Progress in Development of the Concept of an Spiritual and Ethical Dimension in Social Progress
from notes of discussions at the Triglav Circle

The United Nations World Summit for Social Development was convened in March 1995, in Copenhagen, Denmark. The purpose of this summit was to address problems of poverty, unemployment and social alienation, considered endemic in various regions of the world. Among the preparatory meetings held prior to this world conference was a seminar on *Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions of Social Progress*, convened in November 1994 in Bled, Slovenia, by the UN Secretariat responsible for organizing the Summit.

The choice of this non conventional title for a UN seminar deserves some explanation. "Why not philosophical dimensions if the purpose was to examine the values underlying the notion of development propagated by the United Nations since its creation.?" The term *philosophical* would have connoted a perhaps pretentious undertaking and would have been too evocative of a particular discipline, with its language and methods. Sadly enough, it would have also been provocative, because in international circles many people use the word *philosophical* in a derogatory sense, -- i.e. as connoting the opposite of sensible, practical, and useful.

Spiritual had appeared in a few speeches made by governmental delegations in the Preparatory Committee for the Social Summit, in reference to an intangible want of individuals and contemporary societies, allegedly ignored in the dominant thinking on matters of development and progress. *Spiritual* was used in apposition to what was perceived as excessive individualism and materialism of the West.

Ethical was, in 1994, already frequently used in UN texts and debates. It referred to the application of moral principles to a variety of domains of social life and transactions, including investment, trade relationships and the behavior of transnational corporations. *Ethical*, without the complement of *spiritual*, would, however, have invited a too specific focus on the elaboration of codes of conduct, for example, to fight corruption in government operations. With *spiritual*, it evoked the moral foundations of a society.

To convene a UN seminar with this title was to affirm that the United Nations was not only a club of member states but also an organization with its own soul, culture, universal message, and entreaty. It was to suggest that the time had come for a holistic vision of the individual and the community, reflected in the full array of human aspirations. It was to recognize that the historic conditions and thinking that led enlightenment theorists to treat lightly the spiritual dimension of the individual and society in their quest for pure reason were no longer existent-- the struggle against the temporal power of the Catholic Church is a battle irrelevant for most of the world today--, nor necessarily scientifically valid. In fact perceptions derived from quantum physics even challenge the certitude of the non existence of the spiritual phenomenon.

Also, the absence of the article *the* before *dimension* conveyed the message that a pluralistic world could accommodate different spiritualities, different paths to wisdom and harmony, and different ethical views.

The Seminar was hosted by the government of Slovenia and financed by the governments of Austria, France and Switzerland. Its report was submitted to the Preparatory Committee of the Summit. It had some influence on the Copenhagen Declaration and Program of Action adopted by 117 Heads of State or Government. In addition to several references to ethics, including for the media, and to the presentation of the eradication of poverty as "an ethical imperative," two paragraphs of the Declaration reflect particularly the message of the Bled Seminar.

> Our societies must respond more effectively to the material and spiritual needs of individuals, their families and the communities in which they live throughout our diverse countries and regions. We must do so as a matter of urgency but also as a mater of sustained and unshakeable commitment. And,

We heads of State and government are committed to a political, economic, ethical and spiritual vision for social development based on human dignity, human rights, equality, respect, democracy, mutual responsibility and cooperation, and full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of people.

It was to pursue such work that in January, 1996, eight participants in the United Nations Seminar on Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions of Social Progress established the Triglav Circle in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Circle explores how societies can respond more effectively to the spiritual and material needs of individuals, families, and communities. The intent of its discussions is to enrich the public discourse on economic growth and social progress.

Fundamental to assessing the functioning of market economies in relation to social progress should be whether they enhance or hinder the capacity of the individual and the community to enjoy a fulfilling life experience. While offering people more goods, material options and comforts, the market and the overall economy do not necessarily contribute positively to the lives of individuals and societies. Material progress without some transcendent fulfillment can even produce heavy individual and overall social costs.

"Progress" in terms of whether people are better able to experience life≡s vast spectrum of possibilities is a subjective matter. People have different visions of life, its meaning, and its opportunities. Nevertheless, discernment of classical philosophers, theologians, poets, physicists, and political idealists from different cultures suggest holistic criteria for gauging such progress. Generally wisdom and perceptions of human nature transcend empirical analysis. Beauty, dignity, integrity, and grace are essential qualities of humanity that must be nurtured. Life≡s ultimate fulfillment derives from expressing and appreciating these qualities -- in giving affection, in labor that ultimates as service to others, in manifesting courage, and in victories of the human spirit over material conditions.

The following sections summarize in more detail ideas discussed in the Circle that have particularly strong bearing on this perspective.

