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FREEDOM AND PLURALISTIC SOCIETY;

An Essay on Federalism

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Goals, Processes and Indicators of
Development Project

Freedom and pluralism, these are heavy concepts. Some little preparatory work by way of definitions is indispensable, but this can be done quite simply by means of the analytical scheme on the next page. One point about that scheme is, incidentally, to show that the two concepts are very strongly related to each other, only that "freedom" is something that individuals have or have not, whereas "pluralism" is something that societies have or have not. In other words, both concepts refer to some kind of diversity but at the individual and societal levels respectively. And that immediately leads to one question: what about the freedom of a society, could the society not be repressed as such, for instance through imperial structures? It certainly can, but for the purpose of the argument of this paper that will be disregarded. In other words, we are operating for the time being in a one society world, in order to explore some important connections. Later on this will be seen in a more realistic multi-society world, the world we have.

Freedom is here seen as freedom to, not as freedom from. It is the freedom to make choices, and that presupposes (1) that there is something to choose from, and (2) that the choice is conscious, that the act of choosing is a willed act. Pluralism in the society in which the individual lives is the answer to the first of these two points: it is a society where there is more than one type available. And education in the broad sense, only partly coinciding with schooling, is the answer to the second of these two points, an education based on much experience and much praxis.

Which, then, are the important dimensions of individual choice and societal types? In the table we have distinguished two groups, individual level dimensions and societal level dimensions, depending on whether these are characteristics of individuals or characteristics of societies as a whole. At the individual level the conventional distinction between ascribed (given by birth) and achieved (obtained later)

TABLE 1

Freedom and Pluralism An Analytical Scheme

<u>Individual level</u>		<u>Societal level</u>	
<u>Ascribed</u>	<u>Achieved</u>	<u>Culture</u>	<u>Structure</u>
Race	Education	Language	Way of life
Sex	Residence	Religion	Economic
Age	Position	Ideology	Political

FREEDOM

(individual level/choice)

PLURALISM

(societal level/heterogeneity)

SINGULARISM

(societal level/homogeneity)

REPRESSION

(dominance in heterogeneous society)

dimensions will be made use of, and at the societal level the distinction between cultural and structural types. The sub-divisions in terms of sex, age and race; education, income and position; language, religion and ideologies; way of life, economic and political are deliberately commonsensical as the whole paper is an effort to reflect problems as seen by people in general, not necessarily as seen by social scientists.

It may look as we immediately run into a major problem trying to make use of the table: how can individuals choose such anatomical types as race and sex and control the complex physiological process known as age? The point is that this is precisely what some individuals, in highly free individual-choice-conscious societies such as the United States of America, try to do - more or less successfully. The bleaching of skin and straightening of hair make it possible for some people to pass the colour bar; surgical and biochemical treatment to pass the sex bar; and plastic surgery and certain types of biochemical treatment again to interfere with the aging process. Or, put more precisely: these efforts to choose one's own ascribed characteristic (in other words to make it achieved) may not be successful in landing the individual truly and safely in the other type, but may create uncertainty as to where s/he really belongs. Whether it is worth it is an other question; some people evidently think it is, as witnessed by the proverbial women who reach the age of 39 and then remain 39 for the rest of their lives.

Generally people stay with the types given by birth, however, and then try through some kind of training (education) to place themselves in geographical space (residence) and social space (position). No societies offer a completely free choice where these dimensions are concerned; class societies restrict the choice more or less and caste societies limit the choice (almost) down to zero. And in liberal freedom theory it is recognised that the choice is limited, but it should at least not depend on ascribed characteristics; there should be equality of opportunity.

The freedom to talk the language of one's choice and to adhere to the religion of one's choice are usually considered the basic cultural freedoms; particularly so as these are the two dimensions most used to define ethnic belongingness (transmitted to the next generation through socio-cultural mechanisms as opposed to racial belongingness that is transmitted to the next generation through bio-genetic mechanisms). But ideology must also be placed in this category, general world orientation, not only in the narrow sense of preference for a particular political party. For all these three freedom has a double aspect: it is not only the freedom to express oneself in the linguistic, religious and ideological idiom of one's choice, but also the freedom of impression, the freedom to have sufficient basis from which to choose. The freedoms of impression and expression are logically related but empirically independent of each other: the Soviet Union is a good example of quite a lot of freedom of expression, but so little freedom of impression that people do not have sufficient basis on which to form opinions to be expressed. The United States may be an example of exactly the opposite: an enormous amount of impressions pouring in on the individual, one impression cancelling the other and the sheer weight of the totality of them tending to make individuals less rather than more conscious so that what is expressed has an astounding lack of variety.

