible to cancel them in 2050 which is a key element to maintain the Paris Agreement signed by 196 nations in 2015 and endorsed in Dubai in 2023.²

However, despite the evidence and warnings, and as Dr. Rees emphasizes, humanity simply does not react... Why?

III. OF THE REASONS FOR INACTION

In his study *Où aterrir*, Bruno Latour offers us his point of view regarding the causes of the ongoing civilizational collapse:

[...] the elites have been so convinced that there would be no future life for everyone that they decided to get rid, as quickly as possible, of all the burdens of solidarity: that is deregulation. That a kind of golden fortress had to be built for the small percentage that would manage to be safe: that is the explosion of inequalities. And that, to disguise the gross selfishness of this flight from the common world, its original motivation had to be rejected outright: that is the denial of climate change (Latour, 2019: 28).

Although we fundamentally agree with Latour, we cannot help but notice that his assessment implies the existence of a super-powerful, well-organized and educated group—the “elites”—which would be behind all the evils caused to humanity.

From our point of view it is not necessary to assume the existence of such a powerful entity. It is enough to carefully examine the way in which the global economy has developed to appreciate that the devastation of the planet that is taking place today is simply necessary or, to put it in the words of Hannah Arendt, banal.³

²<https://www.france24.com/es/medio-ambiente/20231208-nuevo-borrador-de-la-cop28-el-fin-del-uso-de-los-combustibles-fósiles-sobre-la-mesa>

³ In this regard, let us remember that Hannah Arendt (1963), in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, presented the concept of the banality of evil to explain the behaviors that led to one of the worst genocides carried out by humanity.

IV. A MULTI-CAUSED COLLAPSE

From our point of view, there are multiple factors that, in our days, add up to motivate human inaction in the face of the approaching civilizational collapse:

4.1 Ignorance

Ignorance regarding what is happening with the world's climate is a primary reason for inaction. Someone might say: "I haven't noticed that the climate is changing and, therefore, I haven't asked myself anything and I'm not doing anything about it." However, given that Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW) has been generating innumerable effects throughout the earth, we consider that more than pure and simple ignorance, in this case it is a phenomenon such as that described by Robert Proctor in his *Agnotology* (2008): ignorance regarding the AGW has been induced by dark interests. Let us remember that Proctor in his book *Agnotology: Why don't we know what we don't know?*⁴ maintains that agnotology revealed its importance after the tobacco crisis of the middle of the last century, that is, when cases of lung cancer associated with tobacco consumption increased and made the causal link increasingly evident while, at the same time, "serious" –and highly publicized– studies appeared that dissociated it, such as the advertising campaigns: "Doctors smoke Camel" or that of Chesterfield cigarettes, which claimed to have "scientific evidence" of the health benefits of its product.⁵ In the case of the cancer-smoking association, humanity learned that big tobacco companies and the scientists associated with them were capable of lying out of interest.

From our point of view, what is now happening with those who claim that there is no clear evidence of climate change, that on earth "cyclical climatic variations have always existed", they are simply under the effects of agnotology: their ignorance –and their inaction as a result– has been created by the worst interests. Likewise, it is from this source that climate change deniers emanate.

4.2 Militarization

Nowadays, practically all the nations on earth are militarized, and above all, the most powerful. The military, consequently, are very close to the decision makers –or they themselves are– and their ideology –"defender of the nation's high values"– continues to prevail in discussions. The soldiers of all nations have, consequently, a precise objective that has been imprinted on them since their years in the academy: to defend their homeland from enemies. The enemy is anyone who, in one way or another, affects, or could affect, the interests of the nation. That is why, if a sovereign nation with whom I share a border decides to join a group of nations that I consider enemies, it could be grounds not only for sanctions but for an invasion! Just as Putin's Russia did with Ukraine.

For a soldier, trained as we previously indicated in the defense of his nation, there is nothing more incomprehensible than "planetary consciousness", than the "union of humanity", than human cooperation and solidarity.

The *urgent* items always displace the *important* ones and since wars are always urgent (because life itself is at stake) the very important and necessary fight against the global phenomenon of AGW takes a back seat ... when it is not definitively forgotten.

If humanity does not significantly reduce –or, preferably, annul– the military academies of different nations and prevent generals from being part of the select groups that make the most important

⁴ Robert Proctor is a professor of History of Science at Stanford University and wrote, in 2008, the book *Agnotology. The Making and Unmaking of Ignorance*.