Part I
Conceptualizing Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions

Men and women every where are being made acutely aware of the fact that something essential to life and well-being is flickering very low in the human species and threatening to go out entirely. This something has to do with such values as love...unselfishness... integrity... sincerity...loyalty to one's best...honesty...enthusiasm...humility... goodness...happiness...fun. Practically every animal still has these assets in abundance and is eager to share them, given opportunity and encouragement. (Kinship With All Life, J. Allen Boone)

A number of contemporary critics of the dominant form of modernity share the view that there is much need for some kind of "dimension of the human spirit" in public and private life to offset the apparent obsession of the market culture with consumption, wealth and power. There is strong demand for a holistic base from which to determine the constituents of harmonious life and social progress. Renowned physicists and scholars, in recent decades, have dented the seemingly impervious facade of enlightened material truth. The environment movement has given credence to the spiritual dimensions of the universe as reason for caring for the environment.

Noting the seriousness of the modern "malaise", Vaclav Havel has urged societies to rediscover their spiritual roots and to live life as if everything one did was being recorded in the infinite consciousness that governs Life. He also wrote:

...I am persuaded that this crisis – and the increasingly hypertrophic impersonal power itself – is directly related to the spiritual condition of modern civilization. This condition is characterized by loss: the loss of metaphysical certainties, of the experience of the transcendental, of any super-personal moral authority, and of any kind of higher horizon. It is strange but ultimately quite logical that when man began considering

himself the source of the highest meaning in the world and the measure of everything, the world began to lose its human dimension and man began to lose control of it.

The conceptualization and concretization of the spirit of humanity, or the spiritual dimension of life, is a difficult exercise. The concept *spirituality* has multiple meanings including the following contained in the <u>Random House Dictionary</u>:
- of or pertaining to the spirit or soul as distinguished from physical nature.
- of or pertaining to the supernatural.
- of or pertaining to the spirit as the seat of the moral and religious nature
- of or pertaining to sacred things or matters; religious, devotional, sacred
- of or belonging to the church, ecclesiastical
- of or relating to the conscious thoughts and emotions.

All of these definitions in one way or another find an echo in contemporary discourse on enriching the concept of social development and progress. Concerned thinkers taking up the challenge politically and publicly are prompted by a diagnosis of excessive materialism in many societies whose future vitality and progress seem to depend on increasing rates of consumption. They are also prodded by apprehension of a spreading vacuousness in social life expressed in wide-spread boredom, moral entropy and seeming purposelessness at all levels of society in the most advanced countries. Related are tendencies in many western societies to dumb down education and to gear it to the exigencies of the market or to prioritize knowledge and technology for mastering the physical world over molding character or developing feelings -- all of these in the face of a decaying environment and social fabric.

Obsession with material production, personal profit and consumerism as hallmarks of development since the industrial revolution has largely obscured an essential link between human life and the ethereal essence of the universe. But, it is this link that gives meaning to human life, and the loss of this same link constitutes a major obstacle to sustainability. Even Marx observed that obsessive materialism would eventually strip meaning from existence. *All our invention and progress are seen to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life, and in stultifying human life into a material force.* When people esteem themselves capable of satisfying all their aspirations through money and consumption, it is problematic to find a credible future for humanity.

The "spirit" in humankind has significance for society in many ways. It is in honest and humble recourse to some harmonious, transcendent consciousness or power that societies finds firm grounds for the elaboration of ethical and moral norms. Lacking any spiritual premise, codes of ethics and moral value do not easily take root in society. They are essentially transient perceptions of good behavior imposed by fashion or power.

In similar vein, in modern society, human dignity is measured according to criteria of material well-being and freedom to exercise political rights. Thus an individual's dignity is an entitlement conferred by society, and people have to be *empowered* to be human. This approach ignores the fact that dignity is inherent to the individual as evidenced in some traditional societies. The modern notion of dignity also feeds the smugness of the economic *haves* and the dependency of the *have nots*.

Views on the human spirit in contemporary discourse can be classified into three broad perspectives.
1. The first is positivist and empirical and is lodged in a scientific mind-set. The earth and the universe form a composite of organic and inorganic matter. Humankind is the most advanced product, so far known, of a continuous and progressive process of evolution starting perhaps from the fortuitous stringing together of protein molecules in a warm, primeval mud. The nature of the universe and humankind will ultimately be discernable in matter and explainable through natural science. The locus of the spirit is somewhere in the ether of the brain. All human knowledge is acquired through the physical senses and honed by the human environment, interpreted or not by abstract deduction and the exercise of logic. Ethics and morality may be transmitted socially through maternal type love and social education processes and may be conditioned by certain neurons in the brain. The spirit that exists in the brain may be the source of humankind's neurologically stimulated instinct for seeking the good and the ideal. Building the human capacity to express this part of human corporeality is the way to wholeness in the person and in society. There is no dualism in this perspective.