As to the structural dimensions: there is the freedom, posited, to choose one's own way of life, meaning with whom to do what, why, how, where and when. This is the individual eking out his and her concrete way of living, through time and space, throughout a life-span. Needless to say, this is conditioned by the economic and political structure. The mediating link between the idea of free individual choice and societal economic and political structure is the political mechanism the society has to offer, translating individual choices into societal action through, for instance, voting for political parties, more or less proportionate representation, and an executive responsible to the representative body. The mechanism is known as democracy, for instance of the Westminster and presidential varieties, and is no doubt a major innovation in the history of humankind, precisely because it mediates between two levels of organization, at least in principle.

Given this, what would we mean by a pluralistic society? It has been defined above, let us just spell it out and try to give it some life. It offers anatomical and physiological variety by being multi-racial, at least bi-sexual, and having several age groups inside its borders. This may sound so trivial, but the singularist alternative, for instance a military college for white males about 20 years old or a training college for nurses, are not places where most people want to stay all their lives. Or, if they do it is because of a very strong conviction of the desirability of that kind of life, as expressed in the monastic orders for men and for women. In fact, it is an interesting and telling move towards pluralism that exactly military training colleges and training colleges for nurses tend to become not only multi-racial but also bi-sexual - not only in order to provide for proportionate representation later on, but also because people militate against excessive singularism.

A pluralistic society would offer several types of formative training, several places of residence, and several types of positions. Again, this may sound so trivial but it becomes less trivial when contrasted with the singularist alternative: a people's commune during the Cultural Revolution in China. It was not only that people were denied the possibility of themselves choosing what kind of training they wanted, what kind of position to prepare for, and where to live. Education and position were decided for them by the "masses" in meetings, in principle, and the place of residence was the People's Commune from which they originated. Perhaps more basic than this even if they had had the freedom of choice there would have been nothing to choose from as the people's communes were, and perhaps to some extent still are, essentially singularist. There is one place of residence, the commune itself, a relatively small speck on the geographical map, a federation of villages themselves federations of hamlets, but not offering great variety from a geographical point of view. There was and perhaps still is essentially only one position: that of being member, meaning being farmer, worker, student and militia, all rolled into one, multi-purpose, pluriform, a generalist in what is needed in the commune. And as to education:

the education needed to fulfill these obligations, essentially the education of experience and praxis. There is much to say for this as an alternative to the excessive specialization in education and in positions found in "modern, industrialized, developed" societies, but it clearly went too far as a reaction.

To continue, a pluralistic society would be one where several languages are spoken, several religions are practised, and several ideologies are found side by side. It would be one where there are several ways of living one's life, several lifestyles; several types of economic systems are practised (for instance, both with collective ownership and private ownership of means of production, both operating in big and in small economic cycles); and with several political systems practised (for instance, decision-making by consensus, and decision-making by voting).

The singularist alternative to all of this is very clear: a highly homogenous society like, for instance, Norway. There is one language, Norwegian, spoken by practically speaking everybody (with the exception of some members of the Samic minority in the extreme North). There is one religion written into the constitution, evangelical-lutheran protestantism, organised in a State church with about 95% of the population inscribed as members. In spite of a certain spectrum of political parties there is a general social-democratic orientation subscribed to by most of the population, making changes of government, from "socialist" to "bourgeois" or back again somewhat less than dramatic. There is a general way of life, the Norwegian version of the bourgeois way of life, tempering the striving for non-manual jobs with gardening and hobby-activities, tempering the yearning for material comfort with self-inflicted material discomfort through often quite strenuous types of outdoor life, tempering the withdrawal into the privatism of the nuclear family with even more extreme withdrawal, for instance in the form of long hikes in the mountains, alone, and tempering the search for security with a certain audacity in outdoor life. Furthermore, there is one economic system, now encompassing almost all economic activity in the country :

it is formal rather than informal (leaving to the informal sector almost only reproduction). It is neither public nor private but public/private, the famous negotiation-economy where the State mediates between contending parties in the private sector, between the private and the public sectors, sometimes subsidizing the private sector, sometimes buying it, at any rate controlling it. And this is presided over by a parliamentary system producing decisions by voting, but with the underlying assumption that once the decision has been made with the majority vote then the majority should be translated into consensus, not only into action in conformity with the decision, but wanting that conformity.

