II Condottiere

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Abstract

The article is about a figure central for occidental history, the Condottiere, an installed mercenary who originally fought for Italian town states to secure their interests. But he became more than just a historical figure, since standing for myth-grounded values and norms of conduct which became prevalent again and make up our today's life spaces in a considerable degree. Spaces moulded by the activities of his recent descendants who became tamer, on the one hand, in getting more bureaucratisized than their forerunner, but on the other hand, exactly through this, also became even more powerful than their predecessor already had been. A development linked to the individualistic as value of own rank, a value that turned out to become the norming leading principle in modern Capitalism, not confined to condottieri. Related, the capitalistic utopia could spread out, a utopia in the original sense but a one inside which we all live in, and the crisis of which we are experiencing once more. Both utopia and crisis enabled by the formats of domination those condottieri held, and hold up still in a mechanized structure of governing things that lost its meaning.

Entrance

The figure of the Condottiere, in its essence the one of a warlord, has its origins in the Medieval Ages, and reached its first peak during the period following, the Renaissance. Its second peak came with the rise of modern Capitalism and holds on still today – still, because signs of erosion became clearly visible.

By his origins, the condottiere was a man who fought for the diverse Italian town states competing each other, in extending or defending their influence. And important, he did so for money, not out of personal conviction, home-boundedness, or other 'emotional' reasons of similar kind. This distinguishes the condottiere from other military leaders, both of that epoch and at other times – for instance, a Jeanne d' Arc or an Epaminondas have been no condottieri. The condottiere is another type of leader. He is not ideal-driven but a "professional", one would say today, the word alone evoking associations of a considerable degree of cold-heartedness, rational procedure, and last but not least, technicality; aspects to return to. The only emotional reason for a condottiere's activity might be glory, to achieve some fame in performing what he was from his essence, namely an installed, paid mercenary who led his men to victory and quite practical, to money, too. Personal fame, like money, is a very individualistic force for triggering action, like the respective town state is he was fighting for. In their combined impact, these are also moments to return to when comparing the old, 'original' condottiere with his descendants, the managers of today.

Fame – like some of their today's descendants, some condottieri had a heroic touch, being portrayed in *Fortune*, *Wall Street Magazine* or as statues and paintings at pronounced places inside the town states in the service of which they stood. The hero archetype is another motive of the condottiere both new and old, despite the quite unspectacular since technical performance of the job in the latter's actual daily business. To expand/defend and to "rationalize things" (which-, or whomever) comes out to be of a technical sobriety; in today's managerial diction, it is ground work just to be done, and somebody "in charge" has to do it. The owners as the final responsibles were it not. An additional parallel between old and new condottieri; the author knows, because he has been one of them.

But this peculiar kind of historical injustice is not of concern here. It is the heroic character instead, or more precisely, the heroic attributes subscribed to the condottiere, from the Italian blueprint over the Western movie-cavalry leader to the famous manager. Like personal fame and personal money, it is the triumph of the individual that becomes archetypized in the condottiere (again, old and new), the individual who surrenders the world as it is, by removing still existing barriers for individual expansion:

The 15th century "striped tiger cat" Gattamelata leading 'his' town state to victory – and hence, to endurance, and hence, to life – Lee Iacocca moving 'his' enterprise out of the perils of extinction towards the glory of a dominant market position. And so on. Individual deeds related to distinctive individualities, causing the prosperity and fame of the individual entities for which they are responsible. Referring to the idea of the archetypal, it were heroic deeds performed by heroic individuals, aiming at the domination of all what matters, in a literal as well as a symbolic meaning. The individual became a cosmic force, and moreover, a force enabled to at all create a world, nothing minor (the myth tells). Every myth of management settles upon it, from past to present, and during its pursue since some 13th or 14th century, it was a myth that became such prominent that it could turn into common sense even, having been transformed into a one of the individual capability, not confined to condottieri; too an aspect to return to.

On Condotta, Individual Developments, and Us

'Condottiere' stems from *condotta*, a mode of leadership and of conquest at the same time, both by mythical intention and real consequences. Condotta again stems from the Latin *conducere*, an intensified form of leading (*ducere*), denoting a "leading together" (*con*), a leading as *effort* to bundle forces towards a clear and predefined goal. A mode which is no historical theme only but quite actual since it recently experienced its own Renaissance, especially as regards its effort-character.

When the task is condotta, we have to start with the Renaissance to unroll the threads of development. The epoch is more than just a label for sober historical description but in a mythological respect, a believed occidental golden age of artful splendour and human unfolding, and the believed origin of the fundaments of our today's self-understanding in large parts. A self-understanding that culminates in the conviction that we are free individuals whose actions are based upon free will and rational conception, individuals who are no longer chained by traditions of whichever kinds. Because from the ancestors to their modern descendants, the belief that everything is mouldable *as we like it*, in line with a pre-planned procedure following rational criteria, remained the backbone of each condottiere's faith.[1] In opposition to its criteria applied, the belief itself is not grounded rationally but myth-anchored. And due to that, it turned out to be a belief persisting, irrespective of all drawbacks it had to suffer during the actual terms of its realization.

When we look at the condottiere's reference epoch, it is not important if the Renaissance really was like we see it; it is of importance what we believe that it was and therefore, has to be. We interpret that epoch (as we do with others) from our nowadays perspective, which means that we unwillingly add a teleological drive into a sequence of events and contexts we call 'history' then. This holds true for the vista of our above self-understanding, as well as, and as inevitably, for the whole narrative presented here. Especially since the latter strongly relies upon personal evidence, that is, upon a highly subjective and out of that alone, necessarily biased source. Nevertheless, despite those obstacles there exist some *universalia*, as Jerome Bruner coined it, some cultural patterns of development which are not, or at least not exclusively, biased ones in the sense of teleology, and which therefore can become the object of "meaningful narratives".[2] Second, those universalia can be interpreted to embody narratives in themselves, leading ideas in the original meaning of an *idea*, representing an inner mental image, an *eidos* about the world as it is, to use that mythological term.[3] On the top of it and thirdly, due to their meaning-generating character and out of that, their capacity to shape realities, some of these leading ideas or narratives can be called myths.

Fourth, if such universalia exist, and if some of them are of a mythic nature, the individual self-understanding portrayed above surely belongs to the latter. One indicator is its old age. Because in itself, it is a self-understanding much older than the Renaissance but rooted finally in a judaeo-christian origin.

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[1] More specifically, a belief (and faith, at the same time) recurring to a conviction Y. Gabriel (1998) described as an encompassing myth, and hybris, of management. We'll come to this.

[2] Bruner, J. S.: Past and Present as Narrative Constructions, in: Straub, J. (1998): 46-80; and p.47 in peculiar, to universalia. As regards the prevalence of "leading ideas" necessary for a construction of meaning, some of them to meet in the Condottiere also, it is interesting to see that Bruner goes back to an old occidental idea, that of the *universale*. We see how contextually those ideas are that make up a culture's base, in the final, up to tautological entanglement.

[3] To the origins of *idea*, and the strong connectedness of an *eidos* [ειδος] to the literally paradigmatic, cf. Knobloch, E., in Rapp, F., ed. (1981): 24 - *paradeigma* [παραδειγμα] denotes a pattern of a *morphological* nature, originally, having an exemplary, "coining" and through that, "guiding" character.

