

Agents of Historical Change

The Historical Process and Societal Transformation

Prof. Mohamed Rabie

Agents of Historical Change

When I wrote my book, *The Making of History* in 2001, I developed new tools to explain history's movement and how it affects societies and cause social change. These tools are the societal processes of change and transformation that include the sociocultural process, the political process, the economic process, and the infomedia process. The infomedia process combines the public media and the information and communication technologies. The explanation of the societal processes of change talks about their nature, historical development, roles in society, and how they relate to each other and interact with one another to cause societal change. These forces represent together the mechanism through which all change is introduced and implemented in society. Therefore, no change can be initiated without at least one societal process, and no change can be made without affecting all other processes. Consequently, every change, regardless of its nature and magnitude, causes the balance of power relationships in society to change, producing winners and losers. However, these societal processes are not forces that provoke change by themselves, and therefore they do not represent what Hegel called "the spirit of history."

Hegel saw freedom as being the spirit of history, or the agent that motivates people to seek and demand change and cause societal progress over time. Hegel was right, but freedom does not explain societal change by itself and thus human progress. Karl Marx, on the other hand, saw class conflict as the agent of historical change. Contradictions within the capitalist system precipitate conflict between the capitalist class and the proletariat, he argued. The resolution of this conflict creates new syntheses that reduce the intensity of conflict, which, in turn, cause change and progress. Since the movement that Marx predicted and described is supposed to continue until a classless society free of exploitation is reached, one can say that the search for justice represents the spirit of history for Marx. Marx was right because the way class conflict is conducted and resolved causes change. However, class conflict cannot, by itself, explain societal transformations and human progress over time. Max Weber saw ethics and work ethics as the primary force motivating people to work hard, save money, invest in their economies and communities, and cause societal progress. Weber was also right, but ethics cannot by themselves cause enough social transformation to move history from one stage of development to another.

Paul Kennedy gets much closer than the other philosophers to explaining the forces of historical progress; he suggests that technological developments and social transformations

are the forces responsible for human progress. In fact, these forces tend to implicitly include most of what the other philosophers had suggested. Technological developments improve productivity and advance industry, while industrial organization changes the relations of production and cause social transformations that influence social relations, ethics, and attitudes toward freedom. Despite the importance of Kennedy's argument, he, just like the other philosophers of history, misses other important forces that have contributed and continue to contribute to causing change and making societal progress. Jared Diamond suggests that geography has had a decisive impact on people's lives and fortunes. He argues that humans, with the domestication of certain animals and the farming of crops, man was able to take the first step towards civilization. Agricultural production, he argues, leads to food surpluses, which supports sedentary societies, rapid population growth, and division of labor, which means societal change and progress.

Forces of change are many, and all get opportunities to influence societal life. However, how societies are organized and the stage of development in which societies live and function, and the nature of the environment that surrounds them give certain forces more opportunities to instigate change than others. Thus, the forces that move history and cause progress differ from one place to another and from one societal stage of development to another. There is no doubt that geography and freedom and technology and ethics and class conflict have played and continue to play important roles in societal life, but the role of each force was eclipsed at one time or another by the roles played by one or more of the other forces. The major forces that represent the engine of history and are responsible for initiating change and causing progress over time are the following:

1. The development of private property;
2. The accumulation of capital;
3. Technological developments and scientific discoveries, particularly in areas related to making tools, manufacturing, means of transportation and communications, and management systems;
4. The accumulation of knowledge, particularly in areas related to the laws of nature, life and diseases, and the universe;
5. Man's continuous struggle and longing for freedom, particularly individual freedom, political freedom, and freedom of speech and worship; and
6. Sociocultural transformation, particularly in regard to human relations and traditions and attitudes toward work and time and the other.

Private Property

The concept of private property appeared very early in human life; long before agriculture was developed as a way of life and enabled man to take his first step towards civilization. The hunter-gatherer was the first man to discover private property; he tried to have as many things as he could carry. But since his ability to carry things across deserts and forests was limited, private property did not play an important role in his life. Tribal man's Private property was limited by the circumstances and culture to some clothes and few primitive tools to hunt animals and defend himself and his family against the other. And because technology was almost non-existent at the time, the hunter-gatherer as well as the tribal man experienced no noticeable change or progress for tens of thousands of years.

