

The Equality–Inequality Dialectics

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The essay argues that the **Equality-Inequality dialectics** is a very complex issue, which reflects many social dilemmas. On one side are the state official commitments to secure, maintain and protect all kinds of **formal equalities**. On the other side are the natural and genetic distinctions that differ between human-beings while creating and maintaining **inequality**. In fact, this is kind of a contradiction exists in many fields of social sciences. The essay's author reviews some of the relevant historical events, such as social mobility, individualism and education and points out on future solutions. Among the proposed suggestions are: 1) Embracing Frankl's giving "**Meaning to Life**" as a leverage for increasing pleasure of life; 2) Recognizing and promoting **Creative Individualism** as the legitimized ground for **inequality**; 3) Increasing **Social Cohesion**, required for social empowerment and attaining security and happiness.

Keywords: equality and inequality, social mobility, educational inequality, capitalist egotism, creative individualism, meaning of life

Introduction

Since the Great French Revolution, some 240 years ago, **Equality**, in addition to Liberty and Fraternity, was among the most popular values expressed openly and covertly by social activists and freedom fighters. Because countries and societies at those times, were ruled by privileged classes, Kings, Aristocrats and representatives of the Church, all the others have neither civic status nor civil rights. Among these rightless citizens were wealthy landlords and rich traders, skilled artisans and poor laborers. The call for equal rights, therefore, was a strong popular demand for achieving minimum civil rights and a fair chance to participate in the political power-game. Thus, attaining the goal of having equal civil rights seemed to be then the top of their desires.

Historical Background

The Drive for Equality was for years the light-motive and the banner of many national and social movements, all over the globe. Because so many were rightless and because the political unjust was so clear, only few have payed attention to the unclear definition of the term "equality." The call for equality in general, therefore, was very popular. It gained immediately the public warm support and became the motto and almost the mantra of many social and popular movements. However, some hundred years later, with the emergence of Karl Marks and the Communist movement, civic equality was converted into a call for economic equality. Socialists, who oppose the communism, remain unclear and vague about their interpretation to this term.

In previous works¹ we have discussed the erroneous use of the term and the harm it caused to Socialism as a political-economic view. However, because the need of clarifying this matter we come to discussing it hereunder.

When discussing social affairs two parts of department appear: 1) The World of Nature—as the taught by Charles Darwin's book *The Origin of Species*, and 2) the Judo-Christian legacy—based on the Holy Bible, the Roman Codex and the legacy of the American Constitution. At the following pages these two perspectives are further discussed.

Equality in the World of Nature

Equality does not exist in Nature. With all respect and maybe with some disappointment of some spiritual Gurus, human beings were and still are living creatures, similar to birds, animals, monkeys and apes. Zoology, Biology and other natural sciences have invested much time and money in studying these creatures and nobody find evidence for claiming that equality exists in nature. On the opposite, Darwin's *The Origin of Species* rests and supports the presumption that animals differ by their survival ability. So, only those who fit better to the surrounding conditions eventually survive. Recent studies on the human Genome that go down to the D.N.A. structure, have also observed the distinction between similar chains of molecules. These updated advanced inquiries also confirm that whereas similarity exists among living creatures but equality cannot be found. Thus, biology supports our claim that with regard to human beings, like with other living creatures, equality does not exist, despite similarity and common behavior.

Results from recent Biology, Genetics and advanced Medicine, point out on the tendency of beginning with Gender-oriented medicine. They think also on individual-oriented medicine. After many years of struggling for Public-oriented medicine, which unfortunately, failed in US, gifted and open-minded doctors strive to promote a more sophisticated medicine. A one that will be tailor made for specific patients. This progressive approach rests on the understanding that nevertheless their similarity, human beings are not equal. Every Individual have his/her own needs, desires and designated remedies.

However, regarding soul, conscious and behavior, it is right to claim that every individua is a free unique entity who is fueled by a kind of divine energy and have the opportunity of choosing his/her way in life.

