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## **Must History Always Be Repeated?**

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The question I have been asked to address is “whether we are doomed to repeat history or is there is an alternative to this”. Undoubtedly, this question has its roots in the late Spanish philosopher George Santayana’s famous quote where he said, “If we fail to *remember* history we are *condemned* to repeat it.” It takes up a much traveled road in its raising of the nature and limits of human freedom, will and agency. It is most certainly true that history can be a great teacher, but only if the student is an astute and resourceful interpreter of the past. The lessons of history are not always as self-evident and indisputable as we might prefer.

If we are to be condemned, it is normally not something that is done to us, but arises from the import and consequences of our own actions. In matters related to learning from history, when we neglect to learn we bring upon ourselves the full consequences of our preference for ignorance or presumptive understanding of the past over a more careful investigation of what the a study of the past may yield. One such insight would most certainly be that history has been changed repeatedly by those who have set out to do so, though the effect of their actions may well have differed from their intentions. Equally, for those that seek them, the world is full of worthy leadership challenges that, if properly taken up, might well have hugely beneficial outcomes. In most instances, a proper address of such challenges will mean much more than just initiating leadership, as the underlying difficulties may demand extreme dedication and persistent to eventually yield any progress.

However, if we are to move towards “better” of any kind, it will require of us that we hold to values and motives that are themselves better or we shall bring to the challenge the wrong spirit, commitment and disposition, thereby undoing the good that is sought. Much will depend upon the sincerity and integrity of our search for values that are worthy. Naturally, if we fail to live up to these, then we can expect to be judged accordingly. So, we do not just have to learn from history, we may well be required to act on the conclusions of that learning, including taking responsibility for our own actions in the flow of history. Otherwise, it will be simply voyeuristic learning divorced from application. An intellectualized erudition, divorced from personal responsibility for what is learned, cannot bring anyone to meaningful decision the consequential free agency that could shape emerging history for the better.

Learning that is wisely acted upon is an entirely different kind of learning because it is understanding employed for some manner of good. Similarly, learning that is evaded on the pretense that human will and action cannot have meaningful effect is, in reality, a relinquishing of human freedom in favor of the enslavement of ourselves to determinisms, historical or otherwise, that shield us from taking personal responsibility for our lives and potential. Once so enslaved, our only choice lies in the nature of how we will yield to whatever occurs, not whether we will yield. The forfeiture of our option to elect to make history will inevitably mean that we are hostage to history rather than an actor within it, as we *helplessly* shrug and submit to whatever comes. When people follow this path, then what is jettisoned is hope, self worth and the kind of dreaming that leads out of darkness.

It is not inevitable that history repeat itself. History is simply the fallible record of what human beings did or did not do, given the conditions of life that they faced. It is not governed by in-built and inescapable imperatives, save those that we bring about through our own personal and collective actions. Even these might be altered were we to alter our conduct. Consequently, historical probabilities most certainly frame likelihoods at a given moment, but they do not ultimately determine the path of history. That role is taken up by the effect of our decisions regarding how we choose to live our lives.

It is most certainly true that history will seem to endlessly repeat itself because there is a stubbornness in human nature that will continue to express itself as perennial foibles until the roots of these are mastered and overcome. There is no force beyond human history that compels a given historical outcome, though there inevitably must be forces that are not human and that exist both within and outside history. What we empower these with will most certainly define our role in regards to them. History will repeat itself only insofar as humans insist upon it through their habits and values. In this regard, it should not be overlooked that history may repeat itself beneficially as well as destructively, since human beings are capable of either. Further, very little about history ought to entirely surprise, given that “there is nothing new under the sun”.

Even with these generalizations, it would not be incorrect to assume that the essence of human nature will continue to reveal itself within history, though this is not the same as saying that the identical historical events will repeat themselves in all of their many details. Rather, historical events will resemble each other in many respects, but they will not be precise reoccurrences of what has already happened in the past. For instance, while empires do rise and fall, their distinct characters are not synonymous. There is a universality in human nature and experience that links all people to each other as is captured in the phrase “the more things change, the more they stay the same”.

It is quite true that none of us are beyond history. We are embedded in it and its influence will influence and define us in countless ways. To say we are a product of history would be accurate insofar as we credit the environment that has produced as having influence. However, the presence of influence, even of a profound kind, is not at all the same as saying that such influences must inevitably prevail.