Settling upon the myths of a master mind (God, man, the manager) dominating matter, and that it must be possible to create a world de novo, a literally artificial one that follows our wills and conceptions alone. 'Artificial' and 'artefact' stem from Latin *ars*, art, and *facere*, to make. And the mythic belief portrayed here, namely to make an own world solely by own means (equally important), an artful cosmos by one own, and for its own, it is crucial for understanding the condottiere's mythical longing, in both its past and present terms. So, on the fundaments of the old Christian mythology a neo-mythology arose, having individuality (no matter the kind) as new point of cosmic reference – man took over the place of his former God, and the roads towards a second, and continuous, creation became accessible for human beings: a *creatio continua* for all.

It became the problem, not only for condottieri. Although paradoxical at first sight, in being linked to the individual and its liberation, a creatio continua in the occidental mode is always linked to expansion; always since necessarily. Because it embodies the result of simple mass and power-relations; here: the power of masses. There are *many* individuals participating in this process, and in addition, they are *liberated*. They act as individuals not bound together by any kind of superordinated, meta-individual canon any more, a canon they would have to obey to, and that would confine their activities to only certain ranges.

Since such a restriction is lacking, individual expansion, first of all in adopting the form of growth, must not remain confined to the person, the single human being. To take an example from the original condottiere's context, also whole town states can grow, as 'individuals', or the enterprises emerging out of them. In its occidental case, individual liberation means liberated growth. Liberation became a growth process. Of course, it needs personal liberation as a premise, the conviction that there are no superimposed moral standards I have to follow except my own ones (whatever they could mean); but as such, the idea of individual expansion is not confined to individuals in the narrower sense but became universal.

This is one important aspect when we speak about our culture-specific liberation. The other is: Although in order to work successfully, the idea of a free individual is crucial for expansion, it needs yet additional premises, mythological and real ones, to actually do so. Especially as regards the mythological ones, premises that are valid still today, in constituting the base of our self-understanding – in general; and in peculiar, that of the condottiere, also in the latter's contemporaneous form.

So, a problem arises when all those unrestricted individualities collide in their expansionist moves: An expansion that is indefinite qua mythic intention can only happen at the expense of others – other town states, enterprises, humans; other values than those related to expanding. From now on, the individual entity could do what it wanted; as long as not stopped by others, and as far as the own means were allowing. It was a world that poured into our one, after the Italian town states had to give way to the more advanced forms of accumulating described in Max Weber's Protestant Ethics.

In line with a myth of the free market, the freedom of competition was constitutive for this new 'natural' order, settled upon its mythic premise that common welfare is secured by individual success, and culminating later in the myth that the production of material wealth would raise individual happiness,[4] a certainty of faith from those days up to our advertising sequels. It was, and still is, a neo-mythology because it isn't a consistent one, in mixing elements of the former Christian mythology with myths that arose out of an assumed human omnipotence.[5] If a mythology equals a true *system* of myths, some assumed consistency from its origin as *systema*, that what owns a unified structuring and hence, embodies a harmonic entirety, a cosmos in the old meaning[6], then that of the new myths was disharmony. They don't fit together, like the individualities they created, and like the worlds they generated. Pico della Mirandola, a Renaissance humanist in one of those town states, let God speak to man: "We bestowed you with no specific face or domicile, nor any peculiar gift, so that you can acquire and own any domicile, any face and all gifts you want in accordance to your opinion and will. All the other beings are confined through Our laws… [but] you can even define your nature in line with your free will." Because God had originally no place for the human kind; so he posed it in the world's midst.[7]

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[4] Pribram, K. (1998): 257, 258f.
[5] To more details, see Gehmann, U. (2003).
[6] From our Greek ancestors, who at the same time 'detected' the idea of the individual.
[7] Pico della Mirandola (ed. of 1996): 10f.

And he left it there from now on. Free to perform whatever he wanted and owning the heritage of a patriarchal Christian mythology, occidental man went on and did what he could: he created worlds, many worlds. Ranging from the original version 1.0 called "reality" with its manifold parallel worlds of today – of economy, of the private, of so-called parallel societies – to entirely virtual ones, in line with the myth that mind has to dominate over matter, the Lindendollar-worlds of a Second Life; a new paradise not in heaven but on earth, following the same expansion processes of capitalist individuals as the 1.0 version does. [8]

Mythical Realities

Such liberated worlds are in need of the Condottiere, of the manager skilled to ensure further expansion, in executing the interests of those who installed him. Especially since the basic kind of warfare changed, from direct territorial gains to more sophisticated forms of expansion: the market share, and the coping with complexity. An expert was needed to manage the masses generated by that in world 1.0 alone (not to speak of the others). Because as we saw, emergences of liberating were the setting free of masses, aligned with rising complexity. Not only masses of individual entities competing each other, first of all the new town states, the recent large corporations which are states inside the residual official state, that atavism of a remained cosmic order after the privatization programs of Neo-Liberalism; neo-states independent like their Renaissance forerunners, but much more powerful, flexible, and opposed to those, acting real globally. Also other masses were set free, a result of the realization of additional premises for successful expansion: Most important, the products of an alliance between science and technique; as an outcome, a mass ever growing, leading to the universe of products we know; as a premise, the precondition for dominating the physical world and her subjugation under the human will. Namely to handle masses of whatever kind for the sake of one's own purposes; that is, for individual purposes only. And to do so value-free, 'objectively', no matter the respective masses or purposes in question.[9] An alliance that started in the universities of the Italian town states and which still continues, in being the fundament of our so-called technical civilization. Without that alliance, the overall mythic aim would remain unreachable: domination of literally everything what matters, from bare matter to humans to even entire ecosystems. Because everything can get managed today, Mirandola's man proceeded, in managing also the formerly unmanageable.

Despite all their differences, it is this myth of management that probably is the most basic trait common to the old 'original' and the new condottieri of nowadays. Probably, because we have no chance to ask the Renaissance forerunners; but according to personal evidence at least, it is a basal belief of their recent offspring. Following this kind of an indirect concluding from present to past, based on this belief, the next common habitual element is the mythic wish to ban the Being, and to perform this by the sole application of *technical* means; and thirdly, connected to the magic procedure, the utopian longing to erect artificial worlds, performed in the mentality to "create" them (see above), to *construct* them instead of letting them just grow. To do so in a *total* manner is what distinguishes the condottiere's modern pendant from the original. Since the full onset of modernity, the latest since mid 19th century, there have been no 'sacred areas' left which should, or just simply could not become the object of management, domains of life and space (e.g., a Brasilian rain forest) which formerly stayed secure from getting managed. In the author's opinion, this totality in claim is the most important difference between a nowadays' condottiere and his Renaissance forerunner. Because it both has enhanced and is keeping alive formatting processes of unprecedented kind, not only in the narrower realms of managing, those concerned with merely administrative processes.

Compared to these three essential traits, and again, according to personal evidence, the fourth one, to embody mercenaries and through that, to be externally driven 'professionals' in the final, is not of a minor importance but will not regarded explicitly – because it leaves its mark in the other traits already, in enhancing their combined impact. Based on that kind of evidence, the remaining common traits, of embodying a hero archetype and the desire for becoming fameful, are also not considered separately, since they too go up in the others. The hero archetype is connected to the wish of banning the Being (which is a heroic effort, by its very essence), and the fame motive is connected with that wish; because who if not such a figure is worth to get famous?