Equality in the Judo-Christian Legacy

Quite at the beginning, we want to explain that we refer to the Judo-Christian Legacy, not because it is better, higher or the only just one. It is done because we are better familiar with this legacy and are able discussing subjects relating to it. We know very little about other civilizations and it is our rule to write only on topics and subjects that we recognize well.

After examining the human biological ground that denies the quest for equality, we move to the cultural and ethical world of values. Here also, like in the biological sphere, the emphasis is on the individual. The single person, who is driven by an internal divine ball of energy that helps him/her choosing their course of action.

In the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden,²

¹ A. Avny (2016).

² Genesis Chapter One.

lesson, when two individuals carry out the same crime, it is smarter to punish each of them in accordance with his/her personal nature, rather than following formal equality and punish them equally. This is what we perceive as the true and real meaning of “equality before the law”. That means not equal punishment but punishment according to the individual personality. How to do it? is really a complicated issue.

The Ten Commandments that represent the old-time moral values do not distinct between man and woman, but order all of them to follow the given commandments. This is an early hint that both genders are equal before God and the law. Equality is noted there as being equally asked to comply with the laws and obey the law of the land.

John Rohr (1989) teaches that,

In the ancient World, equality was usually an ideal suitable only for other times.

In medieval times, equality continued to be looked upon in otherworldly terms. All men are equal in origin and destiny in that all are children of God and destined for everlasting life with Him at the eschaton.

Further he explains that other scholars have linked equality with several human features, such as depravity, fears, passions and retribution against a decadent aristocracy. He ends by saying: “Liberal argues for equality in terms of equal rights and equal immunities from state intervention”... Marx claimed that “true equality will come about only with **the advent of the classless society.**”³ Because of this complexity the authors of the American Constitution and the Supreme Court Judges prefer focusing on equality in term of civil rights and equal protection of the Law, rather than discussing economic inequality.

Equality and Social Stratification

Because many social and political activists were not satisfied with the interpretation of “equality before the Law”, and were not ready to wait for the creation of Marx “classless society,” they prefer sticking to the general unclear and vague definition of equality. It had had a much better public appeal; it was more inspiring and it promises something that nobody knew. Such a vague definition of equality was good for both side of the political arena. Capitalists saw it a driving power for fueling competition and increasing revenues. Communists use equality as a platform for promoting their ideas and their version of Justice and fair distribution of profits.

Both parties were wrong. In real natural non-utopian world, there is nothing like equality. Unfortunately, Equality is just a wonderful insight created by humanists, well-intended and idealist individuals, energized by a ton of wishful thinking and hopes. Thousand years of civilization and culture were not able to overcome basic distinctions created by nature. All along history men tried to improve and correct God’s or Nature’s products. They faced many successes and some failures. Unfortunately, or maybe still fortunately, we in the 21st Century, are seen, think and behave, like our forefathers in the ancient Bible time. Whether is it sad or not, we solemnly declare: All people are not equal. They are similar, some look alike, they have comparable wishes, dreams and hopes, they are equal before the law, they deserve equal treatment and should have equal opportunities, but they are not equal. Everybody, every woman and man own their genuine personality and have an unrevealed potentiality that waits to be realized.

Damages Caused by Vague Meaning of Equality

both were accused on disobedience and both were punished for their deeds. This story speaks on a common wrongdoing, by different individuals, who deserved to be punished. One may wonder how irresponsible promises on false equity, that have no chance to be achieved, can harm somebody? The answer is simple—Unattainable promises or hopes increase people’s expectations while

³ Rohr J. (1989), p. 97.

they, when failed or discharged, cause disappointments, frustrations and pain. In this way, popular or demagogic calls for equality in general, plant some unattainable goals in people's minds and hearts.

Human-beings are not equal by Nature, as an old Jewish proverb says: "They vary by their mind as they vary by their faces."

As every human-being have his/her own personality, they also have their specific needs, wishes, dreams and hopes. This whole package of needs and desires must be met and satisfied in accordance with the genuine request.⁴ Creating a common dominator for meeting the average demand may work well for meeting the crucial elementary request of poor population, like food, sex and housing. It totally misses the demands and expectations of the more affluent society. This is the first, but not the worst harm of misusing equality.