Private property emerged as a socioeconomic institution during the agricultural age, causing society to be divided into two distinct social classes; the landlords who owned most of the fertile farmland and were generally rich, and the peasants who owned little or no land and were generally poor. Since land ownership enables the rich to create more wealth, and poverty denies the poor an equal opportunity to create as much wealth, a socioeconomic gap developed, causing a sociopolitical gap to emerge slowly. The poor, as a consequence, were forced to work for the rich in order to survive, while the rich were able to accumulate wealth by dominating, exploiting and often enslaving the poor. As the socioeconomic gap persisted and widened, the poor lost much of their freedom, and the rich gained more freedom. Since freedom and wealth usually translate into power; people who are free and wealthy are able to have more power and use it to influence societal change in their favor and control their fortunes; people who lack freedom and have little or no wealth lack the power to make a difference. So, wealth facilitates the acquisition of more power; and power facilitates the acquisition of more wealth and freedom, making it very hard for the poor to gain freedom, power or wealth.

Due to the sociopolitical and socioeconomic role wealth plays in individual and societal life, private property became a force motivating people to work hard, accumulate wealth, and use it to improve the quality of their lives and enhance their social statuses. Meanwhile, the inequality and injustice private property usually creates and perpetuates causes conflict to become a major characteristic of social relations, forcing the poor and powerless to seek justice and struggle for freedom. Since the institution of private property was absent from tribal life, the tribal man lived his entire life free of oppression, exploitation and injustice. The

concepts of freedom and justice therefore, had to wait the agricultural age before they could be born and activated.

The development of agriculture and the building of hamlets and villages expanded the concept and role of private property in societal life; it included land, tools, houses, domesticated animals and personal things and much more. And since land and tools and animals are an important part of the factors of production, they enabled all agricultural societies to produce more and gain more security. But since some people had more land and tools and animals than others, the rich were able to enjoy relatively higher standards of living than those who did not have as much. Meanwhile, the slow accumulation of capital was helping agricultural society produce a surplus, causing the idea of progress to be born and civilization to emerge gradually. Individuals, as a consequence, never stopped seeking more property and societies never stopped experiencing change and making progress.

Capital Accumulation

As tools and means of transportation and sea navigation technologies were developed in the late centuries of the agricultural age, trade expanded and capital began to play an increasingly important role in individual and societal life. It caused the productivity of land and labor to increase; and thus it helped create more wealth for its owners, while making work for the peasants and workers less stressful than before. Slowly, capital emerged as a major factor of production, enabling its owners to gain more wealth and freedom. However, as capitalists were accumulating wealth and power and freedom with the advancement of the industrial age, the poor and weak were losing their power, and freedom and thus their ability to create and accumulate wealth. But since capitalists cannot make more money and accumulate more wealth unless they sell whatever they produce, they were obligated by self-interest to pay their poor workers more money to enable them to become potential consumers. With the diversification of industrial production and the expansion of trade, the capitalists realized that to make more money and accumulate more wealth they had to share some of the economic gains with their less fortunate poor and rather powerless workers. As a consequence, capital became a force contributing to social change and to making societal progress possible. However, contacts between the rich and poor in the workplaces and in the rich's estates made the poor aware of their status in society, leading them to seek justice and freedom. But no matter how much the poor get, they always feel worse off compared to the rich. Awareness of the nature and size of the socioeconomic and sociopolitical gaps in society always leads to conflict and change.

Nevertheless, by raising the productivity of land and labor, capital enabled society as a whole to produce more and have more free time to enjoy life. People, as a result, began to allocate some of their free time to creative thinking and creative doing. Nevertheless, the continued accumulation of capital in the hands of the few caused the socioeconomic and sociopolitical gaps to widen further and gave birth to a sociocultural divide between the social classes. No laws were enacted at the time to limit the reach of the rich and powerful and empower the poor and powerless. As a consequence, organized religion reemerged slowly as a force calling for justice, comforting the poor, and asking the rich and powerful to be more compassionate. Moreover, Marxist thinking and the socialist revolution in Russia in 1917 forced the capitalist state to intervene to limit the reach of capital and provide safety nets to protect the poor and powerless.