⁵ "Now, scientific evidence on effects of smoking. Much milder Chesterfield is best for you!"

decisions, humanity will not be able to build the planetary consciousness that is demanded to effectively fight against AGW.

The militia is a total institution and, as such, is absolutely opposed to democracy. An army could never be democratic. Only one should take all decisions. The task of others is simply to obey. Therein lies its efficiency and its enormous power ... against the planetary consciousness and the harmony of humanity.

In a world where urgent wars dominate and important climate change mitigation takes a backseat, inaction is a necessary consequence.

4.3 *The democratic farce*

The West likes to call itself “democratic” and the “defense of democracy” has been a flag in more than one international conflict. Those of us who live “in democracy”, however, know too well what, in most cases, it has become a mere marketing exercise where one can even count what it “costs” to win an election, since Votes are bought and, regardless of the quality of the “platform” of the candidate in question, if the right amount is invested, operators can make virtually anyone to win the election.

We should never have forgotten what Aristotle mentioned centuries ago: *Democracy* is the degraded version of the *Republic*. Let us remember that Aristotle, in chapter III of his *Politics*, indicates that the difference between a good and a bad government lies in the fact that it works for the good of all and not only for that of the king (tyranny), a minority (oligarchy) or a majority (democracy). In a *Republic*, rulers are expected not to operate in a factional manner and to truly seek the well-being of all citizens.

What Thomas Hobbes maintained in his *Leviathan* was not too different: to overcome the stage of wars of all against all, it is necessary that there be a Leviathan that is the only one with “free exercise of force” and that “works for the common good.” The Leviathan, by setting limits on “individual interests” in favor of the common good, is a key element of social peace and, in all cases, its task is to limit the worst human instincts: the desire for dominance, greed, avarice.

Establishing a republican, aristocratic or even monarchical government —but in the sense in which Aristotle or Hobbes defined it, that is, one where one governs not for the well-being of one, a group or the majority, but for the good of all—, should be an urgent task for all nations on earth. Only governments that are truly concerned about the future well-being of their fellow citizens will be able to establish the agreements that humanity urgently requires to stop the looming civilizational collapse. And since truly republican governments are far from being the majority, most of humanity remains inactive, resting in their comfort zone ... until collapse breaks out.

4.4 *The corporate boom*

The fourth reason that, from our reading, explains human inaction in the face of AGW is the main element of the economic model prevailing in the world today: the corporate boom.

For more than a decade we have known —thanks to the brilliant study *The Network of Global Corporate Control* by Vitali, Glattfelder and Battiston (2011)— that, today, the true owners of the world are not national governments but a handful of companies: Only 147 large corporations own 40% of the world's GDP ..., and 700 of them own 80% of the GDP.

In all corners of the world, corporate capital dominates and imposes fashions, tastes and even eating styles. And everyone loves that. The always beautiful, modern and clean corporations shield us and that prevents us from noticing their true nature: they are the ultimate invention of human greed, they constitute true economic predators (Klein, 2002).

Corporations have not only appropriated capital, but they are also responsible for the decline in workers' rights, the attack by States against their citizens and the establishment of a legal system that favors them.

As Bakan (2004) reminds us, a corporation is a “legal person”, that is, an individual with full rights and obligations: it can acquire goods, hire workers, obtain loans, establish demands and respond to them, it can increase its assets and even go bankrupt... although it cannot go to jail. The corporate “legal person” makes every capitalist's dream come true: carrying out ventures without fear of the lawsuits that any error could generate: the corporation allows the capitalist to enjoy limited liability, that is, in fact, it makes him lose responsibility.

The corporation can be called the masterpiece of the neoliberal system: it generates enormous amounts of capital for its investors and makes their dream come true by achieving the increased and quickest possible return on the invested capital. And if the actions of a corporation produce the loss of human life or the destruction of ecosystems —externalities— the owners, that is, the investors, have no responsibility, only their managers or administrators can be blamed for the damages as is shown by the case of Bhopal (1984)⁶.

The dominant corporate world is, with the complicity of humanity, responsible for the devastation of the world.⁷

The corporate legal person was a very bad idea that will have to be withdrawn if we want humanity to overcome the obstacle of the AGW. It is essential that the legal figure of the *corporation* be dissolved and that all those that bear such a name be reconverted into *companies*, recovering responsibility in the process. Only in this way will humanity be able to defend itself from its (now) immense power and to effectively confront Anthropogenic Global Warming.