Second but larger damage causes by erroneous popular indoctrination, claims that due to those who teach equality, Everyone, can do Everything, at the same level of quality and functionality. This saying is false and untrue. It is so because it disregards natural talent and genetic ingenuity. By definition, human-beings vary by their minds and senses as they vary by their appearance and physiognomy. Everyone has his/her own genuine talent and potentials, but they are not equal. One is a gifted dancer while the other a talented footballer. One is a skilled engineer while the other is a fantastic poet and so on and on. Meeting equally their requests is a mistake but still not so bad. Telling people that due to the equality paradigm, they can successfully progress in a field that does not meet their natural ingenuity, is the more harmful mistake.

Every man and woman have their own talent and ability, as they have their own name and surname. It is better that they will be stuck to them and will follow their genuine instincts and abilities, rather than haunting in foreign fields.

The wrong approach to equality is nicely associated with the "Political Correctness" inclination that prefer to run away from well known facts, just because it is hard to tell them. It reminds me on the policy runs in some universities that prevents marking notes on students' papers in red pen, because it may hurt their suffering souls. We sincerely belief that in academic work, in presentations and examination, the simple truth and the final assessment should proper be presented even in red.

Scientific or Academic works should be political blind so that they will be able to maximize their scientific contribution. The same thing is with equality. Everyone cannot be everything. It is better for both, the individual and society, that everyone will concentrate on what he or she knows best. Let the engineer work in engineering and the poet write poems. This is the kind of specialty or division of labor, offered 200 years back by Adam Smith and David Ricardo, when recommending England to focus on textiles' manufacturing while Portugal shall produce wine.

Another outcome of the supposed to be equality, is the practice managed in public administration where all citizens, disregarding their specific needs and wishes, receive the same service. The current Corona crisis indicates that this approach seems to be obsolete. A more differentiated service may fit better to the situation. Since older people are in greater danger, they deserve different and better attention.

Equality, Individualism and Socialism

The Socialist movement saw itself responsible for promoting to common good and developing social services. Erroneously it rejected, ignored and even degraded individualism. This approach may be understood

⁴ More on Human Needs see A. Avny (2016), Chapter five.

because of the bad impression and the negative impact of the capitalist extreme egotism. But from the society point of view this was a mistake.

Throughout history, human development, progress, science and Arts were carried out, maintained and advanced by gifted individuals and talented human beings. The early thinkers, philosophers, scientists and artists were all competent people that dare to think and to act “out of the box” and differently from their contemporaries. Even at those olden days, Creative Individuals, of all walks of life, had proceeded their counterparts and tried hard to produce something different, new or great.

By downgrading social individualism, socialists decreased the chances of their countries reaching the top. Their inequality approach to sport, because of the wish to achieve some individual achievement, just indicates the mistake they have done in other fields. Moreover, the inclination of degrading individualism resulted with a wish to keep “small mind,” to work “by the book” and to minimize personal responsibility. All these preferences lead eventually to weakness and mediocrity. Mediocrity is almost the worst state of being. Mediocre individuals know all, they are hard to learn. Since sometimes or somewhere they have learnt something, nobody can teach them anymore. They pretend being brave but they tend not to risk anything. As usually they are the majority, they pretend to be always right. Since they are the majority, they have the ruling power most of the time. Because of their power, or influence, most governments, of all forms of regime, tend listening and meeting most of their demands. Unfortunately, this is one of the sad and frustrating outcomes of the wrong equality claim. Let us put it very bluntly: Formal equality may lead to mediocrity while inequality is an opening for personal advancement and skyrocketing achievements.

Inequality and Social Mobility

This also is an intrigue and complex topic. According to Wikipedia “**Social mobility** is the movement of individuals, families, households, or other categories of people within or between social strata in a society. It is a change in social status relative to one's current social location within a given society.” However, this social movement or inclination, depends on fulfilling of two basic requirements:

(1) The willingness and determination of state and local governments to carry out and maintaining a clear, unequivocal policy regarding equal implementation of this wish. Thus, Government should be responsible for ensuring that everyone, “individual, family or household,” will be able achieving his/her goal and attaining their new or upward status. This is a basic public commitment that is an indispensable part of any advanced free democratic regime. In this regard the “equal opportunities” rule should firmly be enforced.