Science and Technology

New archeological discoveries seem to indicate that tools were used before the human societies evolved and man began to dominate nature. Tools were used in hunting and fighting, which enabled man to feel more secure physically and get more of the food he needed to survive. Tools, or technology in general enables man to produce more of what he needs using the same amounts of whatever resources are available to him, or produce the same amounts as before with less time and energy and resources. In both cases, however, progress is made because man gets more of what he needs and likes to have, or gets more free time to use in activities that enrich his life and the lives of people influenced by his work. Meanwhile, as man uses his tools he learns how to make them better and more productive and develop new, more efficient ones. As a consequence, technological knowledge advances and accumulates enabling man to produce more, change more, and make more material and cultural progress.

As economies expanded and states were built and empires emerged, trade began to expand, roads were built, and more efficient means of transportation were developed. Larger ships had to be built and navigation systems were developed to enable merchants to travel long distances without much risk or fear. However, navigations systems could not be developed to the point of making it possible for sailors to travel deep and far and come home safe without new scientific discoveries in areas related to the seas, to geography and to the solar system. So scientific discoveries served to facilitate more technological developments; and tools and machines conceived by technological developments facilitated new, more advanced scientific discoveries. However, the more material progress was made

in society, the more the socioeconomic and sociopolitical gaps widened and the sociocultural divides deepened, causing the rich and powerful to become greedier and more powerful and oftentimes ruthless as well.

Freedom and Justice

The poor and powerless, feeling the enormity of social injustice and denial of freedom and other human rights, began to fight for equality. Revolts were launched in older time by slaves against their masters; but such revolts did not lead to ending slavery; slaves were weak and societies were not disposed to helping slaves and support their demands for freedom and, therefore, slaves were unable to win. As a consequence, slavery continued for thousands of years before it was officially abolished in the twentieth century. People, since the dawn of civilization, have continued to struggle against whatever they thought had been enslaving them or limiting their capacity to feel and act as free people. History seems to indicate that no people could see an end to their struggle for freedom because man seems to view freedom as an open, limitless space; the more you have, the more you feel a need to have more. Nevertheless, the tribal society was the only society in history to be classless and have all the freedom it needed to live a nomadic life; it therefore, did not experience slavery or injustice.

With the dawn of civilization some ten thousand years ago, the space of freedom began to shrink and appear limited; causing some people to get less as others got more. As a consequence, conflict began to arise in society; and, with the creation of empires, conflict expanded to characterize relations among nations. People struggle today peacefully and otherwise to free themselves from political oppression, suppression, poverty, ignorance and need, as well as from capital exploitation, prejudice and discrimination, intimidation and fear, and foreign occupation. No society is entirely free, and no social system is flawless; every society has more than one reason to feel that it must continue the struggle for freedom and justice, either to protect what they have, or to get what they do not have, or to regain what they have lost. As societal systems evolve and production relations change they produce winners and losers, encouraging the first to fight to preserve what they have, while making the second feel cheated and thus willing to struggle to regain what they have lost. Therefore, the struggle for freedom and justice and against both will never end.

Throughout history, every society has had certain social, economic, political or cultural problems that manifest themselves in one or more of these issues; political corruption,

economic exploitation, racial discrimination, religious intimidation, denial of human rights, and media manipulation. Since each problem affects the fortunes of people differently, it distributes freedom and wealth and power in society unfairly, allowing some to have more than others. Under dictatorships, for example, the leader of the nation monopolizes all attributes and privileges of freedom and power, forcing ordinary citizens to have little freedom and almost no power whatsoever. When large corporations are allowed to create oligopolies and monopolies, they confiscate great portions of the wealth of nations and create huge obstacles that prevent other business-minded people from entering the market, denying them an equal opportunity to participate in the economic life of society. When the mass media resorts to manipulating the news and substituting opinions for facts, they deny people the right to be informed and know the truth. Therefore, when a group of people manages to control an aspect of societal life, it confiscates some of the rights of others, and thus causes them to become less free and less satisfied. Everyone who does not enjoy his or her full rights is not free; everyone who is not free is unable to utilize his talents and be as productive as he could be. And since no state distributes freedom or wealth equally among its citizens, no society is entirely free or content, and thus the struggle for freedom and justice will continue to play an important role in making history, provoking change, and causing progress to be made.