4.5 Anthropocentrism and its consequences

In a previous essay we indicated that anthropocentrism is nothing more than the expression, on a social scale, of narcissism and, consequently, has caused humanity to consider itself “created in the image and likeness of God”, “chosen people” and, even, separated from the animal kingdom “humans are not animals” (Tamayo, 2015, 2024). Such an idea extended its power to our living space, generating criminal geocentrism and even pathetic flat earthism. I call geocentrism “criminal” because we must not forget that on February 16, 1616, a group of theologians concluded that the idea of the sun being at the center of the universe and the earth rotated on itself “was stupid, absurd in philosophy and formally heretical for contradicting Sacred Scripture” (Alonso, 2016), which caused the persecution and condemnation of Galileo Galilei and, almost 16 years before –on February 17, 1600– the immolation at the stake of Giordano Bruno.

⁶ Let us remember that on the night of December 2 to 3, 1984, in Bhopal, India, there was a leak of methyl isocyanate, a substance that the Union Carbide company used to produce pesticides, which generated, according to official figures, more than 3,500 immediate deaths and another 15,000 who died in the following weeks. Another 50,000 —those severely affected— still suffer today from pulmonary fibrosis, asthma, blindness, tuberculosis, spontaneous abortions, neurological damage and asthenia. And those affected called “mild” number half a million. The Union Carbide executive who lived in India, Warren Anderson, paid a small bail after the accident, escaped to the USA and died in Florida at the age of 92 without ever setting foot in a court. The American government never accepted the extradition request requested by the Indian government. Almost 30 years later, only two Indian executives of the company were sentenced to 2 years in prison (but with the right to bail and they can also appeal so the trial will extend even longer). And, to make matters worse, the fines against Union Carbide were insufficient and paid late. Finally, in 1999, Dow Chemical acquired Union Carbide and, of course, denies any responsibility for what happened. The “legal person” who caused the deaths and damage simply disappeared. There is no longer anyone to sue. Cf. <https://www.europapress.es/internacional/noticia-condenan-dos-anos-carcel-directivos-union-carbide-20100607165943.html>

⁷ Tamayo (2021).

We know, however, that anthropocentrism is nothing more than a crazy reaction to the more than patent human weakness. As Dany-Robert Dufour (1999) indicates, the human being is a neotene, that is, a species that, like the axolotl and other amphibians, is born, grows, reproduces and dies without having reached maturity. Although it is true that human beings manage to reach physical maturity after childhood, psychological maturity, unfortunately, is prevented by religions, schools, armies and political leaders, which feed on human undervaluation.

Anthropocentrism is a type of ideology that denies the unity of Dasein⁸ with the world and, consequently, leads those who suffer from it to believe themselves superior to the other species on earth. Therefore, it is allowed not only to exploit nature but also to exterminate species that affect its interests. Anthropocentrism is the ideological foundation of extractivism and is a serious disease because, given that the world is inherent to us, by completely consuming a mineral or exterminating an animal or plant species we only affect our own world, that is, ourselves. Anthropocentrism, as a pathology of the mundanity of Dasein, presents itself in various forms:

- *Extractivism* refers to the abusive treatment of humanity with respect to its world: the pure and simple overexploitation of nature (of the biosphere, the hydrosphere, the cryosphere or the lithosphere).
- *Consumerism* is a behavior that the industrial revolution made possible and leads humans to acquire countless products, many of them unnecessary and that fill up the residences of the wealthiest.
- *Innovative arrogance* is, as its name indicates, a disease specific to a specific sector of the population: the innovative community, nowadays, the techno-scientific community. It refers to that behavior, promoted by irresponsible and greedy businessmen, who hire scientists to present them with technical solutions to their production problems. Innovative arrogance appears in scientists who fall into the game of such entrepreneurs and propose practical solutions without clearly knowing the effects that the proposed substances or processes could have.
- *Avoidance* describes a type of psychopathology that exists in those who, faced with specific threats (derived, for example, from global environmental change or the sixth mass extinction of species), choose to escape through cults, drugs, video games and other forms of "entertainment". Evasion allows us to live in comfortable alternative worlds... while the house burns down.
- The *saving desire* consists of a type of arrogance where, whoever suffers it, attributes a power that exceeds them and makes them say: "as a superior species I take care of the poor and injured earth." The reality is that we are nothing more than one of nature's species, its power exceeds us and, rather, we should learn to respect it. Because it exceeds human power, the desire to save usually leads to frustration and inaction because "nothing can be done" or "it is too complex." The narcissism of those who suffer from the desire to save prevents them from noticing that what is at risk is not life -nature- but themselves, that is, human civilization itself and, consequently, it is not about "saving another" but saving oneself.