No doubt this offers a setting for choice of education, position and residence within one of the richest societies, per capita, in the world. This choice, however, is exercised by men much more than by women, and by the young much more than by the middle-aged and the old - the middle-aged are supposed to have made their choice already, the old are supposed to end up in the slot labelled "retired". There is practically speaking only one race in the country. And it goes even further than what has been indicated so far: through unitary schooling the educational experiences of Norwegians are - probably - becoming more and more similar for each generation; positions are becoming more and more similar because they are more and more exercised non-manually, within a technocratic framework. And as to place of residence: people in the countryside try to live as if they were living in cities and people in the cities as if they were living in the countryside; they both meet in some type of suburban living. And still one step further: through the current, quite advanced, revolution in relations between the sexes women are behaving more like men used to do and men to some extent more like women used to do, the two about to meet somewhere in the middle in a unisex role. It is probably also true that the young and the old both try to behave more like the middle-aged people, more or less successfully.

This permits us to formulate the first thesis: the more homogenous or singularist a society, the less freedom is there in that society, simply because with no diversity there is nothing to choose from. Of course, there is nothing to prevent the Norwegians from talking, say, Malay - only that s/he would be rather lonely in doing so. And the same applies for most of the other dimensions, bringing out the point that these choices to be real have to be not in a social vacuum, landing the individual with a free choice but in splendid isolation, but in a societal setting, landing the individual in a group that has made the same choice. Obviously, in such an extremely homogenous society one is essentially left with a choice that a market-oriented, capitalist society offers: an astounding variety of consumer goods of the same type, a totally unnecessary variety of refrigerators, transistor radios, watches, clothes, shapes of houses and so on. But this is not the dimension we are thinking of in connection with a pluralistic society.

From the thesis above it certainly does not follow that the pluralistic society necessarily guarantees freedom, only that if there is freedom then the society is not singular. On the contrary, a second thesis might be formulated: a pluralistic society easily degenerates into a repressive society, by having one type on each dimension dominating the other types. This dominance may take several forms. One form is that the type expands, overshadowing and eventually eliminating all other types, making the society singularist, at least on that dimension. This is expansion. Another form is through exploitation: the dominant type exists at the expense of the other types, making the others inferior, second-class, marginal. In that case one cannot talk about freedom of choice either because the choice is so biased in favour of one type. And then there is the third form where there is diversity with types co-existing, so to speak, but not everybody is in a position to exercise any choice for other reasons. Thus, old people - as mentioned above - are generally not supposed to exercise occupational choices women in many societies, just as non-whites, have not been supposed to exercise choices with regard to education, or political parties; members of some language groups may be under heavy

pressure to choose one rather than an other religion, and so on. And then, fourthly there is the point about consciousness: people may simply not be conscious about possible choices, even if types are there and they are objectively free to choose, they may not be subjectively free to do so.

Singularism is one form of repression, the other forms are better known as such. Even the categories of race, sex and age gain in depth by being exposed to this type of analysis. Granted that the anatomical/physiological choice is limited and perhaps not even desirable they could constitute a social choice. There are different forms of behaviour associated with different races, the sexes and different age groups. To eliminate all such differences of behaviour, tending towards a uni-race, uni-sex and uni-age type, is the singularist type of repression. To leave a range of behavioural types but prescribing that only men should behave as men, and only women as women and so on is another form of repression. A society combining pluralism with freedom in this particular field would be a society with very wide ranges of behaviour, some of them associated with racial, sexual and age types as we know them today, but one is permitted to choose the type that speaks to one's subjective condition. One should not be forced into the type to which one objectively belongs. If an old man wants to behave like a young girl, so why not?