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[8] www.faz.net/secondlife; last call 23. Sept. 2009
[9] An attitude that, also applied to its lived expression in daily culture, is most visibly expressed in Francis Bacon's *Nova Atlantis*. And later on, in its traits of having adopted a horror scenario unwillingly, in B. F. Skinner's Science Fiction *Futurum II*.

In rather condensed shape, here we have the most fundamental traits of a myths-grounded psychology making up a "typical" condottiere.[10] Now, based on the author's experience in having been one of them, let's examine these traits and the developments they triggered.

The Myth of Management

Every mythos, states Blumenberg, does own a narrative core with only marginal capabilities for variation.[11] Examined in such a respect, the modern myth of management's core is: everything could, and also must be managed.[12] Because there is nothing left that is, or could, be un-manageable per se. It means that every individual entity in the world, from the person to larger entities cannot, and has not to stay truly individual but has to become managed. In the direction of the above Condotta and as a prerequisite for management, the respective individuality has to be made *suited* first, for becoming managed then. After their conquest, the result consists in individualities *organized*, i.e., none in sensu strictu. Or more precisely, the real individual traits of the managed and hence, organized item do not count any longer; the individuality in question became formatted, an item exactly. Remaining individual traits only count when they turn to come out as problematic, that is, when they begin to interfere with the overall effort to manage: The employee who doesn't work, i.e., who does not *function* properly; the human resistance of every kind, based on the denial to function only, i.e. to *be* a function only; and more of the like, last residuals of an individuality that isn't willing to become engulfed. Expressed in management diction, when these and other "human factors" are occurring which severely disturb the organization machinery, individuality regains importance, but only then.

In other words, management is about Conducere, "to lead together", to arrange the things in a confining way, to group them together so that they cannot escape, do not run away from our plans. Congruent with the author's practical evidence, conducere, the today's *conduct*, is a crucial term with regard to mythological roots that inherently belong to our culture. Firstly, with regard to an occidental understanding of the Self that had its advent in those condottieri's times[13] and spread out since then, characterizing our predominant self-understanding today: interpreting humans as essentially self-destined, free-acting individual beings capable of making the world's entities obedient to their wishes and goals. And secondly, conducere embodies a term that sheds light to our very understanding of management as such – what it is, mythologically as well as in its practical transmissions, but first and foremost, what it *has* to be.

Conducere is the heart piece of management, a term of Italian origin, too; Maneggiare meant "to keep horses at bay",[14] or in mythological terms: to tame the wild, the yet un-led, in making it obedient to our wishes. A conception of management which expresses a deep occidental conflict, at the same time, based upon a patriarchate mythology of dominance and submission: Natura vs. Cultura, the wild vs. the tamed, the "cultivated". Just to show how deeply rooted such a world conception is, inside our cultural sphere: *agriculture* stems from there, the very base of civilization, the act of delimiting human beings from a primordial world. Not just from time to times but in a lasting manner, that is, by its mythic intention, forever. Until today, nature vs. culture symbolizes the perceived necessity to tame everything which crosses our paths, to submit it, not allowing for that it might lead an existence by its own, non-dominated, not subjugated to our plans. That means, from those Italian town states to their descendants, the today's large enterprises, i.e. from the early beginnings up to our present, the necessity to submit everything. And to do so both inside and outside the respective city walls in question. In the ethics of the Occident, Spengler says, everything is direction, claim for power, intentional impact towards the distant.[15]

In line with such a mythology, the condottiere's job was, and is, to ensure domination, via expanding subjugation of adverse 'natural' forces not tamed yet. Or in focused shape, as the one the author experienced: to colonize the wilderness via transforming it into a cultivated space through the art of war.

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[10] *Type* comes from Greek *typein*, to coin – the traits listed here are assumed as coining, in other words.
[11] Blumenberg, H. (1996): 40
[12] Next to the author's personal evidence, see Bowles, M. (1997).
[13] To this, see J. Burckhardt's classic on the Renaissance (ed. of 1985): 93, where it is emphasized in mythical terms
[14] B. Sievers, personal communication
[15] Spengler, O. (ed. of 1983): 435

A basic attitude of warfaring that reflects itself in the very wordings used, in the descriptions of the condotta-process itself, as well as in its outcome, a 'cultivated' organized world: Markets are to be conquered, competitors to be beaten, organizations are structured like armies, in divisions, headquarters, line and staff, the lead condottiere is named CEO, chief executive officer, and so forth. In ancient times, the managerial core process, namely subjugation followed by taming, was confined to a symbolical as well as practical outside, to everything "which is not us" in a deep anthropological and hence, practical respect.[16] It applied to competitors, primitives, prairies and other lands still not arable. Taking care of too the inside was not part of a condottiere's job. Recently, such a core process is confined to nothing, applies to an outside and inside alike, that is, in both its mythological and practical terms, to an adverse Natura in its total. It embraces not only markets and competitors or a suspecting public, but also those untamed adversities which remained located inside the city walls, the bulk of employees who have to be handled properly, managed like the above horses. Means, at the end of the day (in management diction) and without disguising euphemisms: to make them do what we, the today's condottieri, want them to do; because those who hired us want it. To do what has been ordered, irrespective of the employees' individual aspirations or peculiarities, independent from them as persons, as concrete human beings having individuality. When managing in the condottiere mode is an outcome of modernities' liberated individuality, then in its final terms, a myth of management has to remain paradoxical: outcome of the individual wish to erect worlds *ad gusto*, it destroys the individual. It has to do so by necessity, otherwise it wouldn't work as myth in practice.

Unfortunately, it comes out to be such crude and simple when stripped off its various, and not seldomly sophisticated camouflages. Above that, the effects of system dynamics come into play: once such a system has been erected, it develops its own justification and with it, its own control, following Max Weber's technical rationality of rightness: the things and circumstances are as they are because they are – to derive any "meaning" out of that would be obsolete. The underlying myths provide the meaning, and the machinery installed by them, through the world it generated by its very existence.[17]

To Ban the Being: Organization as World-Making

From its universal claim, such a myth of management aims at a magic ruse to ban the Being, and with its help, to organization as a "world-making" process.[18] It was the offspring of its surrounding myths sketched so far, but also of still other myths central for the neo-mythology described here. First, there is the myth of creative destruction, a myth comprising a capitalist Weltbild's base. In line with a *creatio continua*, telling that only the destruction of the old is a guarantee for progress – progress needed to ensure further expansion, i.e. growth – the constant removal of the already achieved, for the sake of the better yet to come.[19] That such kind of progress constitutes the viability of our world "as it is" in both its mythological and practical terms. All the recent condottiere's efficiency programs can be located here, together with their underlying myth he is following. By a divination of the old Aristotelian *causa efficiens*, it is a myth that tells that efficiency is the measure of every performance, and what is not efficient is not worth to exist. At least not in economic terms; but these became the fundament of our world as it is. That is, efficiency became a cosmic principle, like the individual. Simultaneously, the programs resulting out of this myth of efficiency provide necessary real premises to shape that world since they are applications of the alliance between science and technique. Without them, the condottiere couldn't handle the masses he is confronted with – capital, information, people, competitors, problems, and other products and matters of expansion.