The mentioned "pathologies of worldliness" do produce actions, but these either go in exactly the opposite direction to future well-being —the actions of extractivists, consumerists, or arrogant innovators— or they are of such short scope —those of the "saviors of the earth"—which even seem like a simulation. From our point of view, all these pathologies are at the root of the failure of the countless summits, colloquiums, COPs and other meetings that have been attempted to stop or, at least, mitigate AGW.

⁸ Following the teachings of Heidegger, we call *Dasein* that entity that "am in each case myself." (Heidegger, 1927:53).

4.6 The failure of schools and universities

Universities and educational institutes do not help to avoid the scourge either because they are completely taken over by overloaded curricula and very important for *a world without civilizational collapse*. The student, society's natural agent of change, is so busy keeping up with his multiple tasks and activities that he simply does not have the time necessary to dedicate to solving the problems of his world. His very urgent activities translate into inaction regarding the phenomenon of Global Warming. And the situation of his teachers is no different. It is then that we realize that neither the creators of the career curricula nor the directors of the universities and institutes believe that a socio-environmental crisis is approaching. And if they, generally well-informed and prominent academics, are not convinced of the seriousness of the problem... Why should we expect the general public to care?

The conclusion of this section is simple: the few awakened citizens are alone and, meanwhile, the phenomenon advances. The Paris Agreement has been exceeded since the temperature has already exceeded 1.5 degrees Celsius for 12 consecutive months. The owners of the ball –the corporations– are not interested in changing anything and citizens will only be able to recognize the problem when they are faced with it.

This civilization, we cannot but regret, seems doomed to collapse.

IV. EARTH FOR ALL'S PROPOSAL TO STOP COLLAPSE

In their recent analysis the new members of the Club of Rome –Sandrine Dixson-Declève, Owen Gaffney, Jayati Ghosh, Jørgen Randers, Johan Rockström and Per Espen Stoknes– published the essay *Earth for All. A survival guide for humanity*. This essay is the updated version of the study *The limits to Growth* prepared by the Club of Rome in 1972 –Donella and Dennis Meadows, Jørgen Randers and William Behrens III. Let us remember that these authors applied System Dynamics to review the future of humanity. Associated with the Professor of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Jay Wilson Forrester (1918-2016) –who developed the World One program, correlating various variables of our civilization– they proposed that if humanity continued consuming in the usual way (the scenario Business as usual or BAU) a civilizational collapse would occur shortly after the middle of this century. In the 2022 version, the authors of *Earth for All* apply the improved World One program and propose two possible scenarios: the first is entitled *Too Little, Too Late* and the second is *The Giant Leap*. The first scenario is catastrophic: in 2050 a socio-environmental collapse begins which, among other things, causes the population to be reduced by half in 2100. The second scenario suggests that the crisis can be overcome if humanity becomes aware of the coming socio-environmental problem and collaborates to face it, eliminates its differences and rich countries support poor ones with resources and technology. In the Giant Jump all nations perform five turnarounds:

- The *elimination of poverty*. For decades, the economic growth of rich countries has been accompanied by the push for fossil fuels. The world now requires a path to energy from renewable sources, agriculture to be regenerative and cities to be sustainable. This implies that the International Monetary Fund allocates at least one billion USD annually to poor countries in order for them to generate “green jobs.” The World Trade Organization must also ensure that “intellectual property rights” regarding energy from renewable sources and other technologies in the field are left behind to encourage their dissemination in poor nations.
- The *reduction of inequality*. In recent decades, inequality in the world has grown and the richest 10% keep more than 50% of global income. This generates dysfunctional and polarized societies. To avoid this, Earth for All proposes that all governments establish taxes so that the richest 10% of their societies do not keep more than 40% of the nation's income, as well as that they empower workers and their unions with the aim of improving their well-being.

