

**The End of Money and the Future of Civilization by Thomas Greco: reviewed for cesc by Anton Pinschhof**

Many have had doubts about the ultimate motives of urban civilisation, ever since UR...and by its fruits let it be judged. There now seems little doubt that the protection racket imposed by urban elites on everybody, using force as the ultimate backing for monopoly money & compound debt, has resulted in net universal brutalisation. But, we can escape from debt-forced labour & marketing; we can build a really free market, beyond the desert of contactlessness and the quagmire of debt. The priests of money-theism stand naked; we can do better.

It has been quite a while since Mesopotamian civilisation started but, ever since then, successive waves of urban civilisers have been riding hard for the robbery of time, riding often under the cloak of transcendental monotheism and finally revealing themselves as naked money-theists on dead horses. The recently modernised alchemy of stealing time & converting it first into money & then into political power (see Goethe's Faust) has produced the goods only for the elite & their imitators; it has cleaned up, abstracted the wealth, brutalised humanity & ruined the habitat.

Keynes (*Essays in Persuasion, 1932, quoted by N.O. Brown, Life against Death, Vintage 1959, p.286*), in his most profound appraisal of economic behaviour, wrote « Perhaps it is not an accident that the race which did most to bring the promise of immortality into the heart and essence of our religions has also done most for the principle of compound interest ». Even if this is construed as a mildly racist jibe, it is nonetheless true that it is high time for the money-power to be de-sacralised & demystified, at least for this Earthly life. We may smile at accounts of ritual burials with precious objects put into tombs along with food & drink; our own bank vaults resemble just such a superstition.

Whatever the degree of malice aforethought on the part of today's ruling elite and, whatever the blind faith of those of us who thought we lived in democracies, Greco shows how to solve the power problem rationally & peacefully, at least in its practical aspects. He clears away the mystery about money-power and shows how societies can take it back into their own hands. Now we can get on with running our territories & sovereign nations, only indebted to each other, not to alienated gangsters, no longer slaves of protection rackets & mass hypnotism disguised as freedom & democracy. We shall waste no time scapegoating tax havens; the whole of high finance has been an extra-terrestrial haven for anonymous speculators & stateless pirates.

Heichelheim (*Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Altertums, 1938, paraphrased by N.O. Brown 1959 p.249*) proposes to take the institution of interest-bearing capital investment as the strategic key factor in the economic development called the urban revolution...allowing much unstoppable progress in the wrong direction, until today.

This relentlessly exploitative urbanisation has been finally revealed as the essential nature of this relentless civilisation process, bringing more brutalisation than civility, despite all the artworks. [For those who would survive the sustainable cynicism of monopoly capital, now that the usurpers are caught red-handed and the mask of democracy has slipped, Greco provides the tools for regeneration of societies. Can we conceive of a new culture? Yes we can. Here are the tools for its monetary system, and it will thrive.]<sup>1</sup>

The future of life on Earth is for free civil societies to decide for themselves, in all their diversity, having seen how an essentially urban uniformity has cynically limited all our choices whilst all but destroying the world. Societies can henceforth begin to reclaim sovereignty over what's left of humanity's heritage.

As mass media produced contactlessness, so too the mass market produced worthlessness and now, Greco helps us find a practical way to the economies of the small scale, for human values & in human time, no rush, far beyond today's bondage, owing no debt to the powers that be, indeed allowing them to come down to Earth & join in the fun of real life. We come to a place we always knew existed, where the citizen's value is measured by what he gives, not by the growth of his capital of which others were deprived, much less by the blind heroism of the unknown soldiers and workers who lived & died for the profit of the unknown shareholders in the sky.

The Chinese say: « if you have no solution, raise not the problem », but NOW WE CAN look the old power problem in the face, since we have a goodly part of the solution. Don't worry, Greco means the End only of *Monopoly* Money as we know it, not of prosperity & abundance. He shows how to end planned cash scarcity and mass racketeering, allowing for the polity & its ethical values to reign sovereign, including over a healthy monetary mechanism, taking interest rates below zero where & when necessary, allowing poor bankers to provide honourable services to society, consigning usury & forced investment to the dustbin of history, thus allowing the real terrestrial economy to breathe freely in a really free marketplace. One natural side-effect should be nations regaining political freedom, including freedom from artificial national debt, and industries producing only what's needed, where & when it's needed; not imposing chaos & gimmicks and dictating policy to the nations; not provoking wars just for profit & geo-strategic hegemony. There just won't be enough extracted capital for such folly: we understand its proper basis of issue and we know how to keep it circulating where & when it's needed.

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10-III-2009*

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<sup>1</sup> The section in parentheses is included on the Chelsea Green website at <http://www.chelseagreen.com>