

PROLEGOMENON TO AN HEURISTIC APPROACH TO THE ETHICO-POLITICAL FIELD STRUCTURE OF QUESTIONS *

THESIS: The ethico-political question “**What is to be done?**” takes the general form:

WHAT SHOULD subject DO TO ethical verb MY object ?

1. Some basic examples of the use of this question form are:
 - 1.1. What should **I** do to **help** my **family**?
 - 1.2. What should **I** do to **help** my **city**?
 - 1.3. What should **I** do to **help** my **country**?
 - 1.4. What should **I** do to **help** my **people**?

 2. The first level of complexity is introduced when the subject and/or object is composed of two or more persons, as in:
 - 2.1. What should **we** do to **free** our **wage slaves**?
 - 2.2. What should **blue-collar workers** do to **unionize ... white-collar collaborationists**?
 - 2.3. What should **students** do to **liberate ... the university**?

 3. A second level of complexity is introduced when the subject and/or object is an abstract noun signifying an entity that may or may not exist, as in:
 - 3.1. What should **Austria** do to **save** the **Aryan Race**?
 - 3.2. What should **Canada** do to **eliminate ... hunger**?
 - 3.3. What should **Montreal** do to **hasten ... Quebec Sovereignty**?

 4. Further complexity may be discussed ad infinitum.
- AXIOM I: Every additional level of complexity increases ambivalence exponentially.
5. The concept of the FIELD in this context is to be understood to mean that:
 - 5.1. ...any subject or object of any ethico-political question with a positive action verb defines the core of the positive FIELD;

- 5.2. ...any object not mentioned is ipso facto outside the core of the FIELD;
- 5.3. ...the ethico-political action verb defines the boundaries of the FIELD;
- 5.4. ...any ethico-political question with a negative-action verb turns into a “border,” a “castle wall,” a “moat” or impassable barrier between two hostile poles.

Examples of a negative action FIELD are:

- 5.4.1. What should radical youth do to **thwart** globalization?
- 5.4.2. What should environmentalists do to **dismantle** capitalism?
- 5.4.3. What should decent, law-abiding Americans do to **stop** the spread of drug-induced underclass crime in our cities?
- 5.4.4. How can we **stop** that madman Hussein?

* Written by © Pascual Delgado - August 7th 2001. Revised June 15th 2024