

January's letters between Hernán and me , even between Andy Croft and me , turned very personal to be of interest to third parties. Also, Hernán and Natalie, at the beginning of January, left , and remained until late May, in Hernán's village in Nicaragua, and Hernán said he would read or respond only when he visited a nearby town and found an internet café. And soon , still before February, Greece's news, started to all be around the well known crisis. So I will only include here what should be included even amidst a starting crisis and then I will stop this site for good, to concentrate more fully on the crisis, and if I find something I can contribute to its confrontation and if that something happens through the internet I will post it , but most probably it will, naturally, be in my Greek site, not here. (Stopping this, or even the Greek site, means stopping to add things, not removing what's already on. I just mean that readers should approach such things in the spirit: "You, who have posted these things, have sure read them. If they help you at all to do anything about a place in crisis do it and then we'll ask you if what you had read helped you in that and then maybe we'll read some of those too, or ask you which to read. But if all those things didn't help you do something relevant, then can you tell us a reason why we should open it at all? So either do something or tell a reason to read it if it doesn't help in that")

So, let me put dots (.....) in what we skip and see what we keep:

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Hernan Espinoza's Blog

Blog Posts

- [Haiti devastation](#)

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The Dark Night of my Saddest Thoughts

By [Hernan Espinoza](#)

at Jan 19,2010

The Dark Night of my saddest Thought:

Jan. 14, 2010.

Puedo escribir los versos mas tristes esta noche.

Escribir por ejemplo: La noche está estrellada .

(Tonight I can write the saddest lines. Write for example, The night is starry) (Pablo Neruda. Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair. Penguin Twentieth Century Classic. The Museum of Modern Art, N.Y. English language translation copyright W. S. Merwin 1992. P: 50-51.

These verses have been repeated countless times by all the romantic youths of my generation, when the separation from a loved one, squashed our chests with pangs of anguish.

I of course can't write poetry, but I feel like repeating them again and again as I write my sadness of now.

The anguish in my chest is like the summation of all the separation anxiety I ever had, because the loss is the biggest I could possible imagine, even if I am not sure what loss is worse: the many lives in the earthquake in Haiti plus thousands in other countries, or the lose of humanity by the society in which we live.

How else but lack of human feelings can one call the hateful statements on TV made by Pat Roberson and Rush Limbaugh blaming the tragedy to the victims in the name of their deranged convictions, or the wise guys blaming the destruction to the lack of construction codes in the city of one of the poorest country in earth, or the news reporters which, with the usual exception of the ones at Democracy Now (for sure there are others from whom I haven't heard), who are using the devastation and dead bodies as photo op and very conveniently avoid to include in their reports the history of foreign powers contributing, if not causing the disaster in Haiti. These last ones would go some place else, as soon as the horror scenes are no longer sellable, even if the worse in that country, is yet to come.

Worse even, The Heritage Foundation considering the destruction of a Nation as a "good opportunity" to which the clever question of Naomi Klein is: opportunity for what? reparation or more business? Then the declaration of the US President: "We have ordered \$100 million Investment" gives a ominous clue.

Is there any one who doubts what the opportunity consists of? A safe bet is opportunity for profit.

To add insult to injury, two hangmen who have torture Haiti for the last 15 years, are appointed to control the "rescue" and reconstruction of that devastated nation: Bill Clinton especial envoy from UN who according to him self, 15 years ago brought back President Aristides with conditions so askew that Aristides presidency was promptly topeled down by a second coup de'état and exiled to South Africa. Bill Clinton also has been working very diligently to establish more and more sweat shops, where the dispossessed Haitian workers make the lowest salary possible and who with the help of George W Bush, responsible for thousands of Haitian immigrants perishing in ICE prisons, would arrange further exploitation of the last resources, cheap human labors to be sure, because everything else is already extracted from what Columbus called a "Paradise on Earth".

I am not a historian and have no instructions in sociology, economy or politics, so I only depend of my experience to talk about what is likely to happen in Haiti in the next few days, months and years.

On December 23, 1972, the center of Managua, the capital of Nicaragua was devastated in the middle of the night, the number of casualties relative to both cities population is comparable, but if the numbers don't keep the proportionality, that should be irrelevant, both are enormous human tragedies.

In Managua the families were split apart that night, and there was as much difficulties reuniting their members as must be happening already in Port au Prince.

All communications infrastructure were down and many people who were out of their houses because Holyday celebrations, were unable to relax wanting to know where their love one could be, hoping for the best but fearing the worse.

The next day people thirty, hungry and disoriented sow beverages and food plus other items in the broken-down and abandoned warehouses and supermarkets, they start using those supplies to help themselves, reasoning - no every one of course, there were opportunist as usual- that the owners have insurance and the food if not used on time might spoil. That was

the moment when claiming the need for security, the advocates of Law and Order cry that there was looting on the stores. The military came in with their guns, repressed the people wounding, arresting and even killing an unknown number and taking away the merchandise to where? To their commanders homes not doubt. From security forces they went to be the actual looters. Is that to happen in Haiti? Maybe, with the benefit of the doubt given to the self nominated rescuers, actually rapacious buzzers, now arriving to the island.

I entered Managua on Dec 28, I had a hard time crossing the city center, we were stop by armed patrols where bulldozer were “cleaning” the rubbles, “this is an area out of limits” was the explanation given to us. The stench was nauseating, the smell of charred meat permeate the air, dead bodies were piled up and burned before buried in massive graves. I remember my self asking the tax driver to hurry alone; as is well known, in all cities tax drivers always know an alternative way and eventually he took me to my destination the El Retiro Hospital. Once there, I found that it was in shambles and totally abandoned by the medical personal, no one was there to give health care. Like most people, physicians and nurses, having some economical means, had already gone to other cities, “to look how to start again” as was told later. I walked the field where El Retiro, the major general hospital of Nicaragua had been before I came to US for further training. For a moment I thought I was the victim of a practical joke, which we used to play to each others on the 28th of Dec. day of the Innocents Saints, and which were ended by the remark: “cogé por Inocente” (probably translation: I got you”). I found in those field a provisional hospital, where I went to offer my medical services joining the staff of that tent hospital which has been flow from Panama and staffed by US military personal. I worked there a couple of days, then, noticing that what we were doing was to care for stable patients, I decide to move to León looking for my colleagues (former coworkers and classmates), to see if I could accomplish what I had in mind since I decide to go with medical assistance: to establish a “follow up” free clinic, where the people hastily seen at the time of been injured, could come to be sure their wound were healing and to receive further care.

For this purpose, I had arrange for a lot of Tetanus vaccine, to be sent from Santa Fe NM to Managua. These supplies never get to their destination, because I was told by an old professor of ours, at that point appointed Minister of Health, that it had to go first, to an especial place under the direction of Tachito (Anastacio Somoza Debayle), nominated by himself “coordinator for all assistance entering into Nicaragua” and me been stubborn and wanting nothing to do with the dictator, stop further actions, which I now regret. Next thing I knew, was that the vaccine had been returned to Santa Fe.

It was then and there in León, where I was to suffer the biggest psychological trauma of my life. I went to see the President of UNAN the National University (my alma mater), my former boss as they are called here, actually a classmate from high school. He then informed me that my appointment as Professor of Microbiology was terminated because I had abandoned my post by coming to get training to US, he suggested though, for me to go and talk to the Dean and other physicians of the Medical School (some of them my former coworkers and classmates), who still were “attending” in the regional Hospital of León.

I was “received” by those colleagues with expressions like these: “are you and idiot, go back to your secure job in the US, if you comeback to Nicaragua at this point you will increase the competition, we are now having from the Managua physicians moving into our towns“.

That was the moment I decide to return to my job in the little mountain hospital in the North of New Mexico and took, forced by the circumstances, another one of the wrong turns in my life: to have to practice medicine selling my service for a salary and to stop dreaming being a professor.

I realize at this point that I am talking of my life instead, then I better change back to my original intent in writing these thoughts.

Soon after the earthquake, Somoza became director of the reconstruction of Managua. His family and his cronies made a “kill” as is said here, obtaining by any means and reselling with hefty profits, the devaluated real state where the city was to be rebuild. They “organized funny companies” for selling construction material and wan invariable the bid for contracts to rebuild.

Is something like these is to happen in Haiti? Probably.

Already the airport is control by US marines armed to the teeth and trained for combat. The other bad news is that the international assistance coming in the airport is being taken to “warehouses” located some place not yet disclosed and from there no one knows when, in what amount and how would reach the casualties of the earthquake or if ever the rest of the tortured people of Haiti, would be remunerate for the years of exploitation, which has bring down to near total collapse, that once beautiful country.

I don't want to be a pessimistic, but cynically one could say: portions of humanity is dead and would continued to die in large numbers, the other portion is inhuman or blinded by greed: then, if something is not done soon to change the situation, which does not appear happening so far, during the rest of this century all lives in planet earth are to perish.

Tonight I must fight with myself for having such demoralizing thought.

I wish I could be more brave and optimistic as normal human beings are suppose to be, but paraphrasing Pablo Neruda I have to say: I can write my saddest thought tonight.