Expansion is also crucial for the system as a whole: A capitalist world of such kind needs growth in order to survive, because without it, it would just simply cease.[20] Hence, it needs condottieri to keep it going. At the top of that, growth turned into a myth sui generis.

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[16] To this as a general anthropological feature, see one first fundamental description by R. Benedict (ed. of 1957) 10-12, when compared with an occidental conception; the latter in its consequences for management embodying a movement of *expansion* as it is outlined here: 29

[17] To refer to the topic held up esppecially in the 1980ies, the *meaningful* organization; an attempt pursued in particular by the movement of *organization development* or OD, an attempt to really include humans into an essentially machine-like process. As regards the role of myths here, cf. (inter alias) Agmon, O./McWhinney, W. (1989).

[18] See Chia, R., on *Organization as "World-Making"*, in Westwood, R./Clegg, S., eds. (2003): 109f.

[19] Schumpeter, J. A. (1943): 83

[20] To the need for growing as a premise of survival, see Polanyi, K. (1979): 133, who analyses the mechanic.

Strongly influenced by the idea of a world basically conceived as a *developing* one (in full sway since Darwin), the new world, the utopia of Capitalism *has* to be developed, and that *constantly*. A development to get performed by a continuous creation, the latter enabled by an uninterrupting sequence of creative destructions which are driven by ever increasing efficiencies.

Related to this and to creative destruction as the actual motor of moulding the relevant spaces our today's world is composed of, a myth of management settles upon a mythic maxim: that everything what *could* be done also *is* to be done. Linked to the myth of individual capability introduced in the beginning, it is a maxim that embodies such a myth's practical outcome. Its pursue let to the respective masses, not just of a simple physical kind, and to the main problems we are facing today: we cannot cope with the perfection of our products, we produce more than we can imagine and answer for[21], and although all this happens, we still generate ever new worlds of n.x versions, from virtuality to cloned organisms. Still triggered by the certainty of faith (we recall that mythic property) that there exist no cosmic barriers to hinder a procedure proposed by the maxim, neither in mythological, nor moral, nor real terms. That we can expand everywhere, in prolongation of Mirandola's man.

Brought down to its essentials, a management mode following its myth is basically organized in such a way that ideal states should be achieved, through procedures of formatting. To start with the latter, it is about management as a peculiar kind of *technique*. Like every technique, it is a management that relies upon programs, i.e., algorithmic devices to govern the behaviour of 'systems'. By its definition, an *algorithm* denotes a formal procedure from which it can be logically expected that it leads to certain results after it had started. It inherently owns three key properties: First, so-called inherent neutrality, that is, the power of the procedure lies in its logical structure and not in the respective issues, or the "materials" it gets applied upon. Second, basic simplicity – each one of the algorithm's steps is as simple as possible; and third, guaranteed results – apply the ever same, and the ever same will come out; provided the algorithm is carried out in an error-free manner.[22] To do so, everything to be managed has to be turned into a 'system' first, into an entity that is basically *technical*. The respective individuality plays no role since the aim is to format its behaviour, in order to tame it (see above, on agriculture), so that it can get "handled". In other words, the individuality in question has to get technisized first, for becoming itemized then. Entities, no matter their kind, become items, mere 'things' to get handled. This procedure makes up the core process of formatting, and hence, of such a management mode in the latter's practical terms – to format whichever individualities into things to be *treated*. In its realized terms, such a formatting happens via the application of "operating rules" which turn into "norms of conduct" then. To endorse the notions made so far with the life actually belonging to them, a case example shall be given. The inverted commata address the respective managerial sayings.

In case of the enterprise the author was part of, headed at "the Conquest of Eastern Europe", so the title of an internal mission statement (another coining term), there too was a body of operating rules. The basic idea, an idea that at the same time became condensed into a basic algorithm underlying all our actual activities, was: all concrete, lively phenomena we encounter (conquest is a rather concrete issue) can be *abstracted*; never overtly outspoken, it was our constituting unthought known. Abstracted via condensing them into the shapes of a very few, assessable Euclidean figures – in our case, diagrammatic representations of the 'overall business performance': the run of crucial variables, to be presented in Cartesian coordinate systems. This was 'best business practice', and nothing else. The result was to bring down all real-life events into the graphs of diagrams, into curves of some numbers aimed to reflect reality in 'figuring out' what happened. The notion of the number became the figure, the *figure* as such: Reality as such can be *figured out* entirely, pinned down in an 'executive summary' with its diagrams. It led to a peculiar albeit strange kind of evidence – what is not in the summary is not important. Like the infinitesimal accounts of Leibniz, such summaries were a condensation of former condensations, a process that – from its inherent logic – could proceed ad infinitum. Aimed at an even more successful domination through comprehension – look at the graphs and you know what's going on. Like in the infinitesimal account, to be achieved through a stepwise, ongoing approximation procedure.

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[21] Anders, G. (1987), back flap of his volume I

[22] Dennett, D.C.: "Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution and the meanings of life", in: ZEIT magazine, No.8, from February 16th, 1996, p.30

Especially in large companies with extended hierarchies, you need such processes of condensation, to 'keep the strings in hand' (maneggiare), to keep control, at the respective management level you are 'in charge' with;[23] the daily inevitabilities of myth in practice. The problem is not the method as such, but its intended range of application – *all* reality, at least all *relevant* reality, can be 'brought down' to the figures of some abstract graphs. What is not included there is not relevant, not even an appendix to the relevant real – it does not exist. It is *nothing*. Since only the relevant *is*. What doesn't appear inside these abstractions has no justification of existence. It remains the proverbial singular case, a singularity not to be considered any longer, merely a side-effect of the general condotta, no more. In a way, it was a quite Platonic way of managing. We all knew that the ideal is the real, and the real only a shadow of the ideal, nothing but just a special case of the general.

Your value as company member is figured out in these graphs, too, next to your position in the Reporting Line – resembling your rank in the official hierarchy: who has to report to, that is, to condense for whom. The reality symbolized through the graphs decides what your actual value is. Or more precise: since they, too, are the subject of interpretation (despite their "objectivity"), it are these *graphs* which finally decide that. What is interpreted out of them is objective – since only the 'essentials' of reality are depicted in them, in their curves and numbers – and thus, becomes *the* measure of your performance. In an emergent movement, a technical tool decides over human beings. It is ideal Human Engineering. What the revenues had been, in the last period; the profits made; and out of this but first and foremost, the earnings; and out of all the former, the future earnings to be expected. If a recent condottiere wants to stay alive (at least internally), he has to have answers to such questions without hesitation. Earnings became a value in itself, next to efficiency, another format-making, almost religious entity.

Since every 'successful performance' has to center on one cosmological relation, that of earnings relative to efforts. Efforts only insofar as they are able to pour into numbers, for becoming figured out then: into costs. All other efforts – of human acts, of enthusiasm, of sheer psychic and mental energy – are efforts, sure, this is admitted, but no relevant ones as long as they cannot get 'figured out' in costs, with their basal codex of the *bottom line*: A horizontal line anchored at a point somewhere on the y-axis, result of an abstraction, but deciding over life or death, of men, single organization units, and whole companies. You have to earn such and such amounts in the next period, to meet the bottom line – the magic line of performance where our overall costs are matched, the dragon defeated. The bottom line emerged as an outstanding ideal of today's globalized business, *the* measure of any performance's quality, mandatory goal for every manager; leading to a management which is 'lean', to huge cuts in labor force (blue and white collar alike), and to other ways to 'rationalize' the things. Humans valued at the bottom line. A procedure of inherent neutrality, basic simplicity, and with guaranteed results. Nobody who participated in our business meetings was upset, or even wondering; it was *normal*. Entire realities were condensed into numbers: quantified worlds.