The most common form of repression in connection with these three dimensions, however, is of course the dominance of whites over non-whites (or some other dominance relation if the whites are absent or negligible in quantity), the dominance of males over females; the dominance of the middle-aged over the young and the old; the dominance of the well-schooled over those with less schooling; the dominance of the urban and central over the rural and peripheral; the dominance of high positions and secondary/tertiary sector jobs over low positions and primary sector jobs; the dominance of world languages (particularly English) over national languages and national languages over the vernacular; the dominance of world religions with missionary zeal (particularly Christianity and Islam) over religions with less universalistic pretensions; the dominance of universalistic ideologies

(particularly liberalism which justifies its atomistic individualism - combined with checks and balances - economically in the form of competition in the market, militarily in balance of power, politically in the form of multi-party systems and culturally in the form of pluralism - with reference to Nature and a darwinistic conception of human beings; and marxism with its reference to History over lesser ideologies;) the bourgeois way of life over other ways of life; an all-embracing economic system (particularly the economic articulation of liberalism, free market capitalism, and the economic articulation of marxism, centrally planned socialism) over other, "archaic" economic systems; and politically repressive systems such as autocracy and democracy. Democracy? - but is that not exactly the opposite of repression? Not necessarily: it can also lead to the dictatorship of the majority over the minorities, and thereby to the elimination of social types as structural realities even though they may survive as cultural ideas; And it may also, through compromises and bargaining, lead to structural types that actually are wanted by nobody, satisfying noone, except, perhaps, those who agreed to the compromise because they derived some gratification from the bargaining process, as politicians or bureaucrats.

In short, the forms of repression are many; we all know them, many of them from personal experience. Let us now make use of this scheme in order to analyse concrete societies, and particularly with a view to understanding better the conditions for freedom in (not "and") pluralistic societies: the range between the Scylla of singularism and the Charybdis of repressive pluralism.

Case 1: Switzerland. In this country 4 languages (Swiss German, spoken by 65%, French by 18%, Italian by 12, Rätomanisch by 1%); two major religious orientations (protestantism 48% and catholicism 49 %) and a certain spectrum of ideologies coexist in a population of about 6 million people, within a limited territory, but over an age span of centuries (obviously not with this much pluralism all the way back to Willhelm Tell!). This is no small achievement in the world in which we live, one which the Swiss can rightly be proud of. It raises the question of how this is possible, and that brings up a number of points.

First, it should be noted how limited this pluralism is: it actually only covers the two dimensions of language and religion, The society is white, male-dominated to an exceptional extent, middle-age-dominated, upper class-dominated (encompassing education, residence and position). The ideological spectrum is very narrow, very Swiss, the bourgeois way of life is certainly the dominant way of life, the economic system is an all-encompassing, very softly controlled capitalism and the political system is the same all over the country, and actually permits much more pluralism than the Swiss have been able to blow into it. In short, it is only against the background of even much more homogenous societies that Switzerland stands out.

Second, none of the languages are world languages, and both of the religions are world religions. It would have been much more problematic for the Swiss if one of the parts of the country had had English as their language, or if one of the religions had been, for instance, Hinduism or Buddhism. Tolerance is more easily achieved between non-world languages and between world religions, in the latter case because some type of recognised balance of power and border-line crystallizes, much like in Europe in general after the 30-years War 1618-48, and remains the same for centuries. It should also be noted that the Swiss are very good at passive learning of the other languages: very few Swiss actually speak Swiss-German, French and Italian, quite a lot speak their own and can understand the other two - as they do in cabinet meetings. The Swiss do not seem to have the same ability to appreciate other religions, however.

Third, there is a high level of criss-cross, simply meaning that there are those with high and low education, good and bad places of residence, high and low positions, among all language and religious groups. Workers, farmers, managers, professionals can find their opposite numbers in the other groups. It would have been much more problematic if all the Swiss-German speaking were managers and professionals, and all the French and Italian speaking were workers and farmers, even peasants.

Fourth, what is the alternative? If Switzerland should break up according to linguistic borders one part would be a province of Germany, another a province of Italy, and the third would be a province of France, which, given the centralist way in which that still napoleonic country is organized means something very peripheral. Within Switzerland they are all something, outside Switzerland they might count less, even considerably less.

Fifth, maybe it should also be noted that Switzerland is a core part of the world capitalist system, a financial center to a large extent living on added value from the transformation of raw capital into finance capital, but spreading its exploitation of other societies so thinly around the world, also itself being so small that there is no anti-Swiss movement near to any take-off stage anywhere. With harsher economic conditions maybe the society would reorganize in a less pluralistic way, but then also may be not. It might even loosen up some of its economic and political singularism and base itself more on local self-reliance of the constituent parts; something at which the Swiss would probably be very good.