In the other hand, age teach that the wise thing to do, is to move ahead. Luckily, it's time for me going to reunite with my friends the landless campesinos working in rehabilitating our deserted land. I shall go then, in another of my strategic retreat.

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...PS: (Just to share some good news) More news: Hernán, my headmaster arriving to his home's phone called me to tell me what he could not tell me from the bus taking him to the boat. His organism works so well with the tacceeba pill, his cancer indices were so low, that the doctors told him he is a case for study!!!

Dear John, how wonderful, your friend is back home safe and with good chance to get into remission with the new chemotherapy, please congratulate and say hello to him from us, even if we don't have the pleasure to know him personally.

...OK, in the 10 hours I also went to see in the port Piraeus a very fine old lady of 85 who was our very-very good neighbor in the island and who, with her husband, was visiting their grandchildren here. I learned the news and we said so many stories of our village, i have to tell you some someday; by the way: last summer i sat down to write some, thinking it would be a 20 page letter to share with my ex-students on the internet since most of them were school stories with them. It became a 401-page book that I posted for the students as a site (that is the site glossaskopelosblues.gr of which i have shown you the first page, first having photos of the serenity and health of a village school, then photos of the intensity of town demonstrations and molotov bombs, then photos of global issues as ridiculous as the paranoid American arrogance shown in Mount Bushmore) OK, I found which of all stories from the village i should tell you: We had a friend, Nick, there who died through some trivial accident last summer, and he was so live that none of us can believe he died (imagine: he went to a nearby (mainland, not on island) town to have his eyes glaucoma checked and, having done that many times he felt so overconfident that he did not want escort for the eye blurring that happens after the exam and as he was walking he passed with red light and trying to avoid a motorcycle he fell backward, hit the rear of his head on the sidewalk, he came to consciousness later but remained immobile as a plant for 40 days and died. He was on his way to buy little chicken for his farm hut right out of village where he was planning in two weeks a lamb and wine vigilance to wait with friends for the song of nightingales before dawn) This friend was a beehive keeper who recently had changed to winemaking and before that he had been a sailor who had travelled around the globe, his daughters had grown up and he felt very free and happy and proud, one had become a very competent translator of French and English and the other had a scholarship studying in Spain about organization of cultural events. He came to school for adult lessons in computadora* and opened a blog with stories, comments, opinions, pictures, that in some weeks reached 6000 visits in some months 10,000. As he said "I became a honey merchant in order to go around Greece and sell it and thus hear in cafes grandpas telling other stories too, like i was telling them stories from

*A part of previous letters:

Hernán: Just in case your Spanish is not enough to understand Natalie's joke: in Latin America computer is translated to "com-pu-ta-dora" and mistresses are usually call putas by an enraged wife. Need no answer. **John:** Natalie you're FAN-TA-STIC!!! What a wordplay! What a joke! What a simile! What a way to see computer as a rival! Maria is going to love it when I tell her (and also going to empathize with Natalie from first hand experience with my devotion to the screen) OK, Maria too is going to answer you when she wakes up, we had a long discussion about some issue and slept late.....Oh: Maria woke up...She laughed her heart out with Natalie's invention and she congratulates her, she even made an imaginary handshake in the air with Natalie and says how much she understands her; she also told me to write you about my 36 hours on the chair concerning your advice as a doctor**

**There was one time ...a while after Iraq invasion... with Maria again missing, when i stayed on the chair in front of the screen for 36 hours rising only to drink water and to piss, no food no sleep. I don't do that anymore, at least because Maria is always around now that we are in Athens.

our village" ...Back to our story with Nick the bee-raiser and honey merchant, and wine maker and sailor and farmer and...and...and...and blogger (and self taught through books he was ordering to Athens bookstores)

Once he saw us teachers guessing (wrongly) that Europeans would block US plans for Iraq and he said "Why expect that? Are they more civilized? They are descendants of slave traders and pirates" In a week, as if it was a set up joke, a newspaper wrote that Blair's greatgrandfather was a pirate and his wife's greatgrandfather was slavetrader, or vice versa. I showed him the newspaper laughing and told him "OK, you made bull's eye but the French..." "What about the French? You believe in them because of their revolution? The revolutionaries followed Napoleon to Russia and they left their bones there, the ones you see now are descendants of cripples rejected by the army who fucked the widows and the fiancées of the revolutionaries" To provoke more answers like that I said "there's a theory, but maybe it's a joke based on coincidence, that fuck comes from initials F.U.C.K fornication under consent of king, the license one had to his wife's body but only after the feudal lord had enjoyed her on her wedding night, possibly out of lust but also to make sure her husband knew who the boss was and to have his morale broken, so maybe Europeans are not descendants of Braveheart Wallaces like in Mel Gibson's movie" He said (maybe realizing my provocateur tease or considering it a trap) "Forget that. You know whose descendants we Greeks are?" "Whose?" "In primary school we were taught that in ancient Athens "Aristides the just" was ostracized from the city and he went to a voter who didn't know him and asked "did you know Aristides the just?" "No" "Did you vote against him" "Yes" "Why? You said you didn't know him" "Yes, but I did know they call him "Just" and I'm sick and tired of hearing calling somebody "just" all day long". We are descendants of that envious idiot. Don't delude yourself that we're descendants of Diakos put live on skewer by Turks; if he had escaped that fate he would have suffered the same in the hands of Greeks, because having that character he would have done something good enough to cause the same envy. All serious people who do want to do some good to the place should wish each other "Nice skewer" "When I went to his funeral the ferry had more than fifty friends of his that went to his funeral and we were saying to each other stories like that about Nick. At the end of the Mass the priest (pap'Alexis whom you've seen in the one of the two photographs with kids in traditional garments after a dance) with the headmaster on the same photograph)) said (probably his ears had caught phrases whispered like "But wasn't Nick an atheist?" "Was he? He only was communist" "Aren't communists atheists?" "What are you talking about? Wasn't Christ a communist?") OK, pap'Alexis the priest said "My last words with Nick were when he had told me "What? You have a cell phone? Even two? What will be next? A computer? Won't we even be able to say our village has a traditional priest?" Our last meeting had no words, only our eyes crossed, I was going out of the church, cell phone in hand, because I did not have a good signal inside, and his look as he was passing by was as ironic and as live and as kind and as glad as always and as we all knew it and as we all remember it. Nick and I were on different sides, but my leader, the Lord is not like the party owners, he never says "he's one of us" so I believe Nick is in His arms right now and maybe he is asking Him the same questions that his philosopher's and investigator's mind asked me too and I couldn't answer. Maybe He has answered to Nick's satisfaction, maybe not, maybe when I too die we'll both meet in God's arms and God will have the time of his life watching us discuss like we did here Nick starting like he always did "Even if your priest, if what you say sounds bullshit I'll say so to your face here and now..." People congratulated pap'Alexis on his speech when we walked out of the church, saying "Pap'Alexis, what you said was so much like Nick that for a moment we felt he rose from the coffin and said that to you himself" Hernan, I'm sure you understand (and from first hand too) that the first priority of people with Z-like concerns should be to have contact with people directly, both to speak to and to hear from, and not with other Z-writers who are equally in the search of what people are and don't know them first hand. OK, the analysts themselves have to do valuable work and analyses, this doesn't need first hand contact. But for us who just propagate the points further the priority is to educate and to be educated by direct contact. By the way, about of my antiwar musical comedy, besides Maria, there has been only one reader. You guess who: Nick. So not only he

educated me but he let himself be educated by me. Oh: Let me tell you another thing I learned from him (on top of the stories he had in a notebook in his back pocket out of which he copied one on the screen every once in a while) Once i was telling him about a point of Aristotle that I had learned from the American savant Mumford (whose translator and editor by the way also lived in that island (by choice, not by birth) Mumford's books were sold on the newspaper agency in Skopelos). The point was that one of the factors that gave birth to democracy was the point made by the ancient Greeks that towns if grown to a size bigger than natural had to split to two towns (by making a colony) and what was that biggest natural size? The size that allowed the town's habitants to hear each other and speak to each other , if they rose to a podium and shouted, if all gathered closely together , so that they all took decisions together, after discussion (thus, what Mumford considered the origin of Athens' greatness was that it kept the structure of neolithic villages which he thought were the cradles of democracy) By the way, i had given a book by Mumford to Nick and once that i was in his car (where he also informed me that where i was sitting his she-sheep was sitting too a while ago) I saw Mumford on the car's floor, so i was glad knowing he was reading it. If i had seen it in his home's library then i would know he didn't take it with him in the farms and beehives and pasture places where he would really read it) Now : the point Nick told me from his own readings from books he discovered and ordered from Athens: In the times of Homer's heroes shields were narrow , each combatant only protected himself. In Athens times the shields were wide , each combatant protected himself and the combatant next to him, and also he was protected BY the combatant next to him, on the other side. And in the military training exercises to keep in shape for wars, each group contained persons from all social and economic strata. So in the very strong bond between people that fighting together for life brings, since the very life of each depended on the next guy's, in this bond all citizens depended on all other citizens, there were not battle positions for rich and different battle positions for poor. OK, Hernán i got carried away, sorry if I tired you, I'll try to talk less from now on, but I couldn't avoid sharing some of my yesterday 10 hours of news and then the one thing brought the other. Say sorry to Natalie on my behalf for keeping you so much on the comPUTAdora/John

I am very sorry for the loss of such valuable person as Nick. For me, having not known him in person, is a loss in itself, but your history make me feel as if I was part of the 50 in his funeral. I could say I envy all of you, but well envy is not something I want to experience, maybe is better to say I tilt my hat to padre Alexis and all the boat load of you. I must go to bed now, I shall continue responding to your kind thoughts about us next, but I have to close tonight, confessing that the Com-puta-dora joke is not our creation and is much too involved to be said with translation in English. Good night, Hernán.