Not only figuring out the past in terms of a "what had been achieved so far" (the remainder is uninteresting), but also the future – which is *your* future: Out of all those figures discussed, what are your intended next plans, to achieve more ideal states of being. In an unpleasant way for some participants, no matter if they attend the business meetings where these graphs are figured out. It makes no difference for these graphs – and for those deciding upon how their future run should look like – if there had been difficulties to realize the figures achieved so far. Even if they had been in a close vicinity to the "impossible", means: nearly impossible to overcome (which might happen, particulary in conquests). These are individual problems. Becoming the matter of concern only if the respective *function* to reach the goals is endangered; seriously. Otherwise, you remain inside the status of an anonymous individual case. And that also held valid if the figures had been *reached*, no matter under which difficulties. Because in a world where the ideal is the real, it is clear at least for the official mythology in use that the respective ideals *are* to be reached. In addition, the people in charge were so busy with reaching their ideals that they don't even noticed when they were reached. Another attitude towards the real (an opaque entity outside the graphs) that was 'normal'. The real of the ideal became reality.

As the example should demonstrate, formatting via management techniques is the magic ruse to ban the Being. It means that there is no exception to the rule, that exactly any individual behaviour beyond certain predefined thresholds has to be treated as a "deviation" from the norm (with extra programs to become applied then), thresholds defined by the master program.

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[23] Also here, the wording used provides a hint about the mindset using it. In 'normal' life outside a condotta-realm, only batteries are charged – or firearms.

It equals the destruction of the individual, being subjected under the respective individual purposes pursued by the program. The algorithms of management which make up his weaponry assure a *formatting* of the Being, again no matter the kind – information flows necessary to keep the organization running, production of items, treatment of employees, and so on. Such a formatting is a prerequisite for successful domination of the matters, because it assures *uniformity* – the very mythic aim of every algorithm. Irrespective how diverse the outcomes are, in their seeming variety, both the mythic aim and the procedure remain constant: to format, for dominating. Therefore the beloved management saying "to figure it out", namely to turn everything into a figure, following a myth of a world as number: that all of relevance can, and is to be expressed in numbers, that is, in unequivocal, i.e. formatted relationships. Because only those allow for being planned and controlled most easily and therefore, assure an encompassing domination. The latter is needed to guarantee encompassing expansion, that is, a one according to plan and eo ipso indefinite. The circuit closes, on both mythological and practical grounds.

Like in case of a peculiar kind of natural science combined with technique, namely science as technique (to cope with masses via dominating them), a peculiar kind of organzing those things produced by that procedure came into the world: organization as *technique* of domination. What is neither self-evident nor trivial, since other mindsets of how to organize are conceiveable, and in fact exist. It was a *Gestalt* of organization that led to its proper worlds, the realities corresponding to it. Organization, Robert Chia states, "is the quintessential technology for *real-izing* the *real*: for making what appears initially irrelevant and unconnected part of a universal order that gives sense and consequence to our everyday action and experience..." [24] If this holds valid for every kind of organization and the specific culture related to it, then in particular to the kind looked at here, the one the recent condottiere is at home. Because this kind of organization gained some additional drives:

"The construction of identities, their simple location, and their causal attribution, however, are precisely modern *strategies of organization*: central features of our modern will-to-order. They reflect our capacity for "world making": for drawing together the seemingly dispersed and the unrelated into a coherent and plausible system of explanation. Such forms of social ordering inevitably influence...how the flux and flow of our life worlds are structured and conceptualized into events, things, and situations; how identity is established and social entities are created...how reification takes place and causal relations are imputed, and with what consequences; and how symbols and representations are used to substitute for reality and with what outcomes, particularly in terms of organizational priorities and practices." [25]

As the case example of the conquesting enterprise suggests, the practices are of special interest. From the background of our life worlds, we can imagine what it means to be "organized" today, or formulated in terms of the imageology adopted here, what a condotta-world that in addition became *technically* organized does really mean, in practical as well as mental terms. Because the programs upon which the formatting procedures are settling develop their own life since relying on *codes*, technically spoken. Programs work with codes in that they define a code's functioning with regard to criteria, premises and preferences of the system, i.e. they delineate possibilities and limitations of the operations performed by different codes, they are the forms with which codes can get worked through.[26] This is one important aspect about codes. The other is *systemic closure*: Like atoms or the individual for an occidental imageology, codes embody the last units of a system, units which cannot get exchanged without destroying the overall system's autopoiesis,[27] the capacity to "make itself out of its own means". Codes elicit a system to establish itself as a closed one,[28] and systemic closure is a precondition for becoming autopoietical. An example is the differentiation of our economic system, core of our culture. The institution of private property enabled a distinction between Possessing/Non-Possessing which then served as code, and this code enabled the phenomenon of Scarce Resources to emerge, a phenomenon in which the existence of our entire economic system is rooted: without scarcity, no capitalist economy.

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[24] Chia (op. cit.): 99; emphasizing by him.

[25] ibid.; emphases by him.

[26] Beckert, J. (1997): 322; after Luhmann, N. (1986): 91

[27] Beckert (op. cit.): 309. To autopoiesis: it is a neologism developed by Maturana/Varela, stemming from the Greek word for "self" (*auto*), and to "make" (*poiein*). In its properties, *autopoiesis* comes very close to an old occidental conception, that of a *physis* as "natural growing".

[28] Luhmann (op. cit.): 91

Scarcity presupposes an uneven distribution of resources, and with it, a societies' differentiation into those who possess and those who don't possess, or possess less.[29] Codes make worlds systemically closed.

That is, we can codify the world in order to make it manageable. In such a way, a peculiar kind of systemic closure appears: The self-evidence of the procedure justifies itself, in generating realities which became self-evident, too; a perfect tautology leading to, and sustaining, a systemic closure that became encompassing.

Organization as World Making: the Utopian Longing

Besides the unwilling but nevertheless quite existent utopian character of such a conquesting "meta"-procedure, namely to nail down every- and anything into its codified existence – the myth of management's actual shape, as ubiquitous and hence, most efficient formatting – it shows the change in condotta as process, and by that, the change in the condottiere myth itself. All three features, the utopia, the new management myth, and the new condottiere, intrinsically belong together. Because all three sustain and enforce what may be called a Technization of the Being, the norming of everything existing under certain algorithms. Not only the capitalist economy, as economy, has to be technical in order to function and to expand – both technicality and expansion are the prerequisites of its viability, as we have seen. Moreover, the principle of technization in itself, as principle, is such successful that it can expand alone, so to say, out of itself. Because in principle, everything can get *technisized* in literal sense, brought into technical sizes, the process has no inherent limit.

By their essence, technical sizes are formatted, uni-formed sizes, and the claim to format everything is utopian by its character. Again, in a literal meaning: From its Greek origins, utopia is a "non place", literally translated, an *ou-topos* [ουτοπος], a place or spatiality where human beings do not live, or cannot live. Do not because they aren't so developed yet – utopia as hope. Or cannot because the place is inherently in-human (again, literally), in embodying a spatiality where human life is not possible without severely degrading the human – utopia as dystopy. For our capitalist culture, both meanings came together, one bringing about the other.

