



Clanking Chains: Thomas Sowell's Summary of the "Tragic" & "Anointed" Visions; 3 Arrogant Skills Motivate Frankfurt Philosophy

The modern Swedish welfare state has made it illegal for parents to spank their own children and various so-called "children's advocates" in the United States have urged third-party intervention in families under the rubric of "children's rights"—obviously to be enforced by adults, and more particularly by adult lawyers for such organizations as the Children's Defense Fund and the National Child Rights Alliance. This is not about neglect and abuse—which are already illegal—but about giving third parties a say in family decisions.

That's the example; now for Dr. Sowell's summary of the two visions:

Sowell, *The Vision of the Anointed*, 112-14:

Those with the tragic vision might share the desire for social betterment without sharing the assumptions as to how much knowledge and control of social ramifications exist. A succinct summary of the tragic vision was given by historians Will and Ariel Durant:

Out of every hundred new ideas ninety-nine or more will probably be inferior to the traditional responses which they propose to replace. No one man, however brilliant or well-informed, can come in one lifetime to such fullness of understanding as to safely judge and dismiss the customs or institutions of his society, for these are the wisdom of generations after centuries of experiment in the laboratory of history. [Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lessons of History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968), p. 35.] (p. 112)

In the tragic vision, individual sufferings and social evils are inherent in the innate deficiencies of all human beings, whether these deficiencies are in knowledge, wisdom, morality, or courage. Moreover, the available resources are always inadequate to fulfill all the desires of all the people. Thus there are no "solutions" in the tragic vision, but only trade-offs that still leave many desires unfulfilled and much unhappiness in the world. What is needed in this vision is a prudent sense of how to make the best trade-offs from the limited options available, and a realization that "unmet needs" will necessarily remain—that attempting to fully meet these needs ... only deprives other people of other things. Given this vision, particular solutions to particular problems are far less important than having and maintaining the right processes for making trade-offs and correcting inevitable mistakes. To those with the tragic vision, the integrity of processes is crucial—much more than particular causes.

The vision of the anointed begins with entirely different premises. Here it is not the innate limitations of human beings, or the inherent limitations of resources, which create unhappiness but the fact that social institutions and social policies are not as wisely crafted as the anointed would have crafted them.

The hallmark of the vision of the anointed is that what the anointed consider lacking for the kind of social progress they envision is will and power, not knowledge.

In their haste, to be wiser and nobler than others, the anointed have misconceived two basic issues. They seem to assume (1) that they have more knowledge than the average member of the benighted and (2) that this is the relevant comparison. The real comparison, however, is not between the knowledge possessed by the average member of the educated elite versus the average member of the general public, but rather the total direct knowledge brought to bear through social processes (e.g., competition in the market place), involving millions of people, versus the secondhand knowledge of generalities possessed by a smaller elite group. Moreover, the existing generation's traditions and values distill the experiences of other millions in times past. Yet the anointed seem to conceive the issue as one of the ... past versus the ... present, preferring to believe that improvements in knowledge and reason permit the former to be dismissed.



- 21- This incisive analysis of Dr. Sowell reveals to us the playing out of Lucifer's cosmic plan to destroy client nations through philosophical assaults on the souls of believers.
- 22- Dismissing the accumulated knowledge of not only our forefathers but also failure to realize that this knowledge has at its center the principles of establishment viewpoint and biblical truth results in believers contributing to the decline of the client nation.
- 23- When believers reject the teaching of Scripture in favor of the philosophies of men they do this with a mental attitude of self-righteous arrogance, preferring the logic of fallen men rather than the immutable thought of perfect God.
- 24- From this attitude comes the conviction that one's own righteousness is superior to that of all others'. This leads to the conclusion that one's own righteousness—or vision—is so advanced that the “outmoded” traditions of centuries must not be tolerated.
- 25- Arrival at this “disposition” led the Frankfurt philosophers into the habitual utilization of the three arrogant skills which is the modus operandi of one's total preoccupation with self:
 - 1- Self-justification: The Frankfurt philosophers were determined to find the root cause of anti-Semitism and stamp it out. The mental attitude sin that ignited justification of their attack on Western culture was an intolerance of what they perceived erroneously as the West's unfaithfulness toward the Jew. This drove them to the second arrogant skill:
 - 2- Self-deception: Convinced, again erroneously, that authoritarianism, fueled by Christian theology, led to anti-Semitism they developed an implacable opinion toward Western culture and Christianity. This drove the third arrogant skill:
 - 3- Self-absorption: Hatred of the West motivated an all-out attack on its institutions. They engaged in the pursuit of a preconceived enemy motivated by an obsession to deconstruct its entire culture expressed by vilification, vindictiveness, and revenge against the West's institutions, history, faith, traditions, and morals.
 - 4- The reversing of the three arrogant skills occurred when these sins associated with self-absorption intensified their anger. Fearful of Nazism they had fled Germany to reestablish their operations in New York City. They were so self-righteous that they saw no contradiction in seeking political refuge in the country they sought to destroy. Under the self-deception that they were justified in continuing their attack against the West, they arrived at the conclusion it was their righteous duty to do so. Therefore, all the sins typical of self-righteous arrogance crystallized into implacable bitterness.
- 26- Those caught up in this vortex of self-righteous arrogance lose touch with reality and enter into a delusional fantasy that they have discovered the cause and the solution to all man's problems.
- 27- The danger of such a crusade is that the arrogant are absolutely convinced their cause is so righteous they are willing to justify any means to achieve their desired end. Nothing can stop them. All contrary opinions are to be discredited and those who hold them vilified.
- 28- By rejecting the Word of God, they enter into a permanent state of unreality. What has eventuated is that those divorced from truth have succeeded in convincing much of the West that the cosmic lie is truth. Those who do not yet believe the cosmic lie is the truth are therefore the enemy and classified as mentally ill.
- 29- The ludicrous result is that the mentally deranged have succeeded in redefining reality and thus the inmates are running the insane asylum.
- 30- We will now note a few expressions of self-righteous arrogance that is pertinent to our study.