Hernán, your calling pap' Alexis (meaning "priest Alexis") padre Alexis =father Alexis , I guess=pater Alexis in Greek= the more respectful form (of the brief and informal "pap' Alexis) made me remember the following nickname the kids have devised for him by just rearranging the letters of the respectful full form: when they talk among themselves they refer to him as "taper Alexis" because , being a monk and thus a bachelor , and also being a handsome and robust young man makes many women, young and old, compete who will cook for him the best to meal* to leave in taper in a bag hanging on the knob, so he chooses what he wants and gives the rest to the poor. Upshot: padre Alexis=pater Alexis=taper Alexis

*Also he does not receive his priest's salary, and leaves it , intact, to the church.

(Oh, let me add that when as a young monk had first come to the village he had immediately met a very difficult part, not only the death of a youngster, but also the tragic death of an old woman. She had hanged herself on his first week in the village. His speech was: "The sin of suicide is considered by the Church as the greatest sin of all since it destroys a gift from God that man cannot create, so great a sin it is considered that it has as penalty something that no other sin has: Not offering a funeral service to those who commit it. Yet it is also the sin for which the penalty is never imposed, since the Church realizes that someone reaching that point must have been driven by factors pushing as nothing pushes or pulls to other sins. So if somebody wonders why we do have a funeral today he must also wonder whether he gave this woman the chance of telling him what factors were pushing her. We all have no idea why she did it and that tells us something. Also we must say today to anybody who in the future might set to mind to do a similar thing that if he finds nobody to say his such factors to, he should not take the last step without coming to the Church to speak about them". Let me also add that his parents wanted him to become a lawyer, so he first studied law and then he told them "I owed you to do what you wanted me to, now I'll do what I owe to what I want to do" and he became a monk)

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The following article I do not remember if it was I who sent it to Hernán or Hernán who sent it to me

The Threatening Dangers

By [Fidel Castro](#)

Saturday, March 13, 2010
[Fidel Castro's ZSpace Page](#)
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Hernán, thank you for your long answer on your country's situation and for the time you dedicated to writing it. By the time you return I will have completed the long answer I owe to you to tell you the corresponding things related both to my country's problems and our own personal life, and also my own self questions regarding what we, both all and each one separately, can or cannot do about the local and global problems that have visited us all and are here to stay. For the time being I only tell you that my headmaster, Mados, after three whole years of fight with lung cancer died (he only resigned 20 days before dying when he saw that he was getting infection after infection and pneumonia after pneumonia and thus he would have to be absent from school for weeks and not just 2-3 days every few weeks and he would make the school dysfunction) After he saw that magnetic tomography didn't show a metastasis he told me both seriously and as a joke "thus, Giovanni, I'll die not of cancer but of infections?" (this time he did have a feeling he wouldn't return to the island from Athens alive so he had shown his teacher son all the files of the hard disk where he kept the data for the school) For his funeral I only tell you that all the villagers gave condolences to each other as if the recipient had a family member dead and vice versa the other person answered with similar condolences. People (students, colleagues, parents) took the floor for very moving obituaries, depending on age they considered him a second father or an older brother or as a son, most moving was a young girl whose classroom was across his office and she said "when we heard your keys opening your door we felt safety" (when he returned from chemotherapy on a boat he went straight to school, not home, and his wife came there to meet

him, he left for home at noon when all us teachers left) I myself spoke both on behalf of people who had left the island (so i summarized all the notes that teachers who couldn't make it that day sent me by e-mail to read) and also i spoke as a friend who had lived with him longer than others (since we collaborated eleven yeas at school and we were very close here in Athens in his therapies. The last twenty days I was with him every day, and when he was dying his daughtetr called me up at as school and i excused myself to the students and to my new headmaster and left running). Nick , the other friend whose funeral I had gone to as i had told you , was a very close friend of Mados , and also both were very active communists. When Nick, regained consciousness after his accident, and he was still conscious but not communicating with his body below neck, Mados had seen him in the hospital and, with tears, asked him "will we go to water our fruit gardens together Nick?" hoping Nick would recover . Nick's said "yes, also for coffee with my daughter ", him in tears too. (Each was watering his trees and vegetables everyday) I finished saying "Now they're together watering their gardens, but not through Nick's recovery but through Mados joining him, each making with his death the whole village orphan once more. Father Alexis, standing here thinks to himself, i'm sure, that they both are in the kind of paradise they would love to live, since I've heard that paradise in some ancient oriental language meant "fruit garden". We'll all remember them forever, I mean forever until we too join them in their garden that they are watering". What father Alexis himself said was that when he came to the village from his monastery he met a wide open school because Mados had a wide open heart and a wide open mind and what he wanted was to also make the students wide open in the same way...Anyway, that was very hasty Hernan, either i must find the time to write more or stop jumping from one piece of this subject to the other . However I do feel that both you and I agree that, in the souls of pure people, humanist-atheists and humanist-Christians do not contradict each other. And concerning a phrase of a colleague that "Mados knew how to make everybody discover and put to use his best self ", the simple secret of how he did this was that his love for the kids was so great and the work he made for them through that love was so much and he did it so untiringly that he made everybody imitate his (real and not just theoretical) example. And the kids only learned what difference they had from other schools when, after entering universities, and talking to students from other places they found out they had visited triple numbers of museums, planetariums, biogardens, etc etc compared to other schools. And his motto was "first what remains forever. Not classes. Whoever wants to sit his ass down on a chair and study hard , OK, give him hard problems etc to enter universities. But to all of them, regardless of higher education, must remain songs and dances that will accompany them forever in family feasts and village celebrations , and also memories of love with fellow students in joy and grief as they will be growing old together. And people who can 't do well in exams but can do athletics, dancing or singing etc must have this kind of memory from school, so let's organize such events too..." OK, it's clear that if I start this subject i never stop. Bye Hernan, kisses to Natalie

Dear John:

From faraway I also want to join the people of your island in the condolences for the loss of such remarkable soul as the one of your friend and headmaster Mr. Mados. Be sure to give to father Alexis and Maria as well as the rest of your colleagues and companions in the wonderful art of teaching and celebrating life, my regards.

To you especially, I know, the death of you former headmaster must be very painful, but well as with Nick we now only can remember a celebrate their remarkable lives.

Love from your friend from the other side of the world.

Hernan.

Dear Hernán, your words are so moving and so needed that I feel exactly this: That I really have a very close friend in the other end of the world whose warm and honest feelings matter very much to me. Thank you deeply.

Hernán , happy Easter to you and Natalie and your people. I also enclose here a speech by Chomsky referring to Nicaragua in many places. With love/John-Maria

"The Evil Scourge of Terrorism": Reality, Construction, Remedy

By [Noam Chomsky](#)

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

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The following article I do not remember if it was I who sent it to Hernán or Hernán who sent it to me

[Dumbing Down Teachers: Attacking Colleges of Education in the Name of Reform \(Part I\)](#)

Tuesday 25 May 2010

[by: Henry A. Giroux, t r u t h o u t | Op-Ed](#)

Hello Hernán, are you back in New Mexico or still in your beloved country with Natalie and your friends?