The Condottiere's Dusk

First of all, it led to the condottiere's downfall, because the new management myth was such successful, in applying the machine-like mode of managing. Up to the Renaissance, a beloved figure was the wheel of fortune. Opposed to later eras of condotta, history was not conceived as a developmental process by its essence, but as a more or less cyclical event subjected to Fortuna, the goddess of fate.[30] Paradoxically, the condottiere became that wheel's victim in his core domain, managing. Due to that managing mode because the latter triggered a specific development to gain ground: the one towards an increased formatting. First restricted to economic units, then becoming surmountedly widespread, and after that almost universal, in reaching nearly every domain of societal and private life and through that, turning into a habitus, an embracing life *style*.

The hero archetype mentioned at the start, the condottiere, backbone in terms of the concrete for realizing a management myth, became bureaucratisized by getting technically codified, too. As necessary part of the procedure, he became de-heroized in order to fit the procedure: meanwhile, he has to embody nothing but a part of management machinery. He became technisized. Although some fameful objectives left, and despite such a new condottiere's deeds are often heroic still, the machinery-character remains because it became predominant. Since his weaponry of formatting via programmatic algorithms can get applied to himself also. The pursue of a continuous expansion, with the help of the mentioned algorithms, does follow one kind of rationality only, in its final terms – the one of the purpose, to "figure it out" in bringing "ends and means together", a condottiere's daily business and his central ethos altogether. Such an 'objective', rational, and machine-like proceeding for a strictly purpose-oriented "handling" of everything also applies to the condottiere, one day. In his former days, he could rely upon his people at least, which implied an obligation of their leader to take care for them, to assure that they get their fair share of the business. It became obsolete today, as we know. "His" people are not his ones but just technical items like him. Like "his" people, he can get rationalized away at each moment, giving way to an efficiency program superior to him and to all his efforts undertaken so far, a modern deity installed by shareholders he is able to influence in a quite limited way.

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[29] Example taken from Beckert (op. cit.): 309
[30] R.-U. Kunze, personal communication.

Moreover, why to be loyal to an organization where I am not really the master of although officially designated for? Here too the circuit closes, on psychological and practical grounds alike. Today, the condottiere can rely upon nothing, except his salary and his weaponry. Essentially, he is alone. When the old condottiere had to be successful for his clients *and* his people, for the new remained the clients only, the shareholders – and he himself: To maximize earnings and chances for himself, a final outcome of the myth of the individual, new god and atom of a liberated world that started such hopeful.

For the today's condottiere, there is an additional adverse turn in the whole movement, these very shareholders. Because opposed to the situation of his original, they embody no concrete persons but an abstract principle they (just) stand for; symbolically, as persons, *masks*: the abstraction of profit maximization.[31] It is not about the concrete shareholders but about *shareholder value*, an abstract principle forming concrete organizational life in all the latter's respects. So all in all, in his second phase, the condottiere became technisized like the rest of the items subjected to this 'platonic' management. He no longer is the outstanding, individual protagonist of condotta but became one of its parts.

Utopian Readiness

The machinery the condottiere became part of got re-bound to a myth of creative destruction (we recall: myth is religious), realized by ever increasing efficiency, and all that resulted in an overall process of technizing the Being. Which in its 'platonic' management mode, alone represents a utopian longing. Not to speak about its intended result, to create an artificial world completely organized – completely.

To label such an endeavour the search for realizing a myth of the perfect world would be misleading since too shorthanded. It is not about perfect worlds but about perfect domination, or expressed in the Natura-Cultura dichotomy coining for our cultural sphere, to cultivate everything within reach via management through formatting. Apparently, a mythic aim deeply anchored as 'cultural code', because even the very advent of civilized culture is interpreted in its terms.[32] No matter if rejected or admired, it is by no means confined to condottieri or shareholders but seems to represent basic mythology. And although it seems that a myth of progress has been abandoned since long, this mythic aim is still alive – as the myth of progress is, in fact. Again, not merely for condottieri who have to stay loyal to it on professional grounds, so to speak. The myth of progress is still alive – and by that, both justifying and fuelling the mode of condotta we examined – in having adopted another, more general shape: a myth of history. The recent shape of progress as unthought known is a myth that *history as such* has to be (by its essence) a one of development, and hence, of progress. It is a myth that enables extension to become permanent in fact. Permanence thus gaining momentum and by that, leading to a phenomenon what might be called a principle of *permanent extension*; as outstanding rule that underlies the activities of a society believing in such a myth about history. Which is evidently utopian since impossible.

Why then believing in it? Of course, there exists no concluding answer, there are many "path dependencies" (in technical management terms) that led to it. One outstanding reason could be: because myths make sense, since they provide meaning. Despite all differences we might have in methodological and practical terms, there remains a common base of understanding with regard to history, says Cassirer, and hence, to progress: "All of us assume that history is a form of human knowledge, that it consists of concepts, of propositions, of judgements; that these judgements claim to be true assertions about the empirical world." [33]

It refers to the earlier notion of *universalia*, that there must exist something as common ground to finally believe in. And we have seen that also myths can occupy the rank of such universalia, or formulated more pronounced, that it *are* only myths which can do that. If History could be defined, very tentatively and generalized, as the ever-running sequence of evolutionary events leading to the unfolding of certain orders of Being, then it depends on the 'true assertions', propositions, and the concepts resulting thereof what these orders are. For occidental mankind, and seen in its mythic terms, history equals progress – despite some drawbacks, it resembles a sequence of events deliberately achieved.

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[31] Going back to the original (Latin) notion of what a *person* is.

[32] E.g., in L. Mumford's *Myth of the Machine* (3rd German edition, 1980): 223; or more recently, in Gowdy, J. M. (2004): 253ff.

[33] Cassirer, E., edited by Verene, D. Ph. (1979): 130.

Or more precise: the underlying true assertion was that it is possible to *make* history – to plan it according to our wills and conceptions; and that this would equal progress. A whole mythology urged for that – based on that occidental subject alienated from the world of objects, therefore in need for dominating them as perfectly as ever possible. Because it was inevitable, due to a basic anthropological condition: man is an *akosmeton genos*, a being a-cosmic that has no genuine place inside a primordial world.[34] Our myth of history is telling; we recall the narrative of Pico della Mirandola. A more recent one takes up the theme again, scientifically backed up: "Man does not decide for culture and against savageness. Because he is dependent from culture, it will get his (second) nature. Through its instincts, the animal is adapted to its (species-specific) environment. Man, in lack of these instincts, is forced to adapt himself to culture…as a symbolic world of meanings that does mediate the world symbolically and therefore, makes it to a habitable place. He has no other choice. He has not to strive off his savageness but to compensate a deficit…Culture is seen as surrender and reversion of a natural state…adaptation to culture means…a distance-creating to nature."[35]