(2) Whereas the first requirement is a public policy, the other one refers mainly to the individual. Whereas the first requirement depends mainly on public legislation the other one depends totally on the individual needs, wishes and determination. Whereas the first requirement is met by the “equality before the law” statement, the second one is a matter of individual preferences and dedication. We have already noted that individuals, by nature are unequal. Every single individual, family or household is unequal to others and behave differently.

Social mobility goals differ from one to another, one wants to be rich the other seeks wisdom while the third would like to become Prima Ballerina. Since we refer to free persons, nobody beside them can replace them and dictating the right choice. It is their ultimate equal right to choose unequal course of life. Similarly, people are not equal in the amount of energy and the spiritual drive for achieving their goals. In this regard they are totally unequal. Some prefer working hard for being wealthy fast, while the other prefers a public career

with a stable career and life. In this regard the following saying is relevant. “one can equally bring the horses to the water, but they will unequally decide by themselves, when, and how much to drink”.

In concluding the Social Mobility section, it is argued that this is a complex combination of equality and inequality variables. Both groups are important and unreplaceable. All the good intentions of the equality promoters may fall if relevant subjects will not gather enough energy to start the move upward. On the other hand, all the ambitious efforts to advance may face too many obstacles in case the social mobility legislation will not be enforced.

Inequality and Education

This topic deserves a separate paper but here we add just few words about it. At the 19th Century, Public schooling was a big issue because it aimed increasing equality and enabling more and more children of lower classes to acquire decent education. During the passing years Public Schools became the main track for equal provision of knowledge to all citizens. Higher education, at those years, was a channel only for minority and privileged ones. At the last quarter of the 20th Century higher education became popular since it was a key factor in hastening social mobility and meeting work-place demands. At present, at the West, due to the equality concept, everyone can join colleges, or Universities. No question that this is the right and proper policy to be imposed in free democratic state.

However, after opening higher education institutions to everyone, two issues must be discussed: 1) Do all high-school graduates really qualified for higher education? and 2) Not less important, do all high-school graduates really want and ready to invest time and energy required for academic studies? The answers to both questions are simply “No”. Based on the Normal Distribution Theorem it is clear that not all high-school graduates are qualified for academic career. Similarly, not all of them are willing to invest the resources required for taking this course.

Moreover, it should be clear, having equal opportunities is not a good or a right reason for equal realization. Free citizens have the right of choosing. They do not have to follow the equality slogan. They cannot be coerced to take this side or the other. Nobody can enforce people to be equal to others. Inequality, distinction and peculiarity are features given to men and women by nature, even before civil society was established. For more arguments see Amos Avny’s (2016) book: *Essays of a Senior Optimist* (Chapter fifteen).⁵

It is important to remember that at the 21st Century many human communities and societies are heterogeneous. They constructed of several stratum. They can be categorized by different measures and criterions, according to the given need. Every human stratum deserves receiving equal opportunities and equal access to the law and to other state and public services. Inequality in this regard should be denied and be dismissed. However, the meaning, the type and the content of the service should be customized according to the needs and the wishes of every individual, all within a given actual budget. By so doing government must recognize that inequality is the leading yard stick, due to the variability and the different nature of every citizen.

Future Prospects

Whereas the past two hundred years were dedicated to achieve Equality and Civil Rights, it seems that the coming decades will be dedicated to give a more concrete meaning to this term. After equal access to the law has been achieved, comes the time for understanding that the real meaning of equality has a significant

⁵ A. Avny 2016, *Essays of a Senior Optimist*.

importance. In the previous section wrong approach and mal use of it, mostly by popular writers and politicians, were discussed. Here we portray our insights on the revise prospects facing the equality in the future.

The Revised Individuality and the Expected Personality

Ultimately, man should not ask what the meaning of his life is, but rather must realize that it is he who is asked.