- *Empowering women.* There are many regions of the earth where being born a girl is still a disadvantage, places where access to education and well-paid work are exclusive to men. Experience has taught that the Nordic European countries, with market economies that invest in gender equality and families, have the best well-being and development indices on the planet. Such nations have also shown that when women have control over their lives they choose to have fewer children. To advance this change of direction, it is necessary to increase access to education for girls and women, encourage them to occupy leadership positions, as well as establish widespread and egalitarian pension systems.
- *Use of regenerative agriculture.* The agro-industrial food production model that the Green Revolution bequeathed to us –full of agrochemicals and genetically modified seeds– although it is true that it prevented serious famines, is currently taking its toll on us. Modern agriculture and livestock farming far exceed planetary limits and are the main causes of greenhouse gas emissions. They are responsible for deforestation, the loss of biodiversity and the establishment of vast dead zones in rivers, lakes and seas. Advancing the practice of regenerative agriculture involves avoiding overconsumption and waste in rich nations and establishing sufficient supply chains in poor nations. Farmers and ranchers must adopt techniques that allow for healthier soils and seas, avoiding harmful subsidies. It is also necessary for the population to adopt healthy diets –significantly reducing the consumption of meat and everything that involves large emissions of greenhouse gases.
- *To carry out an energy transformation.* The 6th IPCC Report (2021) indicates that to maintain the average temperature of the earth below 1.5 °C, it is necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by half in 2030 and eliminate them completely in 2050. To achieve such an objective implies, according to *Earth for All*, that emissions be reduced by half every decade starting in 2020. This is feasible given that the technologies are available, affordable and scalable. And they cost the same, or even less, than fossil fuels. All that is required is the political will. It is also necessary to redesign the processes and electrify everything possible, transfer technology from developed countries to poor ones and significantly increase (more than a billion US Dlls annually) in the improvement and implementation of renewable sources.

Thanks to all these actions, the risk of a runaway climate on Earth would be significantly reduced, as well as the associated socio-environmental crisis (Dixson-Declève, 2022: 50). Carrying out *the Giant Leap* scenario, unfortunately, seems quite unlikely. The other, much more feasible scenario is called *Too Little, Too Late*. Such a scenario establishes that, if the same dynamics that the world has carried out from 1980 to 2020 continue, both population and economic growth will slow down, employment will be lacking, trust in governments will decrease, humanity's ecological footprint and the loss of biodiversity will increase. In the coming decades, this scenario indicates, poverty will persist in most of the world and inequality will destabilize rich countries. Some of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be achieved and this “will represent some progress in a world without planetary limits”, but, in general, there will be a dramatic increase in the Social Tension Index. This scenario does not establish an ecological or climatic collapse in this century, but the beginning of a social collapse after 2050. Such collapse will be a consequence of social division and ecological damage. This risk, the report indicates, will be particularly acute in those countries “poorly governed and with ecologically vulnerable economies” (Dixson-Declève, 2022: 35).

Unfortunately, it is highly unlikely that humanity will be able to take the necessary measures in time to stop the looming collapse.

V. RELEARNING TO BE HUMAN THANKS TO INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

It's not hard to imagine that when the first Sapiens were kicked out of the trees and forced to walk bipedally on the dangerous ground, they had to cooperate to survive. Since cooperation requires interhuman coordination, an increasingly precise and efficient language became essential. Consequently, only the most intelligent and collaborative prospered. In cooperation the life drive (the impulse to build increasingly larger units) is dominant. It was cooperation that allowed the first symbiotes⁹ to establish social institutions that increased solidarity. Among them we can refer to Potlatch (I am richer when I give more), Ubuntu (I am as others are) and Tequio collaboration (“today for you, tomorrow for me”)¹⁰.

Tequio is a current practice in some Mesoamerican towns through which the inhabitants of a community commit themselves to solidarity with their fellow humans: both in the harvesting of crops and in the construction of buildings for the common good and even for the personal good. Thanks to this social technology, the poorest communities in deep Mexico have been able to cope with life and maintain enviable joy and confidence in their communities.

It is no different with *Ubuntu*, in this regard let us remember that this notion is part of the conceptual map of Zulu/Xhosa philosophy and is its way of saying unity with the other: “I am because we all are”, “if everyone wins, I win”, “everything mine belongs to everyone” (Rovira, 2015).