By locating human agency and freedom within history, it enables us to see scope of the many ways that human beings act upon history rather than just being acted upon. These invariably must involve other human beings since they are also the makers of history either through action or inaction. We shape history in many ways and it is important to single out some of these for attention and for their instructive merit. These include learning, values, leadership, commitment and collective action.

### **The Place of Learning**

As has been indicated, if we fail to learn properly from history then we are likely to need to re-learn them such that the lessons they hold for us are suitably grasped. There

are many ways that this might occur. Most of us are familiar with academic analyses of history and would see great value in what professional historians have to offer. Nonetheless, one should also recognize that even such professional chroniclers of history bring to their work all manner of potentials for their own errors and a lack of wisdom. Nonetheless, even where they have valid contributions to make, their work is to no avail should a generation emerge who show no interest in their subject, thereby wasting the labors of disciplined seekers of the truths of history.

This highlights the degree to which wise and learned people are granted some manner of respect in a given time and place, be their wisdom that of scholars, sage elders or inspired observers of human affairs and nature. Whatever restraint such persons might have been able to call forth will be lost along with all of the benefits that might have accompanied a balanced deference to wisdom.

Sometimes, it is the power of ideologies that blinds people to the realities they are immersed in a triumph of belief over discernment. Ideologies can unleash powerful passions that legitimate perceptions and convictions that may lack the kind of evidence that a careful study of history would reveal. This passion can be seen in the many marches off to war that have captured so many nations, in the endless parade of economic “bubbles” that ensnare the naïve and in the ways in which scapegoats are invented and promoted so that the truly guilty might elude detection. It is also true that our ever eager appetite for oversimplification and panaceas provides ample scope for the arising of attractive solutions that seemingly require little of us, but offer bountiful rewards.

In our own small corner of the universe, we have seen the rise and fall of unsustainable and deeply faulty human service trends and models that have been promoted by leaders who have told us what we wanted to hear, not what would ultimately serve the best interests and needs of vulnerable people. A recent example of this is our fondness for chemical interventions in the lives of severely disadvantaged persons that conceal the true factors at work in people’s lives by giving us a simple method to deal with what we do not understand about people and their lives through embracing drugs and a blind deference to medical or professional authority.

We are also no strangers to creating scapegoats that draw attention away from our own failings by pointing the finger at professionals, families, bureaucrats, service users, communities, politicians, natural supporters and all manner of others we can blame without seeming cost to ourselves. Rare is that we enthusiastically sign up for substantial sacrifices for valid but challenging and hard to achieve goals such as quality, fairness, substance and depth and so on.

We have also seen the rise and enthusiastic welcome of our own contemporary ideologies and panaceas that tempt endless people into hugely simplistic utopian hopes be that the unbridled and uncritical romanticizing or over-idealization of “community” or relationships, the placing of individualization, self-determination and choice as being goals that do not have any dark side, the exaggerated embrace of technologies that

promise only liberation and benefit when they are quite capable of being damaging and perverse, such as independent facilitation or individual funding divorced from a deeper understanding of who people actually are and what they need.

We also see the pursuit of endless, poorly conceived and disruptive reorganizations of our service systems in pursuit of the holy grail of technocratic organizational quick fixes, misleading pretensions such as evidence based practice, the bureaucratic illusion of “quality assurance”, the unrelenting imposition of standardized solutions and safeguards in the face of evidence that suggest that flexible and negotiated variability of solutions works better for people and the prevailing of vested interests in our service systems over the needs and priorities of the ostensible client beneficiaries of services. These developments are rarely seen as either “ideological” or self-serving, yet a case could be repeatedly made that what is at work is more ideology than truth.

Some learning takes the form of fables, myths and legends that hold the potential to instruct us on the essence of history even if the particulars of the story offered are doubtful. This can be seen in many “success stories” that essentially convey many good examples and lessons, but more in the values they promote rather than in the specific practices they reveal. This can be seen in the many stories that highlight the benefits of social inclusion. Often the instances cited may lack sociological realism and factual accuracy in their details, yet nonetheless reveal that many aspects of communities can indeed be welcoming and supportive of marginalized people. The actual example may typically be overstated, glamorized or less persuasive than portrayed. This does not make such “success stories” ultimately invalid, as their deeper truths may well be more transcendental than literal. Nonetheless, it would be better if the actual, possibly not entirely flattering truth of situations was shared, as this would add depth, nuance and empirical evidence to what is eventually gained without introducing or relying upon false understandings of the facts.