(Viktor Frankl)

Most Western Nations are manned at present by free, better educated and affluent citizens. Although most of them “enjoy the blessing of liberty”⁶ many still feel confused and frustrated. It is our humble guess that this bad mood emerges from the feelings that they are just peons on the chase-mat board, or sheep of a large herd, living less-meaning life.

Following this line of taught we have to learn from Viktor Frankel (1945) and claim that salvation lays in finding the meaning of life. Moreover, after 75 years of peace, the real “meaning of life” depends on and belongs mostly to, the single individual. It seems that at present, people in US and Europe, have very little things they are ready to fight for. At wartime or emergency days people tend to come together, to join in order to be encouraged and empowered by the togetherness. At such days, the “meaning of life” can be a collective or even a national one. At the past, being British subject or a French citizen was a privilege and an honor. This sense of belonging works also in sport, where dedicated supporters become almost blind fans of a given ball group. They need it for strengthening their collective self and supporting their common identity. Although some uplifted intellectuals will negate this claim by call it nonsense, but they really do not matter. The historical fact that the ancient Roman had run the policy of “Bread and amusements”⁷ just indicates that they had already understood this powerful morale driver.

However, in 2020, the collective search for “meaning of life” does not meet the people’s needs. They look for something more personal, some private vision that will help them coping with the daily meaningless and boredom life. It seems that the capitalist drives to make money, does not do the work, it does not promise enough pleasure nor happiness.

Thus, it is a clever taught looking for self-actualization”⁸—a synonym term for the “meaning of life,” in the non-materialist field of Psychology.⁹ It is obvious that in long peace periods, collective achievement do not meet individual desires and the craving for excitement. It is not just a luxurious request but real deep personal requirement. The renewed type of Creative individualism must be reconstructed on this deep and wide basis.

This revised Creative Individualism, which clearly should be distanced from the former capitalist egotism, rests on the presumption that all people born and buried naked, seemed alike, but are not equal. Everyone has his/her own mission and their own destiny in life. This basic recognition of the individualism renewed character, is crucial for further developing societies and curing their miseries.

Thus, the simple and clear definition of the future individualist mode of equality indicates that it is going to be Equality among distinctive individuals, not among equal ones. Since equality does not exist in nature, it is fair to assume that it cannot last among human beings. Although it is nice assuming that human-beings or human society surpass animal gathering, it opposes the genetic origins of the distinction. The revised

⁶ The Preamble of the American Constitution.

⁷ See Wikipedia.

⁸ Term used by A. Maslow for describing human being’s top achievement.

⁹ See: A. Avny (2018), The Philosophy-Psychology Linkage.

Post-modern individualism claims that within a human society that maintains equality before the law and equal opportunities, it is imperative, possible and necessary to find enough space for initiating, encouraging and preserving a new creative individualism. This creative individualism may be the basis for all the sophisticated innovations and a port of departure for many advanced and creative initiatives. High-Tec Start-ups and Out of the-box innovators—the shining symbols of advanced nations, are also the product and the fruits achieved from the Post-modern creative Individualism.

With all due respect, nobody releases these revised individualists from taking part in communal or social initiatives. Revised creative individuals are unique but they do not run away from social undertaking like maintaining solidarity, enabling social mobility, promoting learning and high education. They work for getting their own self-actualization but usually they are willing to participate in advancing lower classes and needy people. Since creative individuals are free persons, having their support and challenging them, depend on the quality of the national leadership.

They do not need materialistic bonanzas they get enough from their employers. They wait for an inspiring calling, for a mind-boggling challenge and for a meaningful vocation. And, this may be the critical point. Post-modern Creative Individuals expect their managers and directors to lead the moves while the National chiefs act as ingenuine pioneers and leaders. Even the best most sophisticated machine can not run without proper gas or fuel.

In retrospect it could be argued that the Socialist movement lost its relevancy because of its misunderstanding the critical role of proper individualism and how crucial is it for development. Socialists have originated and promoted the ideas of the “Welfare State”. They claimed that it would provide a social security net for all citizens. But they failed describing how the means and budgets for such a state will be generated. They missed understanding how importance is the unequal creative individualism for achieving this goal.