2. Antithetic to this perspective is the wholly transcendental and incorporeal conception of life and the universe. The apparent materiality of man and the physical universe is a temporal objectification of the human senses. Life is,

in and of itself, wholly spiritual, infinite, and eternal. Being is in the bosom of the Infinite Mind cum Consciousness and Intelligence. To find one's spiritual dimension one must have recourse to one's Higher and Real self, of which the ego is but a channel for the reflection of Infinite Light. According to this perception, the spiritual dimension on the human plane is the reflection of the Infinite Consciousness. Each human has recourse to its Real being through prayer, meditation, intuition, inspiration, and revelation and remains instinctively in tuned with Life as he/she lives unselfishly expressing humility and dignity and seeking the beautiful and the good. Ethics and morality are inherent in this mind-set. Certain expressions of Stoicism, Gnosticism, non-western religions, and natural religion are consistent with this outlook.

3. The third perspective divides humankind between the poles of empirical and metaphysical transcendence and explains the abyss between the two as the ultimate mystery of human life. Both are real. The life experience swings back and forth between the two poles. Through faith, fear, and/or love, the human being seeks understanding and, through ritual, attempts to approach the superior Consciousness which should guide and protect the mortal creature. Each creature has a soul which may or may not be embodied in the body. It is the soul that longs to find its ties to nature and the cosmos and instinctively cares for the other. It expresses itself in human relationships. This is the most common understanding among those concerned with the spiritual dimension of life. Spiritual humanism and most mainstream religions share this perspective.

These three perspectives share common ends that transcend scientific rationality and reach out to the human heart. Despite their differences, proponents of each view share enough common ground to cooperate in building ethical and moral systems aimed at sustaining the human society in balance with its spiritual needs and the natural environment. They are holistic in their appreciation of the world and other forms of life.

The spiritual dimension of life is not necessarily so unscientific as mainstream realists suggest. It advances the notion of the importance of the imponderable, unanalyzable, qualitative differences, of the uniqueness of individuals, traditions, and customs. In the words of Sir Isaiah Berlin: *It proclaims the value of intuition, imagination, historical sense, of the vision of the prophet or of the inspired historian or poet or artist, of the sudden illumination of genius, of the immortal wisdom of tradition or of the common people -- beings untouched by sophistication or too much logic -- simple rustic sages or the inspired bards of a nation.*

Building on the typology of perspectives outlined above, individual perceptions and analogies offer a mosaic of approximations to a core idea of the spiritual dimension.

As a view of life:
The spiritual dimension of things comes to mind through reason, revelation, and intuition. It is the spirit that generates a sense of beauty in the beholder, imparts courage in desperate situations, and feelings of affection between individuals. The spirit is reflected in serenity, decency and nobility. Spirit is something that speaks in silence to those who take the time to listen. In this context "spirit" refers to the Good, and to a transcendent perception of the Good Life. In daily existence it is manifested in expressions of natural dignity; gracious, empathetic, and compassionate relationships; moral courage; genuine happiness; rich imagination; and keen and profound sensitivity to soulful-beauty. Such manifestations are impelled by certain understandings, for example, that human life is animated by the power of the cosmos, by the Way; by the essence of unselfed love, by a self-sustaining life force, and/or by an infinite intelligence. To approach such perception requires some degree of self-denial, moral discipline, humility, hope, reasoning, and deep reflection. A sense of the spirit inspires attitudes of wonder, awe, gratitude, and grace. The deep implication is that it is truth-seeking.

Subordination of the body to the soul:
In Greek tradition, the notion of contemplation and of a contemplative mind, was in contrast to the *praxis*. This tradition in also found in Hindu spiritual philosophy. Likewise is the subsequent Christian ideal of the Saint moving out of the world to pursue, in isolation, asceticism. Not as severe a denial of the body is the tradition and idea of subordination of the body to the spirit. Through the practice of spiritual discipline the body is put at the service of the soul and the whole person is transformed, self cultivated to reach a higher degree of spirituality equated with a higher level of humanity. This quest is the opposite of Narcissism and the cult of fitness which subordinates the soul to the body, the spirit to matter.

*Relational manifestations***:**
Expressions of spirituality are profoundly relational. They involve a search for connection and even identity with the universal "Energy", the life force and framer of the universe. Otherwise described, it is the essence of the link between the essential inner core of the person (the poetic heart, mind, soul) with other beings, the cosmos, and for some, ultimately God. It is in the development of this link that the human being comes to full Self-realization in the most noble sense. Spirituality infers integration as opposed to the compartmentalization of life into isolated spheres of activity each with its material ethic and animus.

In this connection, the distinction between "I" and the "other" as the object "It" or the "other" "Thou" articulated by Martin Buber is most instructive. "Spirit is the eternal Thou, never turned into an It by spiritual ennui or fatigue, but glimpsed through a human's encounters with others, with nature, and with works of art. Revelation is humanity's continuing response to the eternal Thou." (P.A Schlipp and M. Friedman, (eds.), The Philosophy of Martin Buber, LaSalle, Illinois, 1967).