Evidently, such a distance-creating can adopt many forms now, and can proceed along alternative cultural pathways; in order not to loose out of sight that the path we went on is neither a "logical" outcome of history, that is, by no means self-evident, nor the best one possible. In the occidental case, it had been triggered by former citoyens who detected the possiblity of a free market *unrestrained*.[36] During its beginnings inside the frames of the Italian town states, this hadn't been the case yet. A free market existed but was bound to sociomoral and political obligations, also after the fall of the interdict to take interest.[37] It begun to change slowly but decisively with the advent of the idea of the supremacy of the individual will, an idea that found its first culminating expression in Machiavelli's *Il Principe*, and that became developed later into an "enlightened self-interest".[38] That new Self experienced strong assistance by empiricism and in its wake, the quantification of world. In the economic realm, based on Francis Bacon, Sir William Petty formulated for the first time that economic problems can be expressed as relations between variables which can be entirely quantified.[39] But we don't have to forget that ideas like these can only emerge if a cultural readiness for them already exists, a preponderance to look at the world in such ways, and no others. In its final terms which are of interest here, it is about liberation, and about liberation unrestricted: the individual as cosmic principle we spoke of. In his Attempt about Liberation, Marcuse states: "The liberated consciousness fostered the unfolding of a science and a technique which are free to discover the possibilities of things and men, in order to protect and to enjoy life, playing with the possibilities of form and matter...then, technique would tend to become art, the latter, to form reality: the opposition between imagination and reason, higher and lower capabilities, poetic and scientific thinking would get obsolete. A new reality-principle would appear under which a new sensibility and...scientific intelligence would combine to an esthetical ethos."[40]

This is utopian longing, offspring of the mythic desires we looked at, and of the myths which resulted out of them; all pouring into one utopian hope, to erect a world as artifact, a world where the arts of science and technique, properly managed, should pour into a new ethos to create humanities' true second nature. It had been the case, albeit not in the way imagined. Since the wish to ban the Being by colonizing everything led to its own colonization. Because not only its individuals but the process as such got liberated, facing the spontaneous order instead the one wished for. That order conceived as being constitutive for liberated individuals, at least on the economic grounds those individuals needed to unfold themselves.[41] Result of human activities but not of human planning, an order becoming constitutive for our world as it is, to recur to this mythic term: Held high as cosmic principle up to today, with neo-liberal ideals of privatization, that is, of robbing.

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[34] The term *akosmeton genos* goes back to Aischylos; the "will and conception" back to Schopenhauer.

[35] Assmann, J. (1997): 136f.

[36] There is cultural evidence that the idea of the free market as such had been detected by very differing cultures, but in all of these cases, had been restrained to only certain limits. See Polanyi (op. cit.): 132, and 135ff. Even in very successful cases like *Ming China* described by Kennedy, P. (1989): 32f.

[37] E.g., described in Hale, J. R. (1979): 41, or in Pribram (op. cit.): 58f., 63f.

[38] Pribram (op. cit.): 77f.;. and 219f., to an enlightened Self. To its Renaissance roots, see also Hale (op. cit.): 61, and 69.

[39] Pribram (op. cit.): 136f.

[40] Marcuse, H. (1969):44.

[41] Recurring to a term introduced by Friedrich von Hayek, for describing modern socio-economic realities.

Utopian Colonization

It is a kind of colonizing that spread out worldwide today, especially after the downfall of its major counterpart in practical, but not mythological terms, Socialist central planning; the other mode to realize a myth of management, and of formatting. *Privatization* is an old idea of our cultural sphere, of Roman origin, too. It denotes liberation on the one hand, staying closed to one self (as the former's result) on the other, but also being robbed off something, a something which is conceived as good; it means that privatization could also embody a loss.[42] We see a rather ambivalent idea, opaque hope and fear at the same time from its very beginnings. And after the central-planned mode of condotta seemed to have failed, it became the dominant mode of condotta: To consequently privatize entities of their former contexts they were embedded in, primarily statal ones, in posing them in the world's midst like Mirandola's man. It is a colonization aiming at the liberation of the individual force. And to do so not only from time to time or just here and there, but in total manner, by intention. The mythic cosmological aim is that there should be only, and just, *private* entities. Entities should be created which are privately obsessed, belonging self-referentially only to themselves, as literal privated property.[43]

The author remembers the large-scaled condotta he was part of in former Socialist countries, where the entire economy of entire countries (nothing minor) had to get privatized, assisted by large institutions (like World Bank or IMF[44]) safeguarding and "assisting" the process as "donor agencies". They were our donors paying us, the condottieri plus our people. It was colonization on large scale, indeed. The utopian longing per country colonized was to establish a myth of the free market: free market = democracy = freedom, in implementing strategies "on the ground" (a notion like paratroopers being sent to hostile terrain) of the respective country. Countries which were eager of getting liberated, in being tired of their former official Socialist mythology nobody really believed in any more; countries ripe for their downfall. And now, we intruded into those grounds, ready to shape a new world per country. Namely to remove every structure that existed before, in creative destruction, and to build up a new cosmic order, that of the free market; by establishing "intermediary" structures like privatization agencies, private ownership funds and the like first, and then, to dissolve them again after the liberation process as a whole promised to become successful.

What it meant in cultural and human terms can be guessed; despite the liberated first hoped for their liberation, in the initial stages of the process. E.g., when in smog-invested, socialistically rotten and impoverished cities on a balcony-outside nobody can see from the street Coca Cola stickers were mounted in mythic hope, signs looking from their 13th floor down at the street below like gargoyles of liberation; or when in a country far away from the Far West an advertising looked at the indigenous scenery below showing a Whitehead eagle sailing over far west-canyons, promising that xy cigarettes are Your Way to Freedom (so the advertising); or comparable weird scenes from the goldmine, down to homeless childs wiping your windscreen when the traffic stops. Although each of them tells something, not confined to mythic aims, pittoresque scenes at the condotta's rims; like in case of the bottom line treated beforehand, nothing but a specialty of the general.

It was to establish a utopia taking the place of a former one. Every new beginning is another beginning's end. In the case reported here, it was to establish a non-place, liberated individualism, instead of another non-place, the centrally guided liberated community. Since every utopia is a format by its very intention, it was the attempt to replace one format by another. Or to formulate it less polite, the attempt to impose a utopia that was already not working inside the cultural space it came from ('the West', for those indigenous, with its magic medizine of 'marketting', as they said) into another one that worked with a utopia also not functioning: Utopian colonization.
Let's go back to its general terms. Like agriculture, the term *colonization* is of Roman origin and stems from *colere*, too, to take care for something by domesticating it; first, with respect,[45] later on, as we saw, by making it plain obedient.

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[42] Heinichen (op. cit.): 672f.

[43] To the domineering role of private property, e.g. Braudel, F. (1986): 698, Polanyi (op. cit.): 161. To its early evolution Pribram (op. cit.): 33-36, 39f., 203. Related, to the (theoretical) justification of making profit: Dobb, M. (1977): 31, 117f., 125f.

[44] IMF: International Monetary Fond.

[45] Heinichen (op. cit.): 155. Without pursuing it further, it might have its reasons that such ideas didn't exist as *words* in the other of our ancestral roots, the Greeks (although they colonized, too). When an idea finds entrance into a language – i.e., a moulded conception of world – by becoming a word, a fixed *naming*, this could be a clear hint about its being firmly anchored then.