I haven't told you our news for some time, I'm sure you have heard about Greece's news , IMF with E.U. have reached some decision for some tight measures after they defamed Greeks enough to convince every foreigner, and even some Greeks if possible, that Greeks are irresponsible and lazy spenders of loans from other countries. Yesterday , Mayday, the government postponed for one day the announcement of measures to avoid the increase of Mayday demonstrations, but a general strike is planned on Wednesday anyway. Well, I'll be short: As you can imagine for some time (a little while after our intense letter exchanges, just some days after you left for Nicaragua) news about our debts kept adding. I terminated my Greek postings with a note in the spirit "all these postings anthologizing megathinkers should be approached with the following question to me , their anthologists: "If you yourself who has read them cannot think of anything at all to do about this crisis, which is here to stay, then why would you suggest reading any of them to anybody else?" and after that I just read things about current problems and chose among them for circulation through forwarding the ones that i considered the most constructive. As top priority I consider the views of economists who had been warning about these things for years but were not believed by consumerists and were defamed as pessimist killjoys. I tried to help make their views and their current suggestions more widely known(TV has them nowhere or has them in hours of very few viewers. And at most shows them one-by-one. I think they would help only if discussing in front of the public. I am glad that more and more discussions among them in public amphitheaters, but not on TV, and concerning the issue of whether there are no alternatives to the one agreed upon by the government and IMF and E.U., start to happen...) OK. let me also tell you what I did and will do with my English speaking postings: I'll post in my site the same kind of goodbye, but in the terms applicable to the American etc issues. I will do it only in my site , not on ZSpace, i'm sick and tired of the silence of American Zspacers , not one has ever responded to any posting or any comment of mine to his/her article. Only a British living in Japan and a Nepalese answered; and only with you our initial contact flourished into a correspondence dense in mutual information and intense in emotions. The Americans themselves are either too busy, or, if i want to find a benefit of the doubt for them I would say that if a giant of activism and art as the composer of Canto General is not listened to by young Greeks when he himself in person (he is still living) makes criticisms of Greece, then why should Americans listen to criticisms from their own geniuses like Mumford when they are

presented to them by a foreigner? Last time i wrote anything to a Zspacer was to that young man from Palestine but he never answered so I didn't even bother to write him the few objections that i had to his plan (I mean to send him the criticism that, in Zspace in September, I had written to the Reimagining society project (I made the point that if parecon etc don't write their proposals in ways commiunicable more widely (e.g. theatrical, like Mexicans did, or like Zinn did, in his play "Marx in Soho) , poetic, song-like etc) then their points will never reach numbers of people that will be critical for the system. This same criticism applied to that young man, but at least he had already started artistic efforts, and he has many years of growth in front of him to perfect his tools) . OK, I'll write that godbye in my site, not in Zspace. And as you can imagine I'll finish it with the first page of your Testamento-Testimonio (and I'll say where in the posting of our December* correspondence it

*Oh! The full text was in the January part of which finally only selections were placed here. Either I can make a separate file posting it in my site or you can make a posting of it in ZSpace to which I can give a reference)

continues) I want everybody who ever reads it to see you as an example of liveness of spirit, of sensitivity and care for humanity, near and far , present and future, of integrity and of warm and passionate friendship to people with similar concerns. Also, before that, I'll copy your posting about the two earthquakes that also shook your souls so much. Maybe the expression "whoever ever reads it" refers to an hypothetical reader, maybe none will read it , but I'll leave the postings on and won't take them down , even with zero visits. I started to post them 2-3 years ago to be OK with my consiense. I admit that one should also try to offer tangible help, not just be OK with one's conscience. And this tangible help I will try to offer to Greece's present period if i can. But it was proved more than enough that nothing tangible i can offer to US. Only education, and even that no American would like to take from a non American like me (or even from an American if learning includes self-critique?) But , Hernán, I'll never forget and I'll always remember, with deep love, joy and gratitude, the passion and the depth of our long exchanges in December and January, the moral support we both felt from you and Natalie and the closeness with which you were near us when i told you of friends of ours , like Nick and Mados. May God continue to give to you and to your so wide family, of so many generations and branches , the blessings you so generously give to your friends. Kiss Natalie from both of us too. With love/John-Maria

We are back in our house of Rio Rancho and I am reconnected to the Internet. The paper by Giroux is the first thing I read, very interesting and educative, I forwarded it to Ernesto, a retired high school teacher of history and my friend living nearby, as I said hello after coming from my hills.....

WELCOME! Very happy to have heard from you and very thankful for your heartening remarks, I too circulate Pilger's ZNet article on Greece to my friends . Kisses to Natalie from both of us and I will be back soon with explanations....Bye for the time being.

Hernan, being in a hurry due to the national university entrance exams instead of telling you the story myself I tell you the story even better through the mouth of one journalist who, some months ago wrote , in a weekly magazine, a "letter to the prime minister of Germany" signing it as the prime minister of Greece and adding that regrettably it was not our prime minister who wrote it; of course he did it with the faint hope that the stupid clown we have as prime minister would learn something from it before his visit to Germany , and with the more realistic hope that Greeks would read and think about what our prime minister lacked both the brains and guts to say and deep down with the wish that people with both the brains the and guts will show up to represent such views and people will support them (recognizing them with some help from such educational help and with the greatly more educational experience coming from the crisis whose onset we're on)With our warmest regards to Natalie I close this and run to some students who, Maria just told me, gave me a call to meet at school for some questions. Tomorrow they're writing physics...

Draft Open Letter by G. Papandreou to Angela Merkel

According to absolutely reliable information of our magazine, there is already a draft of a personal confidential letter to German Chancellor Angela Merkel within the diplomatic office of Prime Minister George

Papandreou. The reasons for writing the letter were provided by the extremely aggressive, even libelous, reports by German institutions and German political statements against our country regarding the fiscal crisis. As the reader will see from the contents of the plan, if indeed the prime minister decides to send the letter to the German Chancellor with even one tenth of the proposals included, it would be a major event in Greek foreign policy and European affairs. The full text is as follows:

Dear Angela,

The stormy political history of Europe during the last two centuries has taught us that every major, prolonged economic crisis begets its inevitable scapegoats. In the late 19th century and early 20th centuries, this role was attributed to the Jews, the stereotype of the "stateless person broker-usurer that eroded the wealth of nations". In the current economic crisis, the most serious test of our generation, the scapegoats were initially the economic migrants, targets of escalating racist attacks, which as alarming as they are, fortunately, do not compare with the terrible, historical precedents.

Paradoxically, alongside this surprisingly easy target, we recently observe the stigmatization of whole nations of our European family, being described collectively as PIGS. These are the Mediterranean populations of pigs, or even cicadas, which supposedly waste the sweat and labor of the hard working ants, the Northerners of the Union, by imbibing ouzo and wine in this modern version of the Aesopean myth. My country has been the target of the lion's share in a campaign of mudslinging. For some time we have shown patience, thinking that dealing with evidence would demolish these groundless accusations. However, this allegation has gone too far. As Prime Minister, but also as citizen of this nation, I feel obliged to tell to the mudslingers:

We've had enough! No more!

A few days ago the Vice Minister of Finance of your government, a Mr. Jorg Asmussen, announced in Gauleiter style that I ought (I ought!) to follow the example of my counterparts in Ireland and Latvia, which chopped 25% off the incomes of their citizens who can least afford it. Earlier, the CEO of Deutsche Bank, sitting comfortably on a mountain of profits of 5 billion EURO in 2009, part of which comes from the profit taking of Greek debt, called Greece a "bankrupt nation" which, with hat in hand, emerges to beg and "needs to choose which ruler it will serve, the IMF or Europe." Mr Jean Claude Juncker, son of a soldier of the Wehrmacht, Prime Minister and minister for life of Finance of that superb taxation paradise of Europe that is Luxembourg echoed the same sentiment as the president of the 'Eurogroup'. As an office-holder he has never worked a day in his life and is paid 300,000 Euros plus travel expenses and allowances by European taxpayers, just to be the President of the Eurogroup. This office-holder shakes his finger threateningly at me and hits the table with his hands, demanding that I cut the salaries of those getting over 1200 Euros, even though he knows quite well that the pension of an average public servant of the Brussels bureaucracy, (not those of the senior officials but simple employees) reaches 12,500 Euros a month!

The honor fell on me to preside over a small country with a great history, a country that suffered Occupation, but never submitted to it. This country has not learned to speak in a language of spineless bureaucrats, the ideal butlers of the great powers, "Souls shriveled up

by public sins/ Each one his rank and position/ like a bird in its cage", as Nobel Laureate Giorgos Seferis wrote. As another Hellene, the late President of the Republic of Cyprus, Tassos Papadopoulos, whose firm patriotism annoyed many, would say, I was elected prime minister of a sovereign, democratic state and will not bequeath to my successors a defenseless community under European domination.

I hope that you are not insulted dear Angela. In spite of the unpleasant experiences suffered by the modern Greek state, from the Bavarian monarchy to the Nazi occupation, Greece never received any of the owed reparations. The Greek people however nurture a deep respect for German civilization. We see the great German nation's historic path, as did Wolfgang Goethe in Faust, as "two souls in one body." We have left to history to judge the dark soul which seeks the greatness of the State at any price and we hold in our hearts the soul of another Germany; one of solidarity and creativity. The Germany of Kant and Hegel, of Marx and Marcuse, of Bach and Beethoven, of Lang and Brecht, Planck and Einstein. The Germany of scientific innovation and productivity, of organization and its end result, the welfare state, and its quality of life.

In this Germany, we see a progressive nation, with its physical and spiritual struggle, a source of inspiration and an ally. Moreover, many well known or lesser known Greeks, from great scientists such as Karatheodoris, Chondros, or Kafatos, to the hundreds of thousands of immigrants who rebuilt German industry, had a share in contributing to the postwar German "miracle." Millions of German tourists, who come to our islands every summer and buy our land, know that they are always welcome. Nevertheless the image of Greece as a country of indolence and beggary nurtured by the EU thanks to German capital, is something that no Greek can tolerate. And the truth is the Greeks cannot condone this German stereotype of them either.