The *Potlatch*, finally, was a practice where, once a year and between ritual dances, the leaders of the different native peoples of North America gave away –or destroyed– their belongings. It was prohibited by the Indian Act of the USA and Canada of 1884 for going against the “capitalist spirit.” In 1921 there were still around twenty indigenous people in prison for not complying with the mandate (Álvarez, 2017).

The respect for ecosystems and nature is also a remarkable cultural imprint in communal cultures, the best example was recently given by the Māori people¹¹, who were able to use the language of the invader, its law, and methods to recover the Whanganui River, the longest navigable river in *Aotearoa*¹² (New Zealand) from the United Kingdom (English Crown).

It was the “capitalist spirit” or, as we prefer to call it, “narcissistic” that caused the forgetting of their brotherhood to occur when the necessary separation of the first human clans occurred. Inequality and division soon appeared between people, as well as within each one of them – between whites and blacks or rich and poor. Immediately afterwards, wars over resources began and the other, who was previously the brother, the uncle, the nephew, became the different one, the foreigner and even the enemy. Finally, due to the comforts brought by the industrial revolution, *cooperative* institutions gradually became unnecessary and, in the end, fell into oblivion, which led to the loss of a good part of humanity¹³.

Education –necessarily repressive since the perversely polymorphous human requires his drives to be limited to live in society¹⁴– soon exacerbated the ravages of the civilizational model based on competition. Thanks to the studies of Neill (1974), Freire (1980), Foucault (1990) and Miller (1980), we know that *competitive* modern education can be a source of much suffering: it turns the educational act

⁹ Riechmann (2022).

¹⁰ Tamayo (2021: 21).

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C4%81ori_people

¹² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aotearoa>

¹³ We qualify this statement because many indigenous peoples –such as those of Bhutan, the Amazon and some of Latin America– continue to preserve these ancient practices.

¹⁴ Freud (1976/1930).

into a sadistic and castrating practice. In its desire to generate individuals capable of carrying out complex activities —competent professionals— authoritarian education established rigid procedures not only for selection and training but also for evaluation. The wonderful childhood curiosity and taste for knowledge were drowned in norms, rules and punishments applied to children and young people “for their own good.” In such an educational model, not only is the desire to know lost, critical capacity and creativity are also excluded¹⁵. In authoritarian education the libertarian desire: “to become who one is” (*Werde was du bist!*)¹⁶ is left out of the picture and tends to generate slaves, mere robots capable of mechanically carrying out the actions for which they were trained.

The “competitive” scheme was also reflected in the economy: the other became someone despicable, a competitor or a stupid consumer to be lured with deception to defraud them. Then greed, dispossession, capitalism, compound interest and, finally, corporations appeared.

As we indicated before, the modern corporation is a type of enterprise created with the aim of evading responsibility. The modern transnational corporation is not a mere commercial legal figure, it is, as indicated in a previous study¹⁷, a kind of Alien —an unconscious, incomprehensible, devastating and deadly “extraterrestrial being”— that threatens everyone because it is one of the main expressions of the death drive. Their only objective: the recovery, increased and as quickly as possible, of the invested capital means that they never worry about the sustainability of existing resources or the damage to the regions where they are located (the “externalities”); They don't even care about their consumers and are capable of offering them products that harm their health or processes that make the places where they live uninhabitable.

Dissolving the legal figure of the corporation —to reconvert *corporations* into *companies with responsibility*— would be a more than efficient measure in the right direction, the *demilitarization* of states and the recovery of unity with each other (*Mitsein*) and the world (*In-der-Welt-sein*), too, since they would promote cooperation, solidarity and symbiosis with our natural environment.

The window of opportunity to stop the worst effects of AGW is still open, it is up to us to achieve it.

VI. CONCLUSION

The reasons for human inaction on global warming are a series of intertwined variables: induced ignorance, militarism, democratic farce and anthropocentrism, all of which allow the unrestricted exploitation of nature and are leading humanity to a socio-environmental crisis of such dimensions that make it very likely that, as indicated by the Club of Rome (Dixson-Declève, 2022), a Civilizational Collapse will occur shortly after the middle of this century. It will be our children and grandchildren, as well as many other species that have accompanied humanity's stay on Earth, who will pay —and dearly— for the transgenerational tyranny currently in force.

At this moment everything seems to indicate that we will not be able to stop the collapse in time and, consequently, we will bequeath to our descendants a depredated world with an *unstable climate*.

Cuernavaca, México, 31 de marzo de 2023.

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