Learning only occurs if it is first sought or welcomed and we are not always eager to have our convenient beliefs and assumptions challenged. Consequently, we tend to reject truths that are painful and disruptive to our comforts of both mind and body. This does doom us to repeatedly “reinventing the wheel”, since our lack of historical insight makes us believe we that we have nothing to learn from the past or even the recent present. We become in such instances stubborn, rigid, barely educable and possibly vain and self-satisfied in the conceit of our own sense of certainty and undiscerning and disparaging of wisdom. We mock the thoughtful, fastidious and thorough and herald only those who accommodate and facilitate our refusal to learn.

What is in play in such instances is not a given approach or conviction, but rather our human nature with all of its foibles, vanity and appetites for its own aggrandizement. Yet, our nature is not just its weaknesses and limitations. We must also acknowledge what many call our higher or better nature. One aspect of this is the gift of being able to learn and to draw closer to truth, providing we commit to the disciplines of truth seeking that might enable us to become educable. This “spirit or ethic of educability” has

enduring features that we would benefit from adopting. These could include resolutions such as the following;

- An awareness and acceptance of our ongoing ignorance as a cloud between us and truth.
- A willingness to seek, respect and yield to truth when it becomes compelling.
- An intentional cultivating of a desire to be surprised, challenged and confused by matters that do not conform to our comfortable and current expectations.
- A commitment to being wrong and taking responsibility for it when evidence accumulates that this is so, such that we change our minds when this is needed.
- A wiliness to go beyond simply endless explorations of what we find interesting and enjoyable to pursue, to a further exacting commitment to draw conclusions from these explorations and to take a stand in regards to them, should the evidence be compelling.
- Living with the faith that wisdom will eventually arise from a sincere seeking of the truth, such that the demanding pilgrimage towards it is justified.
- Recognizing that any person or event can be one's teacher if we are a proper student of what these may be able to convey to us.
- Accepting that humility is likely the best safeguard against the illusions generated by the intoxication of the surety that we are right.

The preceding are essentially personally adoptable ethics that allow us to be educated and continue to learn, as they equip us to receive and benefit from what the world and our fellow human beings have to offer as to the nature of reality and our place in it. Whereas, a temperament of incuriosity and a refusal to be open to learning works to imprison us in our ignorance and limited understanding of important matters, such that we are enslaved to an existence whereby we cannot advance nor liberate ourselves.

## **The Place Of Values**

Values are what we most place importance and priority on and they typically reflect our sense of what is worth giving energy and attention to. They are extremely crucial to how we function because they create a sense of urgency, priority and commitment within our lives, both as individuals and as groups. Curiously, our stated or claimed values may well differ from our conduct, such that we may actually live in contradiction to the very values we profess to be decisive in our lives. These contradictions may not even be ones that we are conscious of. Such is our faith in our own assertions of virtue.

Our sector has many examples of these sorts of contradictions between stated values and actual behavior that can potentially serve to clarify for us what we truly value from that which we would prefer to value. For instance;

- We claim that people with disabilities and their well-being matter most to us when, in reality, they are often strikingly of little importance and prominence in our actual priorities.

- We claim that we want to be of service, yet we behave very unhelpfully even when we could have easily been of more assistance.
- We claim that we are the best of humanitarians yet we are part of practices that continue to degrade and oppress people.
- We claim we are altruistic, yet we are driven by our own selfish appetites, interests and conveniences.
- We claim we are noble and principled, yet our day-to-day conduct can often lack conscience, concern for others and any signs of obligation to vulnerable people.

Tendencies of this kind are not seemly and serve to call into doubt our stated values on each occasion in which our behavior is at variance with them. This contradictory conflict afflicts all of us, though we typically see the contradictions so much better in others than ourselves. Nonetheless, values do matter and when we show some faithfulness to positive ones, they do make a difference.

The challenge that our contradictory behavior raises for us is that of *values scrupulousness*. This refers to the degree of meticulousness with which we govern our conduct such that there is a greater degree of integrity between word, posture and deed. This is not solely a matter of appearances, as much of legalistic or other conformity may be structured to cover quite reprehensible conduct. For instance, many wars have been launched on the pretense of lawful self-defense, yet at their roots they created or exploited apparent violations of their territory or interests in order to justify their own aggression. Equally, at a personal level, a day does not go by wherein a formerly highly respectable citizen is unmasked as a fraud and their failings paraded in the public eye.