How such a turn could happen in the case we look at here, our own colonization via a "free" market, us being the colonizators (e.g., in form of condottieri) and the colonized at the same time? By the autonomization of ideas which became mythic first, and then those universalia Bruner spoke of, universalia becoming reality. In line with the Natura-Cultura dichotomy outlined above as one constituent myth of our culture – by its essence, cultura equals agriculture, and later, colony – after the Enlightenment, writes Polanyi, the reality of society had been detected. But "...this new knowing didn't create a new understanding of society that would disperse as ubiquitous as the image of the atomistic individual. In decisive points, we fall back to earlier explanations of man as embodying an utilitaristic atom. Nowhere such a fall back becomes more apparent than in our conceptions about economy." [46] A fall back into an image of man believing with certainty of faith that man, as such, is finally driven by motives of profit, and in trunking Adam Smith who never stated such things, that such motives are sufficient to ensure individual and public happiness.[47] It is a mythic belief in its essence, and a prolongation of von Hayek's *spontaneous order*: Technically expressed in a managerial mode, a system state of stable equilibrium is reached by the liberation of the individual force; mythologically, a maximum of chaos is able to generate a maximum of order. A literally liberal utopia gets declared here, resting upon the principle of a laissez faire and upon what Polanyi called economic determinism: that all other cultural spaces are determined by the economic one. Why such a utopian longing could spread out so successfully? To shorten the argument, out of two reasons, its rational efficiency, and its personal, that is individual unaffectedness. Both reasons combine into a mythic hope that became outspoken in graffiti in the author's home town. It went: All for All.

Let's turn to the individual reason first. "Inside the frame of the market system, society as a whole remained invisible. Everybody could feel free from being responsible for statal measures of force which he rejected personally, or from the responsibility for unemployment and poverty from which he didn't profit personally. Personally, he remained unaffected from the perils of power and of economic valuation. In the name of his imagined freedom he could deny their reality..." But: "Any opinion and any wish will make us to collaborators on the generation of power and on the constitution of value, independent from the kind of society we live in. A freedom to act in other ways is unthinkable. An ideal that would expell power and force out of society is obsolete, in itself; and through the denial of this limitation of human wishes, the market-oriented conception of society does reveal its essential immaturity." [48] On literal anthropological grounds alone, the utopia of liberation sketched here cannot work; or even if, than only for a rather short period. 'Rather short' when we apply a historical dimension of measurement.

But if this holds valid, the same question comes up as in case of the management myth: why then to believe in? Since it has been systemically established, in generating its own condotta on a permanent base; what has been caused by the other reason, its rational efficiency. In other words, it became the world we live in, and it is a world of the systemic closure – not just its management programs which became such world's intrinsic elements.
It started with the birth of the *laissez faire*, enlarged into the ubiquitous claim of a liberal economy that made everything to items, to products obeying to the rules of offer and demand; not just partly or from time to time, but exclusively. Including *work* and *ground* as formerly "independent variables", now treated as if they were products, i.e. as if they would exist as sales items solely. What is an illusion, of course, since they are not, and cannot get, "produced" [49] – but they were formatted as if they were. Formatting according to a ubiquitous As If makes the utopian character of the world described here. Also in its dystopian respects of a world as ou-topos, a place where humans cannot truly live, because as an overall outcome, for the first time in human history the economic 'subsystem' (we remember those terms of an essentially technical nature) was not part of society, but society became a subsystem of economy. From now on, Capitalism became a format, and remained that. The utopia of an artificial world was realized, and at the top of that, seemingly endurable since it wiped out its competing conceptions – as said, a self-referential condotta. In case of its condottieri, it embodied a process driven by persons who were culprits and victims at the same time. Never before, Polanyi says, a more effective fiction had been conceptualized. Nature, also the human one, became culture; in the capitalist mode.

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[46] Polanyi (op. cit.): 186.
[47] ibid.: 143. To Adam Smith: R.-U. Kunze, personal communication. Smith speaks of the free market *and* of moral obligations, not just of the free market alone.
[48] ibid.: 144f.
[49] To these processes, see Polanyi (op. cit.): 131f., and 133, to the historical unique event.

"The true importance of such a step one can estimate when one realizes that work is only another label for human being, and ground only another one for nature. The product fiction gave the fate of the human being and of nature in the hands of an automaton following its own rules...The 'rest' of society became dependent from the [economic] sphere...as a result, the market mechanism became defining for the life of the society in its total. Therefore, it is of little wonder that the human community resulting out of this turned into an "economic" community that not even partially had existed before." [50]

The Magic Ruse

All this causes masses continuously, too of problems and of systemic entanglements. Because the operation as such, namely to erect a rationally designed utopia in the sense of Marcuse (see above), was so enormously successful on practical grounds. As one of the early analyzers of such an utopia's machinery, Werner Sombart, already formulated it, the becoming 'mindful' of the organization was decisive, both its subjugation (internal rationalization) and spread out (external rationalization) as attempt to ban the Being.[51] But coining for such a mythology: the achieved aim cannot be reached, has to remain utopian; since the pursuing of it does evoke its own contraries, the emergent opposites of the hunted for, like in a Greek drama. Due to his performances in applying the mythology described, the condottiere's power over masses turned into a power of masses, resulting in a world which is meticulously planned in its details but fragmented in its total. This is the one aspect of his tragedy: his will to dominate let to his impotence in front of the things he powerfully created. Because he is no longer the master, even not in his own house, since increasingly, this house doesn't belong to him. Not just due to the simple fact that he is installed, hired by others. This old condottieri were also. Nevertheless, they could pursue longer-termed goals and enjoyed a degree of autonomy which their descendant doesn't have. Such a state of happiness was over after the early nineties of the 20th century the latest, after the second wave of globalization held sway; forcing the corporations to accumulate masses of capital faster than their competitors, in order to survive as autonomous, i.e. truly individual entities.[52]

Following the myth of destruction's own acceleration, the old condottieris' descendants are forced to increasingly concentrate upon shorter-termed goals, to achieve the immediately possible for the sake of his shareholders; in terms of profit, of course, of growth, well in line with the basic mythology, and through applying the myth of efficiency. Since everything can be made still more efficient, and hence, more profitable. It turned out to become possible, since everything can get managed. So the shareholders, those who hold power over him, determine his goals and dictate his strategies. As a free individual, he became heteronomous. Like the others did, his installers. The core of the today's capitalist crisis going on, an observer states, has to do with this very myth of the individual, and linked, with the utopia of the privatized world. Due to limited liability problems, caused by the basic idea underlying such a world, the numinous private property: property, the author says, is possible only in limited freedom – if we want to survive.[53] Because due to its systemic properties and its mythological anchorage described, "the system" has the inherent tendency to generate one crisis after the other.[54] The Condottiere, working for others, destroying others, became the victim of his own weaponry; another aspect of his tragedy – having the power to create and to destroy as his former God did, although being powerless in fact. But through that, he goes on to actively contribute to the generation of those self-referential machineries we examined.

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[50] Polanyi (op. cit.): 132f.; emphases by him.
[51] In its essentials, cf. Sombart, W. (1927): 895 – 901.
[52] E.g., in Sennett, R. (2007): 21, 40
[53] P. Kirchhof: Der Schaden der anderen (the being inflicted of the others). In *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 28th, 2009, No. 122, p.32.
[54] G. Heinsohn: Die nächste Blase schwillt schon an (the next bubble is already coming up). In *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 20th, 2009, No. 116, p.31

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