Case 2: Malaysia. In Malaysia the 12 million population is divided between 53% Malays who speak Malay and are Moslems, 35% Chinese who speak Chinese with 28% Buddhists, 11% Indians who speak Tamil with 9% Hindu, and a rest, 3% of the Christians, Christians also being found in the other groups. Very many speak English, making the country very plural: there are four languages, four religions, and four races. The question is whether there is freedom, if not to choose any of the four languages or any of the four religions, at least to "to choose" the one to which one "naturally" belongs. As we shall see there are considerable differences relative to the Swiss case, some of them so pronounced that they make one wonder whether the society is a viable one or will disrupt, one way or the other, and even relatively soon.

First, Malaysia is much more pluralistic than Switzerland. Not only is there a factor of race, but the three or four communities have different ways of life, tied to their civilizations, particularly their religions, and to their positions in Malaysian society. Moreover, capitalism is coexisting with precapitalist modes of production, perhaps also to some extent with postcapitalist modes given a relatively high level of state planning in some sectors (however inefficient). Politically, there is a parliamentary system, but also high level of decision-making by consensus at the village level; probably also other systems.

Second, the three languages are non-world languages, and all three language groups can be said to be equidistant to English, the idiom in which they can meet. But the religions are asymmetric: Christianity and Islam are endowed with considerable missionary zeal, Hinduism not - making for the sad incidents of Islamic youth running into Hindu and Buddhist temples, overturning relics, etc. There seems to be no passive learning at all: The Bahasa is to some extent imposed as the national language, all citizens are supposed not only to understand it but to speak it and write it, but Malays do not reciprocate by having even passive knowledge of Chinese, and certainly not of Tamil. Religiously it is surprising how little the communities know about each other and understand each other, except the most superficial characteristics that appear in public life, such as Ramadan for the Moslems and temple festivals for the Hindus and Buddhists.

Third, there is a very low level of criss-cross, with the Malays dominating the political structures, the Chinese the economic structures and the Hindus being at the bottom of both. And the fourth and the fifth factors in the case of Switzerland do not necessarily apply: it is not obvious that the Chinese and the Tamils are better off in Malaysia than elsewhere, nor is it obvious that all the communities together in the future can share the spoils from exploitation of neighbours.

Consequently, something has to be done to make the society more stable, so that the freedom to retain one's own culture at least can be guaranteed. The Islamic forces have to be restrained; and that can only happen through self-restraint. Some passive learning of some Chinese among some Malays might help. A much higher level of criss-cross, not only by providing economic positions for Malays, but also by having Chinese being admitted more fully into bureaucracy, the police and the military.

Case 3: Trinidad. A population of 1.2 million is divided between about 40% East Indians, to a large extent Hindu(25%), somewhat more(43%) of African descent, to a large extent Christian but also interested in African religions (Shango). There are also some whites (1.2%) Chinese(0.9%), Muslims(6%) - but then there is something of everything in Trinidad, including mixtures and combinations of everything. It is racially pluralistic including some new races (mixtures between Africans and Chinese, for instance) and there is religious pluralism. What is the general situation with regard to pluralism and freedom?

First, the pluralism is actually only racial and religious. There is for all practical purposes only one language, English. The rest is what one would expect from a rich, dependent capitalist economy in very quick change, with a prevalence of the bourgeois way of life, with one economic system, for all practical purposes a one-party system within a Westminster democratic model, and with education as the clear legitimate avenue to residence and position.

Second, there is the problem of two religion being missionary and the other not, but as the case of India itself clearly shows the inroads made by Christianity on Hindus are minimum. The situation in the African community may be less stable, however. There seems to be little interest in the religions of others.

Third, the criss-cross could be worse. The Indians are disproportionately high in the economic sector and the Africans disproportionately high in the political sector, but not so much so as in the case of Malaysia. This should theoretically leave a substantial

pocket of poor black youth, and that was the pocket that revolted in 1970, under slogans of black power (also under slogans of "Africans and Indians unite"; but that remained at the slogan level).