The test of values scrupulousness is a much deeper test than simply outward conformity to community expectations. It involves the actual inherent truth of our personalities, character and soul. It is about who we really are, not who we seem to be or want to seem to be. Good character is not something that we simply possess, but rather something that is held in the balance and settled in each and every decision we take. Since our nature is variable, it could also be said that values scrupulousness extends along a continuum that matches the mercurial and often unstable nature of our humanity.

Consequently, at any given moment, we might gain or lose in terms of our character, as each act has its own specific coherency in terms of values. Much as in the concept of karma, we author our unique gains and losses through the quality of our attention to or neglect of the meaning of our behavior. Our conduct sets forth consequences for ourselves and others whether we are concerned about these or not. So, our actual choice of values is not at all a private matter, as we are bound to others in terms of what we are as people and what effects this will have on them, even where they are unknown and nameless.

Values and the choices we make define our relationship to ourselves and others and they unleash either beneficial or hurtful effects on both others and ourselves. If we are thoughtful and responsible about this, then we are normally typically drawn to find

ways in which we minimally harm neither ourselves nor others, but also, more expansively, where we seek to ensure that the well-being of others is affirmed and nurtured in how we behave as both individuals and groups.

Naturally, with such prospects in mind, it can be crucial to;

- Select or amend our values with their effects on both others and ourselves in mind.
- Be willing to critically evaluate the goodness and harmfulness of our “lived” values rather than solely the merit of our intentions.
- Be willing to seek out and adopt better values once it is clear and persuasive what these might be.
- Be extremely attentive to what actually transpires in the name of otherwise seemingly beneficial values to see if they are being interpreted wisely or misleadingly.
- Return again and again to moments of reflection, questioning and weighing of our values.

Positive values evolutions in our sector have sat beneath most of our eventual progress insofar as they have helped ensure that people obtain the good lives they should have and that uphold their worth and potential as unique human beings. The actions flowing from these positive values have often helped bring about revolutionary and beneficial changes for the better in all aspects of life. In many cases this has come about rather quickly when such positive values have been taken up seriously. These changes have occurred throughout our lives and community including advances in;

- Rights
- Employment
- Personal empowerment
- Valued social roles and participation
- Education
- Leisure
- Safeguards and security
- Vision
- Home and family life
- Relationships

These advances are no accident. Rather they have arisen from the intentionality of many people acting in conjunction with each other along the same values direction. Countless people have become inspired and committed to seeking and making better life choices, both personally and collectively, that have in turn, ushered in new opportunities for people that were simply not there before this values transformation work had transpired. For instance, we could not possibly have progressed to a situation where most

children with disability live with their natural parents or a substitute family, were it not for our rejection of the use of institutional living as a preferred choice.

Many times, those who attempted to advance positive values have had to struggle with those of us who were not paying attention, to deeply rethink our habits of thought and living. Often, this has taken the form of the adoption of a substantially new standard of conduct, such as was seen in the crucial role that normalization and social role valorization theory has played in expanding people's life opportunities as well as their standing in society. By insisting that people with disabilities be treated as well as every other valued member of society, it has opened the door to people with disabilities more fully enjoying the benefits of deeper and more valued inclusion in community life. It asserted that people with disabilities were people just like everyone else and that they should be treated as being so. The adoption of this value and principle has led to many fruitful changes in the lives of millions of people.

Values can be used to flatter ourselves and to promote our own worth. Used in a self-congratulatory way, they can serve to affirm our sense of proper order of the universe, thereby insulating us from truths and realities that we would find distressing. Yet, values can also do us a lot of good when they act to challenge us to do better as human being and as societies. Values that justifiably call into doubt the many subtle ways that we avoid seeing things as they actually are rather than as we would prefer them to be are values that can save us from our own worst tendencies. These are values that call us to be and do better and they can serve to bring us to a higher level in terms of how we are in the world.

A quote from the much cited American social activist and Christian theologian Reinhold Niebuhr states "Nations, as individuals, who are completely innocent in their own esteem, are insufferable in their human contacts." He also is remembered for his antidote to the delusions of self righteousness in another famous quote where he said, "We must comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." Values that deprive us of the kind of comfort and legitimation we may secretly hunger for may serve us well by bringing us to face our nature and responsibilities more clearly. Values that assist us with our own self-deception cannot properly disturb us, thus failing their role of being a challenge for us to do better.