Accumulation of Knowledge

As man works, develops his tools, watch nature, thinks, and experiments with things around him, he gains more knowledge and transfers his knowledge to others through siblings, relatives and neighbors, causing knowledge to spread and accumulate in society. Since knowledge cannot be reversed, and what is learnt cannot be unlearnt, knowledge increases man's ability to produce more, think and contemplate, make new discoveries and thus progress in all endeavors of human life. In fact, material progress or economic change has always moved in tandem with cultural and social change; oftentimes, material progress moves first forcing social and cultural change to follow its lead; and sometimes, social and cultural transformation precede economic change. For example, when man developed land cultivation he produced a surplus and the surplus enabled him to have more time to think and build better tools and irrigation systems and farming techniques which enabled agriculture to become more productive. And as man became more productive and more thoughtful, he became more secure, allowing the new technologies he had developed, to influence his social life and relations to both man and nature.

Social and cultural transformations come as a result of either a great idea that influences how people think, or in response to a cluster of small ideas that challenge the status quo and cause attitudes to change; or due to technological innovations that transform the economic base in society. Though ideas play only a minor role in causing societal transformations in stable, largely traditional societies, they play a major role during transitional periods that move societies from one civilization to another. Nevertheless, ideas can and often do change people's attitudes leading them to change the way they think and behave and thus the way they view the world around them. Religion in general and monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam in particular, came as a result of human need to understand the world and foster group unity and cohesion; they gave the lives of their adherents a new meaning that made them feel more content and at peace. But since religious teachings concern themselves with the cultural aspects of life only, religions were unable to change the material conditions of life, invoke scientific inquiry, or encourage technological innovations, and thus they were unable to cause social transformations. In contrast, technological innovations usually transform the existing modes of production and the means of production, causing production relations to change and social and cultural transformations to take place and societal progress to be made.

Social and Cultural Transformation

Social and cultural transformations come from either great ideas that influence how people think or in reaction to a cluster of small ideas that challenge the status quo and cause peoples' attitudes to change slowly. It is also possible that social and cultural transformation comes from being provoked by technological innovations that transform the economic base of society. Regardless of their importance and nature, new ideas play only a minor role in causing societal transformations in stable, mostly traditional societies. However, the same ideas could play a significant role during transitional periods that move societies from one civilization to another, or from one stage of development to another. Nevertheless, original ideas can change people's attitudes, leading them to change the way they think, behave, and view the world around them. Religions are also original ideas that changed people's attitudes, and lead them to change themselves and their societies.

Religion in general and monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam came in response to the human need to understand the world and uncover its many secrets. But once developed, they became a force fostering group unity and cohesion, giving the lives of their adherents a new meaning that made them feel more content and at peace. But since

religions concern themselves primarily with the cultural aspects of life, they could not change human life's material conditions, invoke scientific inquiry, or encourage technological innovations. Therefore, no religion was unable to cause significant social change in society. In contrast, technological innovations usually transform the existing modes of production and the means of production, causing production relations to change, which forces social and cultural transformations to take place and cause societal progress.

Dynamics of Change

As explained above, each agent of historical change had played and continues to play an important role in societal life. Nevertheless, the dynamic relationships that tie these forces together and the way they interact with one another are much more important to causing change and making progress. In fact, no single factor is able to cause tangible change by itself because change affects the balance of power in society causing one or more of the other agents to be activated, fostering change or hindering transformation. If the political and cultural environments, for example, are not hospitable to change, it would be very difficult for society to make meaningful scientific or technological advances. On the other hand, no scientific or technological developments are meaningful if they do not affect the economic, cultural, and social aspects of life. When new scientific theories are developed, scientists use them to develop new technological tools and build new machines that make man and society more productive and work more rewarding and life more interesting. Yet, for this kind of transformation to happen, society has to be ready for change.