The Normal Distribution Theorem

Resting on the 19th and 20th Centuries erroneous maxim that “all people are equal,” many social sciences scholars relate to people as figures in a mathematic equation. This approach, which is typical to economists, led to many misunderstandings and even mistakes regarding human behavior. Some ten years ago we departed from this wrong attitude and have embraced the Normal Distribution Theory, or the Bell-shaped curve, as the leading technique for analyzing and describing social phenomena. The said method claims that every human group, with minimum of 30-50 participants, when examined for a given feature, such as height, weight or competence, is divided into three fractions. Two minority fractions, at the two extreme ends, each with 15-20% of the population. The third group, which is the majority, lays at the middle, with 60-70% of the population,

Based on this concept, it seems rational assuming that with regard to transformation or improvement initiatives, always will appear small groups of supporters and opponents at the beginning of the process. The rest, the majority, will wait before joining any given side.

When referring to the current Corona crisis, the situation is much more complicated, because of several reasons:

(1) It is an unprecedented international event that deals with billions.

(2) Despite the fact that little is known about the plague, it got enormous publicity while many Heads of State like to be involved.

(3) As a global mystery, it produces many superficial myths and beliefs, and spreads fears, panic and horrors.

(4) Many downsides and former deficiencies of the health systems are revealed in several countries due to the Corona crisis.

Although it is too early for deducing final conclusions, it is right to conclude that victory over this alarming danger would be attained by a common effort and joining together of able creative medical staff and competent national leadership. Whether the Normal Distribution Model suits for such an effort? and what type of lesson will it provide? is too early to say.

The State of Israel Case

In the previous sections, when opposing the formal conventional uniformity quality, because it contradicts positive individualism—the main proponent of innovation, we offered the term of Creative Individualists for describing gifted qualified persons. Further, these individuals are required to participate in communal or social initiatives and to take part in the environment protection moves. We already have stated that salvation for Western countries will come only by combining individual's needs and personal motives, with social undertakings and responsibilities. Some will argue that such an arrangement is unrealistic and impossible. Individualists, in peacetime, always will run away from social commitments.

The State of Israel case comes to show that a combination between very creative individuals, social responsibility and national cohesion is neither a dream nor a utopia. Israel, which is known as a Promoter of High-Tec industries and a Start-ups Nation, successfully maintains and encourages social and environmental responsibilities. Despite strong deep and thorough dedication as individual entrepreneurs, these gifted and talented individuals perceived themselves as ordinary citizens who volunteer fulfilling national missions. This strong national cohesion combined with high medical expertise was tested in the recent Corona disaster. It yields very good survival results—less than 300 deaths from population of 9.1 million citizens.

Conclusion

The past review indicates that the essay's main topics, Equality and Inequality accompany social sciences from their early days. The core of the dispute lays in the inherent contradiction between the natural and genetic distinction, exists among living creatures, that means Inequality, and social or moral wishful demand for **Equality**. Although educated scholars and writers know the undisputable truth that people are born naked and similar, but not equal, because by definition, nothing on earth is equal and equality is just an abstract presumption. However, demanding Equality in general, as a demagogic call, seems better, is more attractive and appeals more to people's hidden desires. Beside the vague meaning of equality only few advocates put their finger on a very significant face of it. They ignore the obvious point that dismissing inequality and advancing toward equality depends and depends heavily on the unequal individuals.

Unequal and suppressed individuals, in addition to their continues struggle, must be willing, ready and work hard for attaining this goal. Even when and after the state enacts and secured anti-discrimination and formal equality laws, the concerning individuals and groups must embrace modes and techniques for implementing it.

Inequality, in contrary, is not the Satan's curse. It is a fair description of the living Nature, which forces creatures, human-beings among them, to preserve their identity and maintain their stand in the struggle for

survival. Without the strong and smart individuals, the rest, the less competent and smaller ones will never survive. Thus, we have to add that only Creative Individuals can offer innovations and hastening prosperity. Ironical, only them can establish the conditions encouraging the creation of Equality. In sum, we want to emphasize, Equality is not a manna, falling from heaven. It is a social product achieved after struggle and hard work.

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