### **The Place Of Values Based Leadership**

Leadership is normally actions taken to achieve direction and purpose amongst people and may be both individual and collective in nature. Leadership is a necessary and important catalyst in human affairs because of its ability influence and mobilize people. However, since it can be used for both good and bad purposes the values that guide its use become very important factors in the kinds of outcomes that may be generated by those seeking to exercise leadership. Leadership that is severed from beneficial values may, at its worst, serve values that are destructive and toxic to human institutions and well-being. We see such effects daily as leadership gets misused in ways that leave much harm in its wake and deprive people and societies of their true positive potential.

Hence, there is a seemingly endless need to counter such misapplications of leadership capacity with a kind of leadership that catalyzes what is good in people, rather than leadership that draws out and feeds the worst aspects of human nature and potential. Some call this moral leadership, transformative leadership, servant leadership or values based leadership. Whatever the term preferred, such leadership acts to bring out the better and brighter side of our personal and collective nature. This kind of eventual outcome begins with people choosing and abiding with personal values and commitments which are favorable to the well being of others. When these values are held genuinely by many a moral and social effect takes hold that tends to elevate rather than degrade people.

Were it not for many episodes and periods of moral and values based leadership in our field we might still be more profoundly mired in the grotesque tragedies of eugenics, the state sponsored killing of countless innocent and vulnerable people with disabilities, the casting away of people with disabilities to residential and other institutions, medical experiments with their lives, perverse abuse and exploitation, infanticide, organ harvesting and so on. What stands between such eventualities and their enactment are simply people and societies whose values simply would not allow these things to happen. Even now, all of these continue on, shielded from scrutiny by all manner of deceptions. Were it not for the presence of leaders whose values are clear on such matters, we might yet be taken in by either our own self-deception or the maneuverings of others who seek to make such mistreatment of people acceptable and even heralded as progress.

These realities argue for the conscious insertion into history of attempts to catalyze people towards values that are genuinely more benign than lethal and that uphold the lives of people with disabilities, rather than diminish and degrade them. These same values would, of course, similarly act to enliven and support all of our lives. This universality of effect of positive values merely acts to underline the profound way in which we are all one people through our shared gift of humanity. However, if there are no longer leaders that can afflict us when we have become too comfortable and too hardened to the sufferings of others, then we are all at greater risk of losing our way with values with all that such a state of moral blindness portends.

If we were to make the key roles of values based leaders more explicit, be they individual or collective in their expression of leadership, they would fall into the following roles;

- To highlight and raise consciousness about the potential hazards that may ensnare people who are at risk of being socially devalued.
- To name what is at work in bringing about the oppression of people.
- To offer insight as to what would be beneficial and helpful in resisting and overcoming tendencies towards devaluation and oppression.
- To directly challenge those that are committed to harm with alternative conduct that might reduce the momentum towards harm and provide a more positive way forward.

- To continually remind people of their capacity for good such that it is constantly called into action.
- To ask people to decide in favor of good.
- To support people in their struggles to understand what is right and to persevere with their resolve to act well.

## **The Place Of Commitment**

To achieve anything of value we most certainly will have to pay our dues. Great achievements do not arise from mediocre efforts, though we are endlessly seduced by the temptations of quick fixes that allure us with the promise of great gain from paltry investments, struggle and risk. To achieve we must stick to a task until it is done well and this can involve the effective address of many demands upon our abilities, will and even faith. To sustain such an effort will require commitment. It is only commitment that enables us to stay the course in the face of hardship, sacrifice and adversity. Should we lack commitment we may soon discover that we accomplish little when our preference is for following the easiest pathways. Expedience will never be noted as a component of great human accomplishments, but commitment is endlessly cited as decisive.

Dedication to a task, including the task of bringing about good in the lives of people, means both knowing what the task looks like when it is done very well and sticking with that task until such an outcome has been duly earned. Often, the price to be paid along the way is substantial and commitment is required to uphold one's resolve to stay the course and to absorb the cost. Leaders who lack commitment are leaders that are ideally suited to fair weather and good fortune but who lose their effectiveness when the going becomes much tougher. Such leaders may have great ability, but without the inner strength that commitment adds to their contribution, their gifts become irrelevant.