Since each agent of change has its own role to play, it can take the lead and initiate change in society. For example, ideas that challenged the teachings of the Catholic Church in Europe during the renaissance, and others that motivated people to give priority to interests over values were the leading forces that paved the way for scientific inquiry and the industrial revolution that followed. But since culture tends to be stable and resistant to change, it has to be challenged by one or more of the other agents to become more open and conducive to change. Cultures are usually transformed through a process characterized by change and substitution that transforms some old traditions and social relations, while substituting largely outdated attitudes and ways of thinking by new ones. But since cultural values and traditions and belief systems do not accumulate, any change they may experience could be reversed and even strengthened like racism and religious fundamentalism. In contrast, scientific knowledge and technological innovations are developed in response to growing human needs and life challenges and are produced by

millions of people throughout the world. Since scientific knowledge advances through a process characterized by accumulation and specialization, it cannot be reversed.

Since industrial technology and management systems are tied to scientific knowledge, they tend to change as new scientific facts are discovered and accepted; they also tend to adapt as social and environmental settings change. Such technologies and systems are characterized by accumulation, substitution and diffusion, which make them very effective in causing change, and almost impossible to reverse whatever change they may cause. The neutrality of most technologies and systems of management and their ability to adapt to different cultural and environmental settings allow them to serve most societies without difficulty. On the other hand, the ability of the ever increasing technological devices to make life easier and more enjoyable have enabled them to influence people's cultures in many ways, forcing most people to change many of their traditions and attitudes and ways of thinking and living.

In fact, it is rather impossible to make good use of advanced technological devices and modern systems of management, particularly in areas related to industrial production and scientific research and education without adopting new traditions and attitudes compatible with the new machines and systems and the requirements of the tasks at hand. Cultures, as a result, are forced to abandon some of the old ways of doing things and adopt new ones in their instead, causing social relations to change and sociocultural transformations to take place. New production relations consequently are developed and adopted, and new values related to science and technology and economic efficiency are conceived and implemented, making time a precious commodity to be used wisely, not wasted unconsciously.

Due to these facts, no social or cultural change can succeed and endure unless made an integral part of a societal transformation process that includes the economic aspects of life. In other words, for economic restructuring to succeed and endure, it has to be preceded by or accompanied with sociocultural restructuring. Likewise, for sociocultural change to succeed and endure, it has to be preceded by or accompanied with economic restructuring.

History seems to indicate that freedom is not a grant that rulers give away willingly to people they rule; it is rather a right that people have to claim and sometimes fight to obtain. However, until few centuries ago, almost all peoples were unable to grasp the meaning of freedom and appreciate the role it could play in their lives; they were totally unaware that they were missing something of value. As a result, most people could not claim what they

did not know they had a right to obtain. Since neither rulers nor the ruled thought they were doing something wrong, the rulers were able to rule without challenge and enslave the ruled without feeling guilty. The ruled, meanwhile, were happy to be ruled, accepting their lot in life and societal role as an obligation of being members of a larger religious or national community.

Older cultural traditions, environmental settings, religious teachings, family habits, and tribal ties caused people to miss freedom without missing it. Since the tribal and agricultural ways of living tend to emphasize collective rather than individual responsibility, individual freedom and individual rights had to wait the industrial revolution before they could be conceived and articulated. In fact, most eastern cultures such as the Arabic and Chinese cultures still give collective responsibility and communal rights priority over individual responsibility and rights. As a consequence, rulers in general are able to ignore the needs and rights of the masses without fear of retaliation, while the despotic ones were able to oppress and enslave them with impunity.

Whoever does not miss freedom is usually unaware of its meaning and importance and, therefore, is unable to make others aware of its existence and appreciate its societal role. In societies where women are controlled and often oppressed by men, women are unable to explain the importance of freedom to their children and help them live and think as free people. Children in such societies are brought up as members of a group led by a man who represents either a higher traditional authority or a political or religious one, and to accept being dependent on that authority. Because of such culture, individuals as well as groups are often denied their social and political and sometimes economic rights, giving the higher authority the opportunity to confiscate and monopolize all the freedom available. People are treated as slaves responsible for whatever authority ask of them, while they have no right to hold authority accountable for whatever in does and fails to do.

Cultures that have a religious core and others based on ideological philosophies such as nationalism and communism are usually less aware of the importance of freedom and the role it can play in initiating change and facilitating individual and societal progress. Freedom encourages people to discover their talents and enables them to employ such talents to advance their careers, while contributing to the advancement of science and technology and economic progress. Regardless of its many aspects, freedom remains a human right, a moral value, and a basic requirement of economic change and human progress. Freedom, therefore, is not the spirit of history only; it is the spirit of humanity,

without which no human being is complete. Therefore, freedom must be treated as the most important agent of sociocultural transformation and human progress.