One might conclude saying that the situation is somewhere between Switzerland and Malaysia, probably closer to the Swiss case because of the irrelevance of the linguistic factor. That does not mean that Trinidad does not have problems on the horizon but they are of a different kind: the dominance of the bourgeois way of life as a goal for all Trinidadians and Tobagons, or so it seems, fuelled with oil money from relatively limited oil resources that have made the island rich because the prices went up so much more than the population has been growing, sets the course for the economic and political systems. The island becomes decreasingly self-reliant, increasingly dependent on others for the satisfaction of basic needs and consequently increasingly vulnerable. But it is still important to list the non-problems of this pluralist society: no language conflict, very little religious conflicts, very little race conflicts. Again, no bad achievement!

Case 4: Belgium. This is the case of the Flemings to the North and West and the Walloons South and East, 57% and 31% respectively. The dividing-line runs to some extent east-west through Brussels, making the capital itself a problematic part of Belgium politics. Religiously the country is 93% catholic, which means religious singularism. Maybe the Belgian situation becomes so untractable because the pluralism is only one-dimensional? Does the identity become too thin, based on language alone, and for that reason less secure of itself, more easily threatened? On the other hand there is the consolation with geography and with the economy. With only 7% in agriculture the traditional division of labor with textiles for the Flemings and coal and steel for the Walloons seems less significant.

Case 5: Yugoslavia. This is a federal, socialist republic, consisting of 6 republics (Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Hercegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia) and two autonomous regions for the Albanian speaking (Kosovo) and the Hungarian speaking (Vojvodina). Serbo-croatian is spoken in Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia, with some important variations, and the writing is in latin letters in Roman-catholic Croatia and cyrillic letters in Greek-orthodox Serbia (and also in Macedonia). Again, there is the case of linguistic and religious pluralism, but not racial - relatively similar to the Swiss case. The following remarks can be made:

First, the pluralism is limited, encased in the particular Yugoslav system of micro-socialism combined with macro-capitalism, called "self-management", extended to all parts of the country.

Second, as for the case of Switzerland all the languages are non-world languages, they may be said to be southern slavonic languages (Yugoslavia means south Slavia), and the religions are stalemated, like in the Swiss case. The languages are similar enough to be relatively mutually comprehensible, with the exception of Hungarian and Albanian.

Third, the level of criss-cross is high and increasing, Macedonia decreasingly being the poor, agricultural part of the Federation only whereas Slovenia maintains its position as the central European part.

Fourth, like for Switzerland none of the parts would do better outside of the Federation, or at least so it seems today.

Conclusion: Yugoslavia will prevail, it will continue. Speculations that the country was so vulnerable that it would burst, break into pieces the moment a particularly popular leader, Tito, died, proved to be exactly that, speculations - based on substantial ignorance.

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What kind of conclusions can we, tentatively, draw from the general scheme of analysis and these cases?

First, pluralism along some dimensions seems to be protected by singularism along most other dimensions. Whether this protection, this cocoon, is in fact necessary is difficult to tell. What it means is essentially that the pluralistic potential of human societies is very far from being fully utilized. It may be that one reason for this is that there is a limit to how much pluralism a society can take, and a limit to how much freedom of choice individuals can exercise. Hence, it may very well be that the condition for racial, linguistic and religious (or simply racial and ethnic) pluralism is structural singularism. And it may also be that the converse is true: that the condition for structural pluralism, meaning experiments with different types of economic and political systems and ways of life within one country, would be racial and ethnic singularism. This is actually the way it works out: such experiments are today carried out in rich, western, capitalist countries that are racially and linguistically, and usually also religiously, rather singularist. Whether this relation is in any sense causal, or just a correlation due to deeper lying factors in the history of the world system, is another matter - difficult to say at the present moment.

Second, the significance of cultural and structural types with universalist aspirations tuning down their ambitions cannot be enough emphasized. One may say that this is like asking the lion to please blunt his teeth and claws. Others might say that the only approach would be for the sheep to develop more lionlike characteristics. In that case, stale-mates might be possible, but the other case is more positive as it might lead not only to passive coexistence but to an active coexistence of mutual learning, at least at the passive level.

Third, the importance of criss-cross seems to be substantial. Where this does not obtain the process of building it is a painful one, and slow relative to the danger of an impending crisis.

Fourth, the significance of the communities not feeling that they can do better outside the society than by staying inside. Of course, if one or all leave the society then the result would be two, three or four singularist societies, which would no longer confront us with the problem of freedom in a pluralistic society. This is the way European nation-states were formed, meticulously drawing borders in such a way that there should be maximum homogeneity within and maximum heterogeneity without.