Medical Vision
The medical symbol is two snakes winding around a staff. Why snakes? The symbolism is traced back nearly 4000 years ago, to excavated versions of this symbol from the Indus River culture. The Hindus venerated the snake because it sheds its skin as it grows and it became the symbol of rebirth. Typically, the snake makes three and a half turns around the staff so it crosses the staff seven times. This corresponds to the seven chakras of Hinduism. The lowest chakra serves bodily functions of nutrition and excretion. The highest chakra, the seventh, the crown chakra, is the union with the universal. The idea is that human spiritual development goes in sort of a spiral course and ends up with the crown. Apparently, the Aryans, coming down from the Himalayas, were so impressed by that vision they adopted the symbol themselves and took it back to Greece where it became the symbol of Hermes, the messenger of the gods, carrying the Caduceus. It is presumably this message that came down from Olympus.

Obstacles to Invoking Spirit in Political Discourse

The debate on *spirit* and *spirituality* is not without serious pitfalls. While *spirit* in the context of present discussion refers to *Good, spirit* is also subject to darker use in the every day world, as for example, a religious cult preaching human sacrifice or evil spirits at work in the mind. Moreover, there is always the danger of excessive fervor, militancy, self-righteousness, and pride that accompanies the conceit of believing that one holds the key to truth and has a mission to save the world. Fundamentalism is another problem that would warn many to avoid the topic all together. The largest pitfall is the fear that, by introducing such a concept, one will again introduce the evils intendant in religious sectarianism; the evils that prompted some "Liberal Fathers" to advise that church and state must be separated and led to the virtual irrelevance of spirit in some contemporary western societies. Yet, many significant political thinkers, philosophers, and literary figures have continued to give credence, albeit against the current, to the spiritual dimension in their writings and other works.

Many people assume that when one turns to spiritual questions and matters of the heart unanimity follows, but it does not. Religious leaders who consider themselves very spiritual can be very frightening people. Some times in certain contexts they are deeply ethical and really spiritual and in other contexts they are manipulative and authoritarian. People cannot just assume that when they deal with matters of the spirit and turn their back on materialism that they will find humanitarianism. Concern for truth and morality can turn into bigotry.

One of the most difficult subjects to inject into contemporary political discourse is the relevance of the spiritual dimension of the human experience. As the western political and intellectual culture has drifted successively through the intellectual movements of humanism, the age of enlightenment, and the modern scientific age, empiricism and pragmatic materialism gained authoritative claim to true knowledge, what was a natural mode of thinking for the Stoics, the scholastics, and eastern philosophers, became inordinately unnatural and unrealistic in an age of enlightened reason and objective science. Since the beginning of the 18th century, many of the western philosophers who gave significant relevance to the non material dimensions of human life were classified as

irrationalists, romanticists, idealists or transcendentalists. Transcendent eastern thought has had minimal relevance in western political circles.

Thus, the metaphysical plane of political theory and philosophy, virtually vanished from public discourse in the West before the end of the 19th century. Present resistance to considerations of morality and the human spirit as ideas relevant to the discourse on political, economic, and social policies reflects the centrality of the scientific method of inquiry. The entrenched convictions that all relevant reality lies in perceivable scientific evidence and explanation. Morality derives from a practical sense of what is necessary to prevent conflict including tolerance and enlightened self interest.

In some western democratic countries, there are institutional as well as other obstacles to injecting moral and spiritual considerations in political discourse. Ultra strict construction of the principle of separation of church and state is not an insignificant barrier. In the United States, while retaining its symbolic importance, the spiritual dimension of humanity is largely dissociated from the political realities of society. Moreover, judicial controversy envelopes prayer in schools, nativity scenes or any religious artifacts in public commons, and physical healing by means of prayer. In these instances, *spirituality* would seem to provoke competition for "truth" between proponents of rival institutional concepts of the transcendental realm as well as the legacy of the historical struggle between the political forces of church and state institutions.

Presently, while a deep sense of compassionate secular humanism inspires some thinkers, the spiritual dimension is not given credence in most socially and politically influential circles. The dominant institutions are geared to satisfying the insatiable biological needs and material demands of Promethean humanity. Economic development is about satisfying those requirements. Advances in technology and social progress reflect in increasingly opulent living standards. Poverty is the lack thereof.

Model democratic regimes, those protecting individual rights to enjoy a large degree of autonomy and fostering responsibility at all levels of social life, appear to be those that are sober in language and ambition; those that have a view of humankind as reasonable and perfectible -- neither heroic nor overly virtuous--, and those that leave religious cum spiritual concerns to special institutions and to the private sphere. The prestige of this type of political thought has been greatly enhanced by the emergence of leaders appropriate to their times: low key, democratic, efficient but suitably skeptical and dull leaders for "normal times", and heroic great men when nations are in danger. Macmillan and Pompidou versus Churchill and de Gaulle. None of these bourgeois, aristocrats, or heros, ever pretended publicly to be concerned by the spiritual.