Nonetheless, man's longing for freedom and his struggle to attain it does not happen except when he feels that his freedom is compromised or confiscated by a higher authority. Such a feeling, however, happens only when people are aware of the role freedom normally plays in sustaining their humanity, helping shape their future, and enhancing the meaning of their lives. Therefore, freedom and the longing for it remain a cultural issue, dictating that traditional cultures be transformed first to enable people to feel free and commit themselves to stay free. However, for such a transformation to be effective and positive and sustainable it must change the traditional relationships that tie the ruler to the ruled, and recognize that people have rights and obligations that are equal. And as freedom holds people responsible for fulfilling their societal obligations, it must hold rulers accountable for their deeds.

Concluding Remarks

Private property has been most important in encouraging people to work hard and accumulate wealth, which led them to invest in economic activities as well as in scientific research and technological development as a way to make new things that enrich their lives and enhance their incomes. Meanwhile, the accumulation of wealth and scientific and technological knowledge has caused societies to be divided into social classes and groups separated from each other by incomes, cultures, education, social status, and power, which created the right conditions for competition and conflict. For example, the tribal society, which preceded the development of private property, was a classless, largely homogeneous society that knew little competition and no social conflict. In contrast, the agricultural society, which witnessed the full development of the private property institution and few technological tools, was less homogeneous than the tribal one; it was divided into two distinct social classes; and, as a consequence, it experienced some competition and conflict. People who owned more land were able to enslave and exploit others who did not, and use their wealth to produce more and enhance their prestige and power at the expense of the less fortunate ones. Nevertheless, social classes and the conflict they caused were responsible for planting the seeds of freedom. However, agricultural societies in general experienced little progress toward freedom as well as economic development and scientific and technological knowledge.

During the age of industry, the pace of scientific discoveries and technological innovations accelerated, causing all aspects of life to be affected, particularly the economic ones. The industrial state and its large corporations were the first to realize that science and technology have a great capacity to help them advance their economic interests and achieve their political goals. As a result, scientific research and technological development activities were institutionalized, facilitating the accumulation of knowledge. And while industry employed the new technologies to raise industrial productivity and enhance profitability, the state used industry to build armies equipped with guns, cannons, and ships to invade other regions of the world, colonize their peoples and exploit their resources. However, as economic activities multiplied and diversified, banking and trade expanded to serve the fast growing economies and investment ventures, causing a new society to emerge having three classes. While the rich and poor classes had existed for some ten thousand years without change, the industrial society gave birth to a middle class for the first time in history.

Although the socioeconomic and sociopolitical role of the middle class was initially limited, it soon distinguished itself by a high degree of awareness regarding its interests, its societal role, its place in society, and its rights. Such awareness led this class to become the most active segment of the industrial society, promoting democracy and employing it to enhance its status and protect its social and economic interests. However, the accumulation of wealth and knowledge in the hands of the few on the one hand, and the increasing cost of having the right education to maintain a middle class status in the age of knowledge on the other led to weakening the middle class and depriving it of the power it has had to influence change in its favor. And this in turn caused the socioeconomic and sociopolitical gaps to widen and the sociocultural divide to deepen. By the end the 20th century, and due to the advancement of the knowledge age, the middle class lost most of its economic and political power, as well as its social status and awareness. Today, no middle class anywhere has enough awareness and power and self-confidence to protect its interests and play a significant role in societal life.

Although no age has ever been free of competition, it seems that the more people advance technically and economically and claim to be civilized the more competitive they become. And as competition sharpens the divides between social classes, it causes conflict to become an aspect of competition and, thus a justified and justifiable part of societal life. In older times, people often competed and fought to get the same things, making competition more negative than positive. During the tribal times, for example, tribes fought

one another to steal the animals of the other and kill or kidnap their children and rape their women. Jared Diamond says in, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, that until 7500 years ago, people used to kill whoever they found in their way, suspicion rather than trust had characterized inter-tribal relations and dominated their interaction with one another. However, stealing the property of others and hurting them did not change life in society; it made the defeated lose dignity and honor and property, while making the victors feel good having destroyed the life of the other. Conflict, therefore, was horizontal rather than vertical, which made people and societies and history move in place, not in time; it was a zero-sum game that changed nothing. During the agricultural times, things began to change slowly as the nature of competition and conflict changed slightly. Nevertheless, the movement of society remained largely in place rather than in time. In fact, neither the tribal nor the early agricultural peoples were able to develop a real conception of time.