The essential key ingredients of commitment are relatively straightforward. They are;

- A deep respect for the task and what it will ultimately require. As the proverb states; "The beginning of wisdom is respect for the problem."
- A resolve to do things exceedingly well.
- A thoughtful rather than reckless resolve to stay the course despite all that that may have to be faced.
- A preparedness to accept and bear the costs, sufferings and sacrifices that accompany an inspired and determined effort
- Peace with what must be forfeited to achieve the end being sought.
- The recognition of the kind of support, resources and renewal that must be present in order to make sustaining taxing challenges a realistic proposition.

Though such commitment can be intimidating it is important to recognize that it has and does exist in many people and can be a resource if properly cultivated in individuals and groups over time. Part of the task of leadership in history is to grow such commitment, such that former failures can be eventually overcome and that sad history

not tragically repeat itself. From such a quality has come great benefits in our field such as the changing of minds and hearts, the improvement of attitudes, the liberation of people from oppressive environments, increased life expectancy, the reuniting of people with their families and communities, the rebirth of hope, dreaming and joy in life, the defense of rights, the arising of advocacy when it is most needed, the rise of vision and expectations, the realization of people's potential and the relief from distress of all kinds. Most certainly, commitment has repeatedly borne fruit.

### **The Place Of Collective Action**

No change in our communities and way of life is fully completed through the actions of single leaders acting alone. They can each help facilitate a part of the process, even decisive ones. However, in the end, for matters to change at a deep enough level, change must extend to the many rather than the few, though the few are always implicated and prominent in the commencement and early stages of change. It is when we act together that we see the greatest and most enduring of changes, because of the strength that is amassed when efforts resonate with each other and intensify impact. Shared action or "collective behavior", as the sociologists call it, need not be conceived of as necessarily formal or organizational in nature as the key ingredients is the like mindedness of vision, purpose and resolve that eventually expresses itself in the heterogeneity of collective social movements. Such movements are better seen as cultural in nature as they sit at the nexus of values, leadership, social mobilization and the knowledge, wisdom and learning that has empowered people to see the world with new eyes.

Social movements are, by definition, a challenge to the idea that history is already pre-determined, in that they arise against the inevitability of history as the free expression of people who see that matters need to unfold differently, as remote as that possibility may be at the outset. In the process, those involved rewrite history so that it reflects their vision, values and hopes, thereby asserting their dissent against a fixed and doomed universe. They are typically the way that often very ordinary people, frustrated by the lives they or others are forced to live, take up the challenge of rewriting the framework through which events are seen and replace such regimes and orthodoxies of thought, dogma and action with a version of life that is their own, however contradictory this may be to the current order and powers of the world.

These efforts at collective action are the embodiment of personal and shared free agency and typically stand as a rebuttal to the fatalism of some notions of history that preach resignation and accommodation as all that people can do in the face of miseries of all kinds. These are usually miseries that are often interpreted to them as being immovable and perhaps even the will of God, such that they must be endured rather than changed.

Quite typically, the energies released by collective action and mutual support, have no choice but to express themselves outside of the officially sanctioned channels of the society, because these pathways will tend to favor those who prefer the current order

and benefit from it. Those disposed by such an order, commonly cannot access the benefits of that order, as it is often built on the exploitation of them or others. Consequently, the rise and assertion of social movements will normally precede significant changes in the character of communities and in many ways provide exactly the kind of values discomfort that can bring positive values back into the equation. Not all social movements ultimately embrace or remain faithful to their higher ideal and values, but many do and much that is good is unleashed in direct proportion to the worth of the values that are lived.

## **Conclusion**

The question that began this reflection was whether a repeat of history is necessary or inevitable. Obviously, the argument presented here is that we are not doomed and that we can take matters into our hands at any point to ensure that this does not occur. Nonetheless, this will not be the choice that many of us will make. We will for any number of reasons, fail to resist the aspects of history that harm and damage of lives and potential and that of others. So, in this regard, history will repeat itself. In the end, we would be well advised to see that built into this conundrum is a constant and exactly unremitting battle for the well being of people that will never end until history itself comes to its final moment. We cannot control history. We can only choose to resist it or not with a more positive sense of what the outcome should be and a willingness to use our freedom for the good of our world.