You know that my father was initially opposed to the accession of Greece to the European Community, thinking that an EU under US-NATO guardianship would reduce our national independence and the economic losses would be greater than the benefits. After the rise of our movement to power in 1981, he accepted, however, the fait accompli of integration, which the Karamanlis' government, but also much of the Greek people, envisaged with twofold expectations: On the one hand that Greece would take the "first gear" position in the global economy and, on the other, because they believed that integration would ensure our eastern borders with Turkey. Thirty years later we regret to see that our hopes have proved to be a midsummernight's dream, on both counts.

Faced with a Turkey that behaves as an openly revisionist power in Cyprus, the Aegean and Thrace, the European Union has not exercised the slightest pressure, as it could have done within the framework of negotiations of accession with its neighbor. In the meantime, the major powers of the European Union benefit from the perpetuation of Greek-Turkish tension by selling expensive aircraft, frigates and tanks and thus draining our state budget and exploding our deficit, and on top of this we are reproached for our deficits and debt by each and every Mr. Juncker from the ...snug security force of the Duke of Luxembourg....

For the infamous Annan plan for Cyprus, which would have transformed a member nation of the EU into a US-NATO protectorate, thereby humbling the whole of Europe, most of our partners, (with the exception I must say of the French, Spaniards and Belgians) pressed Greece and Cyprus but not Turkey, the occupying power. Not one guarantee was forthcoming from the EU for our threatened eastern borders, the borders of the EU itself. To protect these borders Greece is forced to spend exorbitant amounts to check the illegal flows of immigrants heading towards Germany and other EU nations, which are the destinations of all these exhausted, uprooted people.

You have cultivated and maintained the myth that by joining the EEC, Greece has benefited

from generous EU funding. Certainly there were inflows of EU funds in the form of agricultural subsidies, for infrastructure projects etc. Nevertheless, everybody recognizes that the total EU funding budget comes to a ridiculous 1% of GDP. The main thing, to put it bluntly dear Angela, is that for every euro EU gives us, EU take from us two or three euros. With the elimination of protective tariffs, the panzers of German industry revel without any resistance from the defenseless markets of the least competitive nations.

Out of the money we receive from the EU, a great share of those funds return to your coffers. Your construction companies, such as Hochtief, receive the lion's share of our public works and your industries, such as Siemens and Deutsche Telecom, drain OTE, our telephone company, and corrupt our political system. Not to mention the piratical attitude of the Thyssen group at the Skaramanga Shipyards, where we were asked for and gave a down-payment of an incredible 75% of the value of the project to build four submarines and repair another three, and in return we were delivered only one ("Papanikoli ") and that submarine listed due to defective workmanship!

The EU was bad enough for us as it was, and then the Maastricht Treaty came along and made the situation worse for us. Behind this Treaty "the heavy hand of the German banker" was easily discernible, as we said in Parliament, though we ended voting for it. With this treaty, which laid the foundations of the euro, the last "Maginot lines" of defense of the weakest economies fell under the weight of German industry, with no recourse to currency devaluations or policies of low interest rates to stimulate growth. Henceforth, the only defensive strategy left to us in the EMU (European Monetary Union) was to squeeze labor costs. To enter the EMU we, like Faust, had to sell our soul to the devil and make frugality our permanent economic regimen. And we were forced to accept a disastrous equivalency between the euro and the drachma of 1:374, which tossed the already weak competitiveness of our products into hell. In addition, we accepted the ruinously recessionary conditions, limiting the deficit and the debt, to 3% and 60% of GDP respectively, as if these were sacrosanct constants of nature, like the speed of light and the gravitational constant (as a scientist you would understand). A French economist recently wrote that punishing countries which transgress these arbitrary limits (why not, for example, 6% and 100% respectively?) under conditions of acute crisis, reminds one of the Millennialists who refuse to have blood transfusions so as not to violate their beliefs, or even a traffic policeman who stops an ambulance for a traffic signal violation. Not to mention that Germans violate the Stability Pact with impunity whenever it suits them and now recriminate little Greece, which represents only 2.5% of the European GDP, as if our weaknesses (and of course we have many) will wobble the Eurozone.

Your financial advisors know very well that the image of Greece as a black sheep is at the very least exaggerated. Our problems are serious, but not exceptional. America and Britain have a total external debt of about three times our own as a percentage of GDP, but no one even thought to refer them to the "expertise" of the International Monetary Fund. Greece needs to borrow 53 billion Euros from financial markets, while Belgium, which is smaller than us, needs 89 billion, Italy 393 billion and France 454 billion.

What is happening in reality is an incredible profiteering game against Greece, one in which, Germany is unfortunately playing its role as well. The giants of Wall Street, JP Morgan and Goldman Sachs, in partnership with Deutsche Bank - an unholy Trinity, which owns 75% of the infamous derivatives (CDS) on the Greek debt, raise the spreads on our bonds and thus drains most of our national surplus.

Again, I am sorry to say, this policy that you pursue will soon push us into the arms of the IMF, this extraordinary mechanism of impoverishment of entire nations of Latin America and Southeast Asia which, however, compared to the European Union, seems far less crude today in the role of Shylock. Is that what you want? Is it possible that short-term, speculative

interest blinds so much of your political thinking? Don't you even read the daily editorials in the American and British press, calling us with open arms to the IMF to hit the Eurozone and the very European Union? Do we really have to accept that the new doctrine of your foreign policy is ... Deutsche Bank Über Alles? Was our reprimanding of the garrulous Minister of Foreign Affairs, Theodoros Pangalos, when he spoke of Germany as "a giant with the brain of a small child" unduly hasty?

In any case, let's move onto what action we can take.

The first measure we are obliged to take is to demand that Germany pay off its war debts to Greece, which has the dubious privilege of being both the country which incurred the greatest per capita damage from the war as well as the only one which hasn't received so far the reparations Greece is entitled to under the 1946 Paris Peace Settlement! I must draw to your attention that the 7.1 billion dollars which were then agreed upon amount to approximately 100 billion euros in today's prices and this is excluding due interest. Neither have you repaid us the 'loan' of 3.5 billion dollars which you forced the Bank of Greece to lend you in 1941. Again, a unique 'privilege' that Greece had. A sum which, in today's prices, amounts to approximately 50 billion euros, excluding due interest. I am sure we can reach a reasonable agreement concerning the payment of interest as well as the payment schedule. There is a German debt, however, of another kind, on which we can show no sympathy and will tolerate no more delays and we demand its immediate settlement. This consists of the archaeological treasures stolen by the occupying forces of the Wehrmacht and the SS from museums and archaeological sites, a complete detailed catalog of which is being simultaneously delivered to your Ambassador in Athens.

But you must admit, after all, dear Angela, that the fiscal problems that my country is currently facing are exacerbated by the piratical speculative attacks of the international financial markets, as well as by the deficits of our European institutions and our political will. In view of this I consider the current crisis a golden opportunity for us to remedy this situation and I call for an emergency summit of the European Union, at which my Government will propose the following:

- 1. A temporary withdrawal of Greece from the Eurozone, and a reintroduction, after the devaluation of the drachma against the euro, in order to give breathing room to the competitiveness of our products in the face of unfair competition from EU dumping, an action which you have forced us to take by slashing German wages for seven consecutive years.*
- 2. The institution of a European bond with a reasonable interest rate equal for all member states so as to counter the speculation of international loan sharks. Without this, the lender of last resort of the Eurozone remains the IMF, a fact which is unacceptable and demeaning to the very existence of the EU.*
- 3. Revision of the Stability Pact in order to allow for the possibility of a relaxation of the criteria under conditions of financial crisis as a first step towards political direction of the Eurozone and political control of the European Central Bank.*
- 4. An increase in the EU budget to 5% of GDP and its redistributive utilization for the benefit of poorer countries, regions and social classes. Instituting measures of social cohesion, such as establishing a minimum, guaranteed income for every European citizen and adopting a common system of progressive taxation. Elimination of tax havens within the EU, under penalty of expelling offenders from the Union.*
- 5. Protection of the external borders of the EU by a European border force.*

The Greek weapons' programs whose profits are reaped by European companies should not be calculated within the limits of the Stability Pact regarding the deficit and debt.

Dear Angela,

It is at the discretion of your government and the governments of our other partners to accept or reject such proposals. For my part, I must clarify that, if the absolutely necessary measures for our national survival are not implemented and if no other similar measures are recommended that could address the situation in a spirit of community solidarity, then we are determined to declare a failure of payment of our debt.

As you know, 75% of that debt is covered externally, mainly by Germany and France. Americans sometimes used to say to their partners that "the dollar is our currency and your problem!" Greece is not America, but the reality still is that our debt is your problem as well! A temporary suspension of payments will result in our having a problem borrowing from the EU, USA and Japan for four to five years. Then again, as shown in the case of Argentina, where after the popular uprising of 2001 she was forced to renegotiate her debt, you will line up at our state treasury to administer to us, with a view to profit, new loans. Meanwhile, there are other orange groves that make oranges, as a Greek proverb says. Russia and China have large idle funds that could well support us. Moreover, Gazprom and Cosco, as well as the Russian arms industry, already have a substantial interest in Greece, which they would like very much to expand. In short, you'll lose out much more than us because of your payment attitude! And much more, if we leave or if we are expelled by the Eurozone!