Imagine now that these four conditions obtained, what kind of society would we then have? It can perhaps best be characterised as pluralism under control. People are what they are and they are permitted to remain what they are and have been, and that is about it. The societies are stable, and so are the patterns of choice that actually are non-choice because people just remain what they are. If the factors are all present and working well no heavy superstructure, like a federal capital with considerable power over the constituent parts may be necessary; if it does not work so well the central authority would probably use the conflicts and the pending crises as pretexts for increasing their power. The typical example are the British in the entire history of the British empire, importing cheap labour to all kinds of places, for instance Indians to Malaysia, Trinidad and Fiji (an island that today has about 50% Indians and 43% Fijians), creating a complex racial/linguistic/religious pluralism with accompanying conflicts, proclaiming that the people are unable to govern themselves, and then installing themselves as an umpire, as a balancing agent on top of potential belligerents. The tactic is known as split and rule. If there was no split existing beforehand one could often rely on the British to create one through importation of cheap labor.

The governing mechanism does not have to be an imposed central authority, however, it could also be decision-making by voting. But here the problem is that if criss-cross is made use of with proportionate representation in all sectors of society a majority will still be a majority and can make use of its voting

power to dominate the minority. It would be purely by chance if the ratios should be so equal as for the two sexes where criss-cross up to the point of total proportionality would make women coequal with men in, for instance, parliaments and other decision-making bodies. For that reason decision-making by voting is probably not a good solution, in general, in pluralistic societies. One may have to resort to decision-making by consensus in order to be sure that the majorities are not dominating the minorities - consensus in fact meaning that the minorities have a veto power. The question, obviously, is whether the majorities will permit this!

But these are technical problems, often capable of solutions. What is more problematic is not what happens when the mechanisms do not work but what happens when the mechanisms really work well. In that case the pluralism will probably gradually erode. More concretely, exactly because there is no tension and also no distance the groups may become used to each other to the point that there is no longer any mystique, no challenge, no curiosity. Take the case of the races: in a society like Trinidad the races by and large blend and mix so well that one may get the impression that nobody pays much attention to what race the next person has. African or East-Indian becomes very much like short or tall, dark-haired or fair-haired, brown-eyed or blue-eyed in white societies: something one notices without paying much attention, and particularly without much evaluation attached to it. Achieved characteristics, such as knowledge, wit and charm, charisma, attractiveness will overshadow the ascribed characteristics. And similarly for religion and language: whether protestant or catholic one is christian, whether German-, French-, Italian-speaking one is Swiss. From this the step to melting-pot integration à la americana is not a very long one; Even if the types are still discernable they are being broken down as distinct entities, gradually acquiring Trinidadian, Swiss, North-American accent.

This, then, brings out the point that the mechanisms to guarantee freedom in a plural society may be too effective, in fact killing pluralism. What, then, would be the alternative if pluralism is to be retained, with freedom?

The alternative would seem to be disintegration rather than integration. More particularly, to divide geographical space so that each type has its own territory, where that type is sovereign and can constitute itself according to its own logic. But would this not be a diverse separatism rather than pluralism, living apart, no longer constituting any kind of society? No, these pure types could still be part of a society, which then would have to be federal with a very high level of autonomy for the constituent and highly diverse parts. The freedom of choice would then be a question of mobility, over the possibility, even desirability for individuals of moving from one point in space to the other, meaning from one type to the other, as it speaks to their concrete life situation through their life cycle. This would presuppose a social ideology where one is no longer predestined to stay with one type, as mentioned above not only with one's own race, sex or age-group, but is permitted more mobility. Needless to say that kind of thing is for the future. What is for the present is what is already obtained in countries like Switzerland and Yugoslavia: a geographical separation brought together in a federal structure, permitting the individual to live, protected, in his/her type, yet to be part of a richer totality that neither the majority of the Swiss nor the majority of the Yugoslavs have learnt fully to benefit from for their own human growth. Why is this so much more difficult in countries like Fiji, Malaysia and Trinidad? Because of the much higher level of geographical mixture which again stems from the fact that British imperialism brought in the "kulis" where they could be useful for menial labour, meaning essentially all over society, thereby bringing about a high level of geographical heterogeneity that does not easily lend itself to a separate but equal policy.