

The kairos of humanity

Weapon investment has always been big business. Nowadays, though, it has even become a precondition for the functioning of our globalised economy. Whether you want to make safe investments in oil exploitation in civil war areas or you want to get your fair share of the cocaine plantation in Colombia, investing in "The Hornsleth Arms Investment Corporation" (HAIC) represents the last resort of transcendentalism of humanity by truly inhuman means.

The price for over-humanised societies, in which free and functioning market economies pretend to permit political participation and democratic liberal rights, is to be paid by a holy alliance of weapon production and weapon use in order to maintain the binary logic of accumulation and repression. "Invest in HAIC, weapons for coca and oil for food!"

In 2007, around 200 Cambridge students took part in a demonstration against investment by their colleges in the arms trade. The story behind was that the "Campaign Against the Arms Trade" put in a Freedom of Information request to find out how much universities had invested in the UK's biggest arms dealers, including BAE Systems, Smiths Group, Rolls Royce, Cobham, GKN and VT Group. Taken together they held the largest number of shares of any higher education institution - with more than 1.6 million shares. But this is just one example of a variety of institutions which have come into the focus of protest campaigns by NGOs for investing in arms trade. NGOs claim that institutions should invest ethically and find the current situation morally unacceptable. Private enterprises and transnational corporations have taken the lead and presented their answer to the most urgent social and ecological "challenges" in our globalised economy. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is considered to be *the* solution for growing social and ecological problems. This means a reinvestment of small fractions of corporate profits in social projects, the setting up of cooperations with NGOs for solving regional problems and generally speaking, taking responsibility for the impact of corporate activities on customers, suppliers, employees, shareholders, communities and other stakeholders, as well as the environment.

Humanising the arms industry

Take for example EADS, the leading player in the aerospace and defence sector in Europe. The company has drawn up an "EADS Code of Ethics", in which they commit themselves "to defend irreproachable ethical standards in our business relations inside and outside the Company." (EADS Code of Ethics - message from the CEOs, http://www.reports.eads.net/2003/ar_2003_en/pages/master.php?id=a_1_6_3) The same with Lockheed Martin, the world's leading arms producer with total sales in arms amounting to 24.9 billion USD (2003). They joined the "Foundation for Corporate Social Responsibility" (<http://www.fcsr.pl/>) with the slogan "How we make life better". It is the declared aim of the Foundation "to encourage corporations to be socially responsible and it assists them in achieving commercial success in ways

that respect ethical values, people in need, their communities and the environment." (http://www.fcsr.pl/fcsr_eng_nasipartnerzy_lockheed.html) Thus, one can spot that the issue of 'ethical' or 'socially responsible' investment is one of growing concern. But why have things changed in such a way? Why have ethical premises become a key concern of big transnational corporations and investment funds when apparently "the miracle of the market is again at work" (Chomsky).

Due to the work of international organisations such as WTO, IMF, etc. and multilateral investment treaties, national legal norms and social security legislation as well as the provision of public services have been dismantled in order to advance privatization and liberalization, establishing free market mechanisms and reducing barriers to trade and investment. But if one looks at the current situation, the promises of improving the situation for all have apparently not been met, when inequality and social disintegration are increasing. Does this mean that the market in itself is not ethical enough? What about the ethics of a free market and its promises of producing wealth for all? The present struggle of civil society and the political changes can be interpreted as a reaction to these unfulfilled promises.

NGOs and the new anti-globalisation movement are demanding among others a "capitalism with a human face", the involvement of civil society and a democratisation of the decision making processes. "Another world is possible!" has become the leading slogan for social changes. Nevertheless, the market order in itself is mostly not at stake. The idea is more about regulating market relations and financial transactions with the aim of establishing a fairer distribution of economic resources. This has exerted a considerable degree of pressure on the main actors in a globalised economy. Their reaction has been in place immediately. In an interplay with NGOs and as a response to the growing critique of their inhuman activities the concept of CSR has been developed, introduced and is currently being enforced. Thus, as already mentioned above, "Gold Seals of Approval as a Socially Responsible Company" have replaced ideas of and demands for an integrative and comprehensive ethical concept. Perceived in such a way, ethics has become a mere marketing tool for enhancing social acceptance of the business they are doing. By means of CSR private corporations are trying to appropriate the high degree of social acceptance and reputation of NGOs in order to legitimize their ways of doing business.

A defensive strategy

In order to fulfil these demands on a purely symbolic level, they commit themselves on a voluntary basis to solving the "negative spillover effects", which they produce systematically. The misconception of such an approach lies in its claim of trying to transform the unethical into something ethical. In a world in which economizing is increasingly carried out for its own sake and we are nowadays once again confronted with the situation that a whole society is embedded in the mechanism of its own economy, one has to realize that ethics cannot be imputed from an exclusive position from outside, bearing in mind that capitalist market economies are solely driven by the motive of profit maximization. Such an

economy can never be functional to society since societal goals do not have priority and the economy is not embedded in societal structures.

The war machine

Jacques Derrida once stated that "one never escapes the economy of war", but the war machine (see Deleuze/Guattari) even represents the constituent for a functioning global market economy. With the end of the grand narratives there has also been a change in the state integration of the war machine. As a side effect of global deregulation the state also loses partial control over the nomadic war machine. In order to minimise and privatise risks, it is increasingly private security armies, which have to safeguard capital investment, since *a priori* they are not expected to take over moral responsibility. The decision to become a mercenary soldier is a voluntary one based on the expected payroll. As we all know, "the weapon does not fall from the sky, and obviously assumes production, displacement, expenditure, and resistance." (Deleuze/Guattari) It still holds good for third world countries that it makes more sense to be trained in arms use than to read Ovid or install water pipelines.

Therefore, one might pose the question why the HAIC represents *the* solution to this dilemma? It is no longer a question of investing ethically! It is a question of control! It is a mode of thinking the totality. Thus, HAIC draws a clear distinction between class A and B shareholders. Those who are only driven by profit maximization are not able to have a say or take decisions concerning the strategy of the HAIC and can only acquire class B shares. Since the regime of the war machine comprises the freedom to direct the war machine against itself or act on inhuman grounds, class A shareholders can think and act within the concept of totality. They are neither bound by market laws nor by moralistic demands. *Per ruinam ad humanitatem!* Learning to dissolve yourself is part of the war machine.

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