It was not our intention, dear Angela, to take matters to the extreme. But you left us no choice. Truth is that the European Union is a voluntary marriage of interest. But in marriage, there is always the possibility of divorce, otherwise it degenerates to slavery.

Our nation suffered many sacrifices in the name of the European future first in order to enter the EU, then to enter the EMU, then so as not to exit the EMU. It cannot however, understand, in an age of demonstrable increase in labor productivity and national wealth, what dark fate, what malicious causality obliges citizens to work ever more to acquire ever less. As one of your poets, Bertolt Brecht said: "Nine times you shut your eyes (make excuses), the tenth time you are condemned for all." We have already shut our eyes nine times my dear. I now await your reply.

Sincerely,

Giorgos Andreas Papandreou

Prime Minister Of Greece

PS: As you might have already guessed, this supposed letter regrettably wasn't written by Giorgos Papandreou, or by one of his advisors. The reader is invited to view this as an exercise in political fantasy. Whether this is useful or not, is left to your judgement.

... Hernán, if I want to scan some recent centuries quickly (and thus with gaps and inaccuracies too, not professionally at all, and possibly just subjectively, not objectively) and not tire you during the briefing and to bring you to the present I will only tell you that the desperate fight of a very small country with an Empire (Greece against Ottomans) would really drown in its blood in a few years as it almost did (OK, the Empire was having deep problems but still the forces were of terrible disproportions) Then the following mechanism happened: Peoples (not governments) of Europe were moved. Governments of Europe and Russia, seeing that the Empire was having problems wanted to seize the opportunity to use the crisis to their gain (even now all big forces have the principle "no crisis should be left unused"). They used the pressure of their public opinion to enter the game and helped the revolution to not be drowned, but at the cost of acquiring deep influence on the liberated. They appointed a foreign king and gave a loan of which 60% went to anyone except to the people and to the development (and was still being paid off until recently, more than 150 years after it was made) the Political parties that appeared just had the names "Russian party", "German party", "French party", "English party" for many decades. And here we go again. We again have a loan to last forever, but this time there is no help to no revolution to gain in exchange. The same European forces that helped us then, enslaved us economically now. Weren't we ourselves responsible too? Is it always some corrupted few who receive fat bribes from externals who want to obtain money and influence and pay those few to mislead their innocent compatriots into taking loans and then face the bill by slaving their butts off if they are not totally unemployed and by selling off national land and resources? OK, the irresponsibility of the uninformed is why they didn't suspect enough the governments and the media that gave some rise to living standards to a fraction of a population wider than before (e.g. pensions to both husband and wife in peasants. Well, if I was a peasant and one gave my wife a pension recognizing she was doing work even if she raised kids and came with them to pick olives or grapes at the appropriate season, would I suspect that somebody is feeding me on borrowed money? or just grateful that our family work was more justly rewarded? Would I believe anybody that warned me? Things like everywhere, were so unfair to begin with that when unfairness became smaller nobody considered that suspect but only overdue. Later, when people learned how to extract more money with less production and how to use cheap labor by immigrants in order not to work less or not at all, OK, then it was corruption. The problem now, in my opinion, is how to pay back some of the dues to repair what we do owe and then to see how to extricate ourselves from the trap that is draining money not really owed but money sucked by real big corruption by international speculators. My own contribution to such a plan, since I have no background in economics, I only can see in the following: Since the real discussion of where we are and how to proceed, by people honest and intelligent and knowing facts, is never played in the media I want to find some of them and tell them to meet with each other and, after their analyses and suggestions take some clear and simple form, to record them and post them, and then I'll tell colleagues and students and they to their own friends, to download them and copy them on DVDs for 60 cents and give them to their parents at home and record back their answers and classify them to ask back and so have a real public dialog and not biased through political opportunists. In this sense schools can become a mass medium that everyone can use Not all can use, or have, internet, but TV most people have and a cheap DVD player most can buy and connect there. And everybody has children, or grandchildren or nephews or nieces at some school. So this is a real good mass medium, provided the analyses and suggestions in it are good (and not lousy like the government's or interminable and useless like the ones from pseudo-intellectuals) OK, let me not tire you more, I hope you won't misunderstand me if like yesterday night I stopped a letter in the middle to catch a friend who was passing and with whom I wanted to discuss some of the above from a close distance and not through e-mail or phone. Kisses to Natalie/John-Maria PS: Hernán, I also forgot to complete the letter which I had interrupted when that friend of mine showed up the night before last when I had come back from that demonstration of solidarity in front of the Israeli Embassy (ironically, it should have been in front of the Cyprus embassy: it was the Greek-Cypriot government that obstructed eurodeputies from getting on the ships to Gaza from its ports and they had to do it through Turkish-Cypriot ports) :

Regarding violence , you were asking me about, unfortunately in the first big strike and demonstration , some weeks ago, a young man and a young woman with hoods (still not arrested) threw two molotov cocktails along with flammable materials to the non striking clerks of a bank and three of them died by asphyxiation from the smoke. Maybe they were provocateurs, maybe just idiots. However this, after some days, caused some chain of self criticism in the postings of anarchists. I hope that through the size of the demonstration they have realized that what the government fears is not one hundred youths with molotovs and one thousand youths breaking shops but 150.000 adults and pensioners protesting (and shouting "Thieves! Thieves!" in front of the Parliament). I also think that the only things that scares their government's bosses too, not just the government , is the occurrence of this same phenomenon at the same scale and at THE SAME TIME happening in all countries of Europe. Multinational corporations (that are brazen enough to propose extra taxes on countries for gains lost during strikes in them) wouldn't like to see strikes in all countries on the same day , I guess, but to reach such coordination in an effective way and not just as demonstration of psychological solidarity is not something for the immediate future. Have a good Sunday Hernán, my regards to Natalie.

...This letter of you now, at least for me, clears a bit better the mechanisms used by the imperial system to dominate and subjugate people all over the world, but of course, it doesn't hesitate, besides those policies, to use the brutal military forces to ensure that we remain complying, no matter how much we disagree.

Your proposal for "converting" the schools in communications centers -which indeed is what education at all levels (meaning informational, emotional, formative, etc.) should consist on, as unlikely of success as may look at first, is probably one of the few ones that could be implemented if we all are sincerely interested in changing the predatory system we have to live with since the the Sumerian organized the city-state, Ur or some other unknown site I guess.

My regards and respect to you and Maria.
Hernan.

Hernán! As live and as unpredictable in your interests and background as ever!! First of all thank you for your heartening remarks and wishes; now that you told me about Sumerians I'll start by telling you something to have a laugh about and then a serious and deep sequel to it: A very funny but real fact that I learned from the great megathinker that we both admire so much, Lewis Mumford, and then I'll include a pdf with a summary-anthology of his masterpiece "The City in History" that refers to the concerns and interests that you have just expressed: The funny part: The deciphering of one scroll (or papyrus or something) written by a Sumerian was you know what? A Sumerian script, high ranking since he could write , was writing to a colleague: "I have tried to convince my son to learn how to write, so that he succeeds me in my so good position, I try to keep sending him to school instead of to the fields to cultivate like all the teenagers go if they don't want to progress in school, but he keeps escaping from classes to go to the village square and tease the girls and speak impolitely to the old people there. And I won't keep it a secret from a friend like you that my invitation to his headmaster for dinner tonight is partly a form of bribe not to expel him from school. You understand me, we all have a weak spot for our children..." Isn't it fantastic to see, in such a way, how little some things have changed, Hernán !!!

But, Hernán, as I told you I want to end this site with putting as it last page the first page of your Testamento-Testimonio. This I will do on the page after next; on the next page I will put your answer to the things so far in this file.

(May 30)

Dears John and Maria:

...As you know, when the events in Athens happened I was out of touch with any meaningful news. Now here, no one is talking much of what happens there, so, you may understand my concerns with commentaries calling the events riots which have shaken Wall Street (Wallerstein). It is of some comfort to know that the problems were caused by the irresponsibility of a couple (provocateur or ignorant, what's the difference?) and not by organizers' mistakes. It still hurts that those three persons lost their lives and other were injured. I also feel better by realizing that what may be going on in your country, is that people there are in peaceful and civil resistance against what in the 90s was called here "restructuring of the economy", a bad and discredited policy carried out by the WB and IMF in most of our countries. I believe you remember what happened to Argentina's economy and people in general some 10 years ago, from which catastrophe they have not yet recovered. The little story of the Sumerians father is nice, by finding universality in our problems/solutions one feels more close to the truth.

Stop posting in your English website is something you have been thinking for a while and should be taken by me as the normal result not only of your disappointment with some of us, but of your resolution to work more intensively in looking for solutions to the current crisis in Greece (I should be doing the same with the problems in my country but it's seems I can't get out of the hole of no activism I have fallen in this respect) Even understanding well your motives I can't help to feel sad. I don't feel sad for Maria, your students or myself, we shall continue to enjoy reading what you write of your advanced ideas. I am sad for the losses of who we had called "the improbable readers" who never materialize or say anything in spite of our great effort to touch them.

It's getting late here in NM and I better go to bed. Natalie believes that if I enjoy so much physical work there in the fields in Somoto, I should show some enthusiasm in working the few physical tasks she assigns me here in our home, on the contrary Carlos my son who came to greet us after our "vacations" this evening said "a 77 year old man does not belong to the roof". They both were only showing their love for me: Natalie by her confidence in my capacities and Carlos by his concern with my wellbeing. Well, I better rest and be ready for tomorrow.

Goodnight my friends.

Hernán.

Dearest Hernán and Natalie, your so sweet letter made us feel like in our Christmas and beginning January correspondence...About Argentina we all here try to educate ourselves and each other through articles and videos going around internet. Concerning the "losses" that you mention I agree that we are not going to ever lose each other since we shall continue the same way we had started. And I also agree that only a hypothetical and virtual reader entity will lose us. If anybody was ever reading, for example our exchanges on Mumford, but never joined us he can still be reading them, they will remain posted (and relevant). The specialists on those subjects can still go on in their own way with their own studies without us, and the ones that did need our live and summarized presentations can still read our discussions posted even if we post no more of them*. The next postings should be catching up with facts around us and apply to them either the background we were giving ourselves and each other, or new thoughts. And, at least in periods of crisis, one can best do something about his life and others' lives by joining efforts about the events affecting more directly the daily lives of persons where one lives. I don't say any goodbye, just bye (bye as usual) and just gooday or goodnight in general, depending on what hour you read this, since nothing has changed in our own touch...Concerning the few corrections you told me to make in your pages that I included I'll do them right now and then make this into a pdf and send it you and then to the guy who posts pdfs on my site. Bye Hernán, our kisses to Natalie.

*And although I've removed from use, for a while, the site's comment section, my johnalev@gmail.com address is on for everybody who wants to discuss anything, if I too happen to know something about it.

I would close this site on May 31 but on the very 31st of May 31 (at dawn) something very serious happened so I must include it:

A ship convoy of humanitarian help was going to Gaza, Israelis had said that they would force the ships into a definite port; also they said that there is no humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, at least there wouldn't have been any if Palestinians repaired hospitals instead of digging tunnels to import explosives along with supplies, the Cypriot government did not allow the ships to come to its ports nor any boats to leave from its ports with eurodeputies (who had arrived by air there) to go to the ships, Greek eurodeputies remained in Cyprus, the foreign eurodeputies left through a port of a Cypriot town under Turkish occupation, and during the trip, and while still in international waters, Israeli commandos came aboard, through boats and helicopters, Turkish activists resisted them, Israelis opened fire, 16 persons (then they said 19, maybe this will change again, PS: then it changed to 9, some foreign media kept it to 19) were killed, many more (50? Then 60. Then 50 again) were wounded (and 500-600 were kidnapped), Israelis said the activists had attacked them with knives and axes, or tried to take their guns thus they (=Israelis) were in lawful self defence; but weren't they in international waters? So what kind of lawful self defence was that? To resist being unlawfully attacked constitutes an attack?) Then demonstrations in Turkey started, and are expected to escalate as the dead bodies will be coming home.....OK, thinking and discussing with friends I gather the following: both Turkey and Israel are well known for acting like superpowers in not obeying any international law that is against their interests, and for only obeying international courts when they condemn their adversaries. That they two, after a 30 years idyll, are antagonistic concerning the policies controlling middle east, is a recent but also well known development. That both (not in collaboration of course!) had reasons to help the whole event, or even stage it, or at least let it happen, is not an hypothesis to reject (OK, it might bring friction between the Turkish government and Turkish generals who might want the idyll to continue, but maybe the charismatic prime minister risks all that to regain his popularity that is recently falling through some problems (economic even after entering the G-20 as even 17th?) by making Turkey feel like a leader of the Islamic world, helped by the west that views it as an exemplary combination of Islam with western type of democracy (!) and helped by some muslims (not all: many consider Ottomans as much of a destruction to Islam as to Christianity. Even people who have not read e.g. Tariq Ali's book on the "Clash of Fundamentalisms" (the one with Bush dressed as a Taliban on its cover) might remember Lawrence of Arabia (featuring Peter O'Toole) or the biography of Kahlil Gibran). Now in all that here-and-now-event and in all that now-just-starting unfolding + remodeling of maps +...+... what's the position of Greece? OK, the government of course was cautious as expected, or even more cautious (that too was expected) but the activists should have known better: they should have proceeded independently with the Gaza help, like they did in X-mas 2008 (when they were again attacked by Israel's navy) and should have let themselves be taken to that Israeli port and from there onward they should have insisted to escort their supplies to their destination saying to the Israelis that they wanted to supervise the whole process of delivery because it well known that it is not always, or usually, properly effected. OK, "should have..." is a always a very bad tense in which to conjugate the verbs related to action....Well, if things evolve as they seem to have started then one here is given the "multiple choice test" containing only the following two choices: either ally oneself with the one bully boss playing superpower, or with the other (its mirror image in many aspects); or develop one's own choices if one can afford to. Regarding our lenders we cannot afford any choice at all ("beggars can't be choosers" etc) What about the fact that the two bullies in question are not among our lenders? (but are just the spoiled protégées of our bigshot lenders) Well, lenders can dictate to us to follow their own choices. If you ask me there IS a third choice, where one can even dictate terms, no matter if he is a beggar or a conqueror, but I'm not sure how many among even the Greeks would like it. To try to move, even if only eventually, to the following end (whether in the sense of end=goal, or in the sense of end=finishing) which is not quite unheard of (e.g. early Christians (not all) and some utopic socialists and communists did the same) but is not very popular either (at least it's not popular as explicit choice; even when it prevails it is chosen implicitly (e.g. subconsciously) or enforced by the flow of events and not by any words of official (!) decision makers; and only at last minute decisions, because long term plans concern hopeful ways to avoid that end, not effect it! And words about it are found by some survivors and through historians' hindsight). Here it is: OK, it's the Israelis whom we should form an "axis" with, but only if we find a way to have first imposed them the following term: Dissidents of the Avnery type of orientation, see if, after these event, you can become as many as would be needed to get rid of your Nazi type of Israeli government that works out the genocide of Palestinians, and we'll try to get rid of our clown government, and then we can be allies, and either help each other survive biologically as well, or both of us, together, fight for the survival of our spiritual values up to our biological end (or our end through economic strangling or spiritual/cultural dilution). But to make fragile and fluid alliances, with either of the bully sides, in order to survive "as a nation", "race", "gender", "culture", "way of life", or other form of "identity", makes no sense if one's values have died in the process. What do we mean by "we" in "we survive"? Without the values that we evolved and taught others through our own application of them, what is saved is what in the commonest of idioms is called "our skin" (and the only spiritual-cultural identity preserved is some subtitles for tourist postcards)

Of course it doesn't happen all the time but it does happen (more and more frequently, too). And some of it has already entered literature books of 13 year old kids. At least in my country. Let me copy-paste from there something from the ending of the famous letter of Chief Seattle to the "Big Chief in Washington" in 1854, or rather from the English original (more precisely: from the translation from Chief Seattle's language into English) that one can easily google :

*...Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of my people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some sad or happy event in days long vanished. Even the rocks, which seem to be dumb and dead as the swelter in the sun along the silent shore, thrill with memories of stirring events connected with the lives of my people, and the very dust upon which you now stand responds more lovingly to their footsteps than yours, because it is rich with the blood of our ancestors, and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch. Our departed braves, fond mothers, glad, happy hearted maidens, and even the little children who lived here and rejoiced here for a brief season, will love these somber solitudes and at eventide they greet shadowy returning spirits. And when the last Red Man shall have perished, and the memory of my tribe shall have become a myth among the White Men, these shores will swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe, and when your children's children think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, upon the highway, or in the silence of the pathless woods, they will not be alone. In all the earth there is no place dedicated to solitude. At night when the streets of your cities and villages are silent and you think them deserted, they will throng with the returning hosts that once filled them and still love this beautiful land. The White Man will never be alone..? **

Hernán, for the equally well known catastrophe previous to that, we both know the words of Neruda, who is so beloved to both of us:

...Before the wig and the dress coat there were rivers, arterial rivers...there were cordilleras, jagged waves where the condor and the snow seemed immutable...there was dampness and dense growth as yet unnamed, the planetary pampas...Man was dust, earthen vase, an eyelid of tremulous loam, the shape of clay he was Carib jug, Chibcha stone, imperial cup or Araucanian silica...tender and bloody was he, but on the grip of his weapon of moist flint, the initials of the earth were written. No one could remember them afterwards: the wind forgot them, the language of water was buried, the keys were lost or flooded with silence or blood...

...My land without name, without America, equinoctial stamen, purple lance, your aroma climbed my roots up to the glass raised to my lips, up to the most slender word as yet unborn in my mouth....

*By some (strange? Or not at all strange?) coincidence the ending of a poem circulated by an unknown poet in the big demonstrations, against globalization, in Seattle in 1999, was as follows (as if the Indian hosts who were buried under the asphalt of the city that had that Chief's name were indeed breathing through the mouth of that poet speaking...):

*....So you see the reason we're here is that some memory in our blood
makes us hear a voice that says when awakening inside
you're not just a fund or a bank
you're the crest of a wave that went blind
a blind crest of a wave that forgot its basic source
and now mounts in greed and lies.
Against this blinded wave of greed we're here to honor
what's natural and what's real.
Against your mounting wave of greed we're here to fight for
what's human and must be freed.*

By some (strange? Or not at all strange?) coincidence these verses can be sung in the same melody as the verses of a poem in the Greek poet Elytis' "Axion Esti" (= "It's worth it"; referring to Life ,and to the struggles and sacrifices for Her sake)) which, as part of an oratorio by Theodorakis , also sounded like a melody of American Indian songs. One of the stanzas singable to that melody was about the case where not just one place on earth, or one race or one nation etc, but the whole earth ended up (e.g. through nuclear holocaust) as ghostly as the Indians we saw above, with all humans being e.g. skeletons in the war machines rusting, or still running blindly, under the sun:

*There's no other planet to make some thoughts like these for her
and soon there won't be any such thoughts by her own dwellers left
there will be only death, dead and past fight
there will be only death, dead and past fight
there will be only death, dead and past fight
and relentless light.*

Hernán, of course I want to depress neither you, nor my students, nor anybody else; besides I'm not myself depressed, nor do I even believe that such kinds of future are inevitable, or that, even if they are, they should be made a source of anguish though some focusing on them as problems rather than as sources for incentives and initiatives for solutions. Also since the actual, and not just mental, aspects of my own leverage to forums (affecting directly or indirectly any decision making at scales more collective than family size) is of classroom size, and since, as Marx says, one contributes to social change only the work of his hands and not what his imagination considers he contributes, I do not consider the huge tanks of excerpts I have anthologized and posted on the internet (from megathinkers and megapoets and megacomposers) as anything that can offer something, unless something issuing from it can be put into direct use offering something tangible to the real people one deals with every day (relatives, friends, students, colleagues,...) and related to what common hopes or impasses, outlets and sharings we all meet. So let me finish with one piece of one of the kinds of skits all these bullshit accusations against Greeks have prompted me to propose to my students and to cultivate together until ready to present so as to contribute to both the fun and the mutual briefing, first between us in the rehearsals or classes and then towards their parents too. So let's finish with one little sample of comedy and of song paraphrase like in farcicomedies and in burlesque political musical reviews: Suppose some German politician or yellow press journalist says that the real source of the Greek debt is that Greeks skip taxes and spend the money saved from them in dance floors of bouzouki joints, paid at high prices as wages to song stars who also evade taxation. Then it's very easy to solve all our problems without changing anything at all (I'll prove it right away) so either the analysis is wrong or we don't have to change anything. Proof: The revenue service can make some of its buildings into bouzouki joints and force those singers to sing there for free, instead of obliging them do some time in jail (where they could at most sing like Elvis Presley in "jailhouse rock", which would bring no tax collection). The tax skippers among the bouzouki goer public should also be obliged to entertain themselves in those particular joints in some of their outings, so their tax contributions and the fines owed by them can be collected in the form of entertainment. So? ...Wouldn't it make Germans equally jealous again? Also, self critique can again be made in the same format: Ladies and gentlemen, let me lay on you such a self critique for the raising of tax consciousness, singable in the melody of a famous love song*:

*The drink of sin has taste so sweet and fragrance heady
 who among us has never longed and yearned for it
 it is the sweetness of taxation that's evaded
 and more or less we all have tried to have a sip.*

*Sinful revenue, you're my history
 cheating, you're my passion
 You're my illness in my mind and in my bills
 how can I renounce you?*

*I pray to God that night again comes with its darkness
 when that known hour on the clock will strike again
 that we will visit some bouzouki joint like shadows
 and on the dance floor we will spend illicit gain.*

*Sinful revenue, you're my history
 cheating, you're my passion
 You're my illness in my mind and in my bills
 how can I renounce you?*

Hernán, I'm sure that all that approach (I mean to song, not to taxes!) does remind you things from your country; at least if it shares some features with Cuba. I remember one old Cuban joke in which Fidel, trying to convince Cubans to become effective in the USA way, told the crowds, from a balcony, to shout three times "Down with the samba", and by the third time that they had shouted: "Down with the samba. Viva Fidel" they were shouting it in samba rhythm and were dancing it. OK, pardon my 1-page transition to your text on the next, and last, page of this site:

* The original, love song context, was: *The drink of sin has taste so sweet and fragrance heady/who among us has never longed and yearned for it/it is the sweetness of a happiness that's stolen/and more or less we all have tried to have a sip/Sinful love, yes you, are my history/error, you're my passion/You're my illness in my heart and in my flesh/how can I renounce you? /I pray to God that night again comes with its darkness/when that known hour on the clock will strike again/that you will show up like a thief and like a shadow/and out of longing my heart splits with that sweet pain/Sinful love, yes you, are my history/....etc.*

Hernán Espinoza's "Testimonio":

Testament:

I am not a writer, so no pretension of coming out with a literate piece, is remotely preset in my mind. These paragraphs contain mainly my opinion of what is happening in the world during the first decade of the 21 century, in itself a pretentious statement, and obviously would be full of all the biases and faults of personal opinions, then, if you are a critical reader you can stop here. But, should you find yourself entertaining questions that could be asked in the future, as : How come people didn't do something about stopping what was happening then? Did o they know what was happening? If they were people like us, what prevented them from acting? Then you may like to continue reading a bit longer. By the way, those questions don't pretend to be "original", unusual or of interest just for now, during my generations they have been asked more than once, the example that comes easier to mind, is with regard to the German people under the Nazi regime. It took years to understand that not all the Germans were in favor of the extermination of the Jewish, some were indifferent indeed, some were intimidated, but there was also an underground resistance which fought and acted with much courage, yet for more than half a century Germany has lived the guilt by association's infamy. The difference with what may be happening in the future is that while the holocaust was a terrible thing, what we are now afraid of, is a new period of species extinction, or at least disappearance of more of civilization gains.

By inexperience I have started with a disclaimer, and then try to discourage the unlikely but possible reader from continuing reading, so why I am writing this? I think it is because of having in mind a very special audience, to whom I want to send a secret message begging their forgiveness.

With a large group of elders of my generation, I am afraid there will be not much for enjoying life, or even to live with, for my grandchildren, now of ages spanning from 7 months to 7 years old.

They are 5 for now with one more to come if things work out for my daughter, during the next year. These precious human beings, besides being the most beautiful creatures I have ever seen, are "only special" because they are my family, but in fact, they are in the same predicament with millions of other children, if nothing is done to correct the current trends of climate changes. Scientist with extensive studies have demonstrated a clear possibility of reaching a point of no return in climate change in the next 4 decades.

By natural law we have to make room for the generations to come and no one can know how thing will turn out in the future, yet one can always try to predict things to come by working with what has happened in the past.

Placing those propositions together, one could, with significant certainty, worry that life, or at least civilization as is known to us up to now, may no longer be the same for the next generation.

By then, we will be gone and in no position to give an account of our responsibility for such things to have happened.

I am 75 years old and by statistical values alone I only have 5 or 7 more years to go, therefore such worries are crucial for me, because certainly I don't have a good chance to see if the changes needed to stop the catastrophic events science is predicting, are in fact taking place or not, before I go.

I have called this paragraphs my Testament instead of my Testimony, perhaps unconsciously thinking in my native language and the proximity of me passing away (Testamento= Last Will)

Feelings that I have nothing material worthy to leave for my family, at least I can leave a piece of my mind, in these disorganized thoughts. Or better perhaps, it is just an attempt of bearing witness (testimony) of what is evolving.

What follows is not other of my usual disclaimers or in any way excuse for my lack of knowledge, the world function and situation as led currently by the USA, are so complex that no living mind, with perhaps the exception of a few persons with extraordinary brains endowment, much training and great integrity, can comprehend them, Noam Chomsky and a few exceptional poets come to my mind.

What difference does it make that the biggest mess we human have made, is understood in its totality if such is possible? Not much I think, the small actions of many -the ants' work my late sister in law Paquita used to refer to, thinking in one of Sandino proclamations, are what could possibly change the self destructive course we are in for.

I mention these things only because confronted with the complexity of the problem, we, the ones in the lower rank of the intellectual scale, invariably get overwhelmed and our reaction is to be silent, but to be silent is to condone, which equals to be accomplice, and so to be guilty by association.

I better confess right away, that my brain's functions may be as low or lower than the functions of the brain, of who we believe bears a lot of responsibility for the crescendo crisis we are witnessing, with the current president.....