UTOP is utopistics

1- The Failures of the Dreams, or Paradise Lost?
2- The Difficult Transition, or Hell on Earth?
3- A Substantively Rational World, or Can Paradise Be Regained?

What I mean by utopistics, a substitute word I have invented, is something rather different. Utopistics is the serious assessment of historical alternatives, the exercise of our judgment as to the substantive rationality of alternative possible historical systems. It is the sober, rational, and realistic evaluation of human social systems, the constraints on what they can be, and the zones open to human creativity. Not the face of the perfect (and inevitable) future, but the face of an alternative, credibly better, and historically possible (but far from certain) future. It is thus an exercise simultaneously in science, in politics, and in morality.

That being said, it is irrelevant to my thesis. I have argued that there exist structural limitations to the process of endless accumulation of capital that governs our existing world, and these limitations are coming to the fore currently as a brake on the functioning of the system. I have argued that these structural limitations- what I have called the asymptotes of the operative mechanisms- are creating a structurally chaotic situation that will be both unpleasant to live through and thoroughly unpredictable in its trajectory. Finally, I have argued that a new order will emerge out of this chaos over a period of fifty years, and that this new order will be shaped as a function of what everyone does in the interval- those with power in the present system, and those without it. This analysis is neither optimistic nor pessimistic, in the sense that I do not and cannot predict whether the outcome will be better or worse. It is, however, realistic in trying to stimulate discussion about the kinds of structure that might actually serve us all better and the kinds of strategies that might move us in those directions. So, as they say in East Africa, *harambee!*

1- The Failures of the Dreams, or Paradise Lost?
2- The Difficult Transition, or Hell on Earth?
3- A Substantively Rational World, or Can Paradise Be Regained?

What I mean by utopistics, a substitute word I have invented, is something rather different. Utopistics is the serious assessment of historical alternatives, the exercise of our judgment as to the substantive rationality of alternative possible historical systems. It is the sober, rational, and realistic evaluation of human social systems, the constraints on what they can be, and the zones open to human creativity. Not the face of the perfect (and inevitable) future, but the face of an alternative, credibly better, and historically possible (but far from certain) future. It is thus an exercise simultaneously in science, in politics, and in morality.

That being said, it is irrelevant to my thesis. I have argued that there exist structural limitations to the process of endless accumulation of capital that governs our existing world, and these limitations are coming to the fore currently as a brake on the functioning of the system. I have argued that these structural limitations- what I have called the asymptotes of the operative mechanisms- are creating a structurally chaotic situation that will be both unpleasant to live through and thoroughly unpredictable in its trajectory. Finally, I have argued that a new order will emerge out of this chaos over a period of fifty years, and that this new order will be shaped as a function of what everyone does in the interval- those with power in the present system, and those without it. This analysis is neither optimistic nor pessimistic, in the sense that I do not and cannot predict whether the outcome will be better or worse. It is, however, realistic in trying to stimulate discussion about the kinds of structure that might actually serve us all better and the kinds of strategies that might move us in those directions. So, as they say in East Africa, *harambee!*