During the industrial age both conflict and competition were heightened, however, their nature was changed substantially. While conflict became more vertical than horizontal, competition had become more positive than negative, concentrating primarily on material things, making economics and profits the main target and the primary objective of both competition and conflict. As a consequence, people became less ideological, driven largely by economic interests rather than by moral values or religious convictions. And as soon as class awareness emerged with the emergence of the labor and middle classes, conflict became more vertical than horizontal, causing people to move in place and in time without interruption; and thus to change and make material and cultural progress.

As the knowledge age advanced and services rather than manufacturing has become the major economic activity, relationships in society began to change rapidly. Science and technology have taken the lead role in changing life and society, causing deep sociocultural and socioeconomic transformations that heightened both competition and conflict. The economy, instead of concentrating on the manufacturing of goods, began to concentrate on creating service-oriented projects and products; some of which are meant to satisfy new needs created by new technologies. Information, telecommunications, scientific inquiry, research and development, healthcare services, and education have become the major economic activities. Since the middle class emerged as a result of industrial expansion and economic diversification, the retreat of manufacturing and most activities associated with it have caused this class to retreat as well and lose its status and power and societal role.

Hegel saw freedom as connected to politics; he said that the "eastern nations knew only that one is free; the Greek and Roman world only that some are free; while we [the Germanic world] know that all men absolutely are free." Since freedom is the ultimate goal to which history aspires, Hegel argued that history will come to an end when freedom prevails. But since the struggle for freedom, as we argued throughout this paper, will never end, history, therefore, will continue to unfold and will never end. Marx saw freedom as connected to economics and the ownership of the means of production that causes exploitation and creates social classes with conflicting interests. Marx argued further that exploitation will end only when private ownership of the means of production is abolished. But since we argued that private ownership had played and continues to play a major role in motivating people to work hard, accumulate wealth, develop science and technology and build the machines and tools that raise productivity and improve the living conditions of almost everyone, neither private property nor history will ever end.

Since my motto is, "Knowledge not shared is Knowledge wasted, and the more we share, the more we gain people of knowledge" I ask all readers to recommend every article and book they like because it will help inform others. We all share the responsibility to make our world more hospitable to peace, social justice, and freedom; a lofty goal we cannot reach without spreading knowledge and awareness in every corner of our mother earth.

Prof. Rabie is a distinguished professor of International Political Economy; he attended 5 universities and taught at 11 others on four continents. He has published 58 books, about 200 scholarly papers, and over 2000 newspaper articles. Books are 16 in English, one in Albanian, and 41 in Arabic. English Books include *Saving Capitalism and Democracy; Global Economic and Cultural Transformation; A Theory of Sustainable Sociocultural and Economic Development; The Global Debt Crisis and its Socioeconomic Implications.* (Palgrave Macmillan 2013-2017) One of the English books, "History of Racism", was translated and published in six other languages: German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Polish. Arabic Books include 3 poetry collections, 2 novels, and a story; the rest is mostly academic books and collections of ideas and reflections. Prof. Rabie is president of the Arab Thought Council in Washington, DC, a member of the Arab Thought Forum, and a fellow of the Alexander Von Humboldt Foundation since 1992. Grants and scholarships financed his education from high school to receiving his Ph.D. in 1970 from the University of Houston; grants covered studies in Jordan, Egypt, Germany, and America. He is the winner of the State of Palestine Lifetime Achievement Award for scholarly publications and several other awards. His writings and positions reflect a strong commitment to peace, social justice, freedom, human development, as well as social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability.

www.yazour.com

Links to Google Scholar and ResearchGate.

https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=evo_c4QAAAAJ&hl=en&citsig=AMD79op143N3h2Qo7R_hDsZtzBuYxsGi6g

<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mohamed-Rabie-2>

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/culture-magazines/rabie-mohamed>