Likewise, in the business world there has been great reluctance to evoke the concept of *spirituality,* although *ethics* is increasingly in fashion to the extent that it makes good business sense *to be ethical*. The word *spiritual* is neither macho nor realistic. What relevance should the non material have in the transformation of material resources into goods and services? Already long ago, the moral and spiritual messages accompanying Adam Smith's *invisible hand* theory have been obscured in the development of the market economy prototype ideology.

For many people with Western European religious educations, the realm of *spirit* and the privilege to engage in the quest for the ethereal is reserved for great saints of the past and for a few respected and beloved ministers, priests and theologians. The ordinary person need only struggle to be *not too serious a sinner* and need only aspire to decency and *amour du prochain*. To indicate familiarity with the *spiritual* risks perceptions of arrogance or ridiculousness. In France, the expressions *C'est un saint homme*, or *C'est une sainte femme*, have often been used to characterize the behavior of good persons, but never, by those deserving such a compliment.

De facto, the quest for social morality embodies some spiritual elements in norms of good behavior in a few critical domains, notably education, i.e. to gain knowledge and to develop one's *spirit*. Relations with family and strangers are to be nurtured with love, generosity, reserve, and politeness. Implicitly, to make progress in *spirituality* is to be as *good* as possible in those different facets of life. In contrast, to talk about religion and spirituality in a personal sense and to express any visible personal weakness is considered in bad taste.

Finally, a great deal of the difficulty lies in semantics. There is necessity to find a language to discuss political implications of the spiritual dimension of human nature without evoking religious or theological controversy and without generating the consternation of enlightened rationalists.

Spirit and Religion

There is a distinction between spirituality and religion. Religion should be everybody's choice. But, the human spirit is inherent and universal.

To facilitate communication there is need to distinguish the concepts of *religious* and *spiritual,* the latter meaning of and pertaining to the human spirit. One of the problems with the term spirituality is that it is commonly associated with organized religions. Seeking the spiritual dimension is not to be confused with seeking *spiritus Sanctus* or the *spirit of the angels* because the quest transcends religious and theological concepts and problems. Unlike institutional religion it does not deal, per se, with questions of who or what is God and what are people's moral responsibilities to God. Nor does it delve into diverse questions of dogma, prayer, ritual, and other forms of worship, however important these may be. Organized religions are human institutions which have the task of passing on values.

The search for spirituality moves outward and inward at the same time. Spirituality going outward is the Einstein version of recognizing billions of galaxies and the possibilities of other existences rather than just one's own. One of many inward dimensions is the concept of empathy - the ability to put oneself in the place of another.

Nevertheless, the articulation of the spiritual dimension shares with religion and theology a preoccupation with the universe of the infinite unseen Consciousness as the essence of life and the source of the spiritual dimension. The spiritual dimension is akin to what philosophers have called natural religion in referring to the fundamental essence common to all religions and what is revealed to each person as a part of the infinite Whole.

For Christians and, especially perhaps for Catholics, *spiritual* is closely aligned with a search for moral values whereas *religious* is often associated with faith in a supreme being. For a scholar of Islam that distinction is very hard to make unless reference is being made to a set of laws or ritualistic practices. Islam means surrender to God and a true Moslem is living in the spirit and the secular at all times. Given the vast number of dictionary definitions of *spiritual* it may be ventured that the words spirit and spiritual have become umbrella concepts connoting a multitude of aspects of the non-material, the intangible substance of life. *Religious* is a more clearly defined concept with some institutional overtones.

Generally, the clergy's separation from society is what permits it to relate to humankind through the lens of theology. It has been observed that society, in attempting to free itself through secularization, has discovered different, and perhaps greater ills. While popular secular society may perceive religion as optimistic and engaged in good works, the fact is that genuine religious dimension makes possible the probing of evil and its operations as a vital step toward progress.

Questions of spiritual values are now being studiously addressed in an effort to encourage progress based on common values in settings of religious pluralism. The ways spiritual and moral precepts influence political thought in some countries, both North and South, indicate how they could benefit policy making in other contexts. The *good* institutions building human happiness and peace must have an inherent spiritual dimension to function effectively.

The following sections show how religions regard the spiritual dimension of ordinary life:

Reflections on Benedictine spirituality and modernity

In Boethius' consolation of philosophy, having discussed with him for a while the situation he was in, Lady philosophy clearly says to him, "You know where you have come from, but you do not know where you are going." This is one issue for today. It is a question that demonstrates discussion of destiny and aspirations and where the world is headed. It was in the enlightened period that humankind decided to take charge of its destiny in a way that it had never done before -- to define it and to set out on its path on its own in a certain sense, without regard for

previous things which might have been considered as superstition, dangerous, or simply wrong. This separation of where humanity had come from and where humanity was going may be part of today's problem.

If Saint Benedict were to be asked for his view on today's obsession with material comforts, he would speak about stewardship. Human beings are stewards of this world with the responsibility to protect the whole spectrum of nature. No creation of God belongs to any generation. What human beings consume today is what they have inherited from those who have passed before them. The notion of stewardship incorporates a strict sense of caring for what exists and passing it along in a condition better than it was received.

Considering technological progress, Benedict would point to the artisans of the monastery. One of the characteristic features of the Benedictine monastery is its architecture and the use of arches. The arch represents technological advance -- an advance that is an opening up, a lifting of the mind and a bidding that all eyes be caste upward. If a criticism were to be given of modern technological progress it is that its thrust is not related to the notion of beauty or something else greater and grander. According to Benedictine spirituality, progress in the use of tools and skills is meant to uplift the mind, not simply to make things easier or more comfortable. Though the later is not wrong, it should not be the goal in itself.

With St. Benedict, the artisan's work was part of what he did within the context of an entire life, which was in Benedict's scheme, a balance between work and prayer. Thus, the notion of work for Benedict was an incorporated notion; it was part of an entire life seen in regard to the community, and not just the individual. What the artisan did as work was to create something that was fulfilling for himself and also for everyone else.

There is strong concern for individuals in the rule of St. Benedict. The enhancement of individual rights according to Benedictine spirituality derives from the recognition of the sacred in every person. It is the sacredness which merits individual rights and it is in honoring the sacred that these rights are to be exercised. The rule, written in the sixth century, provides that all people, but especially monks, are responsible to recognize the presence of Christ in the poor, in the guest, in the sick, and in the elderly.

While in many of today's societies there is concern for a number of groups of people, those who seem to fall most by the wayside are the children. The idea of the child was preeminent in the mind of St. Benedict. Passages in his Rule were written specifically for the protection of children. The rule provided that they be cared for tenderly by appointed officials. According to Benedictine spirituality each individual is a child of God.

In Benedictine tradition, intellectual discourse is for the discovery of ideas, but that is only half of the work. There is need to distinguish between intellectual conversion and moral conversion as Benedict and Augustine agreed. While a person may know what is the right thing to do, it does not mean the person will do the correct thing, because the moral virtues that are required to do so are more than simply knowing, they involve courage, fortitude and discipline. These may be stimulated by theater, art, and music, which are potent media for projecting such ideas of values, ethics, and spirituality. According to Shakespeare, the play is the thing. The morality plays of the medieval period gave expression to this use of the stage. But if theater, art, and music are to continue to uplift the human race, as Benedict intimated, their power and influence must be recognized, because their impact can also be very destructive. The present negative influence of television on children's behaviors is clear, reflecting untamed technological progress.

Islam and the rejection of secularism

Enlightenment should not be called Enlightenment if it is only rational. Enlightenment of human beings does not just come with their reasons being broadened or their visions being expanded; Enlightenment has to be moral, spiritual, rational and completely humanistic. Only then would it deserve to be called Enlightenment.

The decoupling of church and state that accompanied the European Enlightenment has generally not occurred in the Islamic world. The Prophet Mohammed was a secular ruler while being at the same time the Prophet of Islam. As the ruler, he fought battles and established a state. From the beginning, the Prophet of Islam insisted that people not only live in this world, but live in the best way in this world. He did not allow the sacred to be apart from the world nor the people of the world to say "*we cannot be rooted in the sacred because we have to move on*." Therefore, this dichotomy present in the West between the secular and spiritual realms technically does not exist in the Middle East.

A positive thing that has come out of the anti-western rhetoric and dialogue in the Middle East is that the unquestioning acceptance of everything that has come out of progressive societies is now being challenged. Such questions are being entertained: Must progress be in western terms? Does it have to be in particular scientific terms? Does it have to be in accordance with the economic gauge of western consumerism? What is the measure of progress for the Muslim world?

The major criticism of the European Enlightenment from the Islamic perspective is the dichotomy or compartmentalization of knowledge. In the Muslim world, all knowledge is supposed to be regarded from a holistic perspective. Islamic ideals are humanist ideals, built on the belief that there is no dichotomy between the secular and the sacred. For example, with the accumulation of wealth comes the responsibility of using it for the poor, the unfortunate, the orphans, and the widow. The people pray five times a day, but those acts alone are insufficient if the people do not participate in the community and somehow carry out their social responsibilities. Thus, responsibility to God is inseparable from responsibility to other humans and the environment. Individual self interest must be pursued with the best of whatever God offers. Reason that makes the latest scientific discovery must see that discovery also as one window of God's greatness. Individual well-being may be pursued for one's own good, but not without exercising self-control for the larger good of the community. The most important principles that guide society are social responsibility, honesty, and generosity.

The individual is seen to flourish only in the context of a community. The community takes precedence over individual self interest and if these are in conflict, resolution must come about through a personal sense of responsibility. Thus, referring to the work of the lens grinder mentioned as an example of the progress which European Enlightenment has brought, a Muslim would say that the lens grinder must move beyond genetics and go to the soul which is inherent in each human being. All truth is not revealed through the lens of the microscope. While science can inform humankind by what mechanisms they think, this information does not explain everyday experience and the practical knowledge gained in human society. Moreover, the question remains whether the brain generates the thought or the thought stimulates and builds the capacity of the brain. If the soul and the genetic person are not balanced, then even if the lens grinder tells us that all beings share 100% of their DNA, individual thoughts remain unpredictable.

Philosophical Thinking and Spirituality

There is growing interest in philosophies that do not distinguish personal achievement from collective or social harmony and which recognize the spiritual dimension as a fundamental part of life. Furthermore, there are many parts of the world where there are no organized institutionalized religions but where philosophies of life and humankind's relationship with the universe are pervasive influences on the daily lives of individual's and society. In countries adhering to such time honored philosophical legacies, traditional ethical and moral values provide tenets for social relations.

In Confucian thinking, the spirit is manifested in a continuum that begins in the core of the inner Self, and extends through the family, the community, the state, and culminates in the universe, cosmos, or infinite consciousness that some would call God. In these extensions, the four dimensions of the person: a part of communities, a species of nature, an expression of heart and mind, and a particle of the cosmos, are realized. The continuum is depicted in Confucian philosophy as a series of concentric circles spreading out from the center of each self. The outer circle is never closed implying all existence taking place in the harmonious cosmos. In the Confucian configuration there is no distinction between public and private life as each outer circle is public to the immediate inner circle and the immediate inner circle is private to the immediate outer circle. Thus, the I is co-terminal with the whole of society and the universe.

Japan has been strongly influenced by Confucian and Shinto philosophies. Today there is an international effort under the leadership of Tomonobu Imamichi to build a philosophy to deal with challenges posed by the technological revolution in the last half of the 20th century. A synthesis of philosophies has also been suggested in other milieu to facilitate "a dialogue of civilizations." These are introduced in the paragraphs that follow:

Eco Ethica inspired by Japanese philosophy

Eco Ethica, described by Imamichi, is a contribution of Japanese contemporary thought to the search for new principles of morality to meet conditions created by modern technology.

Eco means oikos in Greek (house), its outside and inside. Translating this idea to *eco ethica, eco* refers not only to the *inter-sidereal* cosmic environment of existence, but also *nano,* the micro-cosmic space in immanent-corporeality, simply stated as the space in the cell between the cell wall and the nucleus. Modern technology has affected human surroundings, from the global and even inter-planetary environment to the most minute micro-biotic space.

The loss of the sense of spirituality and the difficulty to recover it is partly demonstrated in the following model based on Aristotelian logic explained by Imamichi in 1956. The model assumes human beings are rational animals that must deliberate their actions and must think before they can come to a moral decision. Therein arises the practical syllogism as outlined by Aristotle in *Ethica Nicomichean* and illustrated in the chart below:

Premises and Conclusion	Example	Form
Major premise (A) (Self evident proposition of the aim).	I want fulfillment	I want A. (aim)
Minor premise (p) (Enumeration of means)	There are several possible means to obtain fulfillment, education, meditation,	There are several possible ways to obtain A; p_1, p_2, p_3...
The moral decision $p_2 \rightarrow A$	Fulfillment is best obtained with meditation.	I choose $p2$ as the means to A.

This classical syllogism remains theoretically valid but today technological advances has revolutionized the material forms of means so much so that the *Mean in the syllogism* has gained primacy over the *Aim.*

Premises and conclusions	Example	Form
Major premise (P) (Self-evident proposition of the means)	We have Capital as Power.	We have P *(power as a means)*.
Minor premise (Enumeration of aims) a_1, a_2, a_3	Through this capital we can obtain new hospital, university, production of mass weapons of destruction,...	There are aims that are inevitable consequences of P, namely a, a_2, a_3, a_4, a_5...
Conclusion $a2 \leftarrow P$	Because my country needs to defend itself I will aim to produce atomic weapons	I choose $a2$ as a necessary result of P.

The logical expression of this development is the reversed order of the practical syllogism with significant consequences:

The major premise is the means P.

> 1. The major premise, as the proposal of the self evident *aim* has been replaced by the self-evident *mean,* Power. The minor premise i.e., the subordinate idea, has been transformed into an enumeration of necessary *aims*.

> 2. According to the classical syllogism, humanity could aspire to transcendent or spiritual ideals and aims. But, in the second syllogism P, secular power, has the potential for realizing only

physical, material effects. Thus, the dominance of secular and material means as the principle determinant of all decisions obviate moral or other transcendent aims.

3. In the classical syllogism the actor and subject of the decision are embodied in the individual person. But, in the second syllogism the actor and subject are the owner of big P, and therefore the decision maker is a plural person or artificial person. Thus, an ethics of committee rather than individual ethics is established and thinking is group thought.

The second syllogism demonstrates the strong propensity of society toward the secularization of human actions and explains why spiritual objectives are increasingly difficult to consider. The added complications to decision making when the major premise is the means, (P), are more subtle. They suppose a technological conjuncture in which instruments are brought into a holistic autarchic system. Such instrumentation renders obsolete individual moral considerations and exercises.

The notion of participation in the logic of the second syllogism is tragic for society because an impersonal operation appears in the major premise. In this light, the new expression *nosism* should be introduced to differentiate *group egoism* from *egoism*. *Nos* is the plural form of *ego*. Nationalism, collectivism of family systems, the legal person of the corporation are examples of *nosism*.

Eco ethica also deals with the phenomena of creative imagination, time, and shadows. To counter modern trends as those described above, it is necessary to foster sensitivity in individuals to the needs and circumstances of other persons. To this end, the development in childhood of the power of imagination is essential. In this connection, creativity is also vital to enhance. Creativity is the most important factor for the next generation if technological progress is to be guided in paths that avoid the control of individual life and moral decisions by impersonal forces. This creativity must be fueled with something from transcendental consciousness and nature requiring imagination to be perceived.

A major preoccupation of technological advance is the reduction of time needed to perform functions by streamlining processes and increasing efficiency.   However, as Pascal noted, man is a thinking animal and thinking requires time. Time is the essence of caution, and caution is critical for human survival. While machines change and operate at increasing speeds, the human brain remains as nature made it, and thus operates at the same potential biological speed nature endowed humankind with in order to think thoroughly. When reflective time is reduced or lost with more efficient technological advancements, important and controlling ideas are at risk of being lost. Without adequate time devoted to thinking, human beings gradually deteriorate into more primitive beings.

A characteristic feature of the present technological conjuncture is the uniformization of forms through the process of mass production. For example, the camera, the telephone, and tape player are all encased in what would appear to be the same black box even though they have different functions and in the past appeared in different shapes. As inert human artifacts are losing their individual forms for the sake of efficiency, the same may be said of the human being.

The rich diversity of human personalities is melted into uniformized quantitative and qualitative descriptors contained in statistics, projected in films, on television shows, and or the computer screen. Computerized human information data is the shadow of the person and it would seem that the human shadow is more important than the living being in the modern information society. Society believes they can understand and know persons without ever meeting any of the human beings in question. This is the demonic face of the contemporary information society, which is encouraged by human genome projects and other research that finds massive similarities in human DNA, as if these were the only determinants of human personality.

At the same time, one can not ignore the merits of traditional measurements of aspects of the conditions of humanity. Such information on levels of literacy, net income per capita, and income distribution is necessary to guide policies aimed at improving the socio-economic situation of humankind.

Towards a possible synthesis

The great civilizing force of China 200B.C. - 200A.D., the Han synthesis, set in motion a continuing civilization, the longest in the history of the globe. In a self-conscious way the Han intellectuals went to study the texts, traditions, and cultures that preceded them. They intended to select from earlier Confucian, Taoist, Ying Yang, and other texts, the type of political synthesis that would stabilize as well as keep civilization going. What they came to was a synthesis deeply embedded in concepts of cosmology -- an orientation to a universe of human, earth, societal and political relations, which, in a multilayered sense, was rooted in a conception of the universe from which stemmed all directionality -- even the seasons of life and climate. All of these ideas and phenomena were highly integrated and self-consciously chosen.

Today, society may also be in a similar type of selection process moving toward a new synthesis and reconstruction. The world is shaped by a form of homogenization rooted in the Western industrialized states. A major issue is the presumption that modernization and homogenization are parts of the same process (in terms of human rights, global market and even road signs). Cultural diversity challenges this presumption. One resolution lies in appeal to a transcending vision of the globe as a way to unite intellectual thought and other resources of the human spirit in the development of the common humanity. One may go back to neolithic periods to imagine the possibilities of a more unified human community with cosmological, linguistic and cultural orientations.

To further expand on this matter, it is necessary to consider that the peoples of the United Nations are all, by virtue of modernization, children of the Western Enlightenment - benefitting from it in all empirical spheres of education, science, transportation, communication and health. It would, however, appear impossible for every society on the planet to attain the life style epitomized as the American dream, now held forth as the paradigm goal of development. Thus, there is tension between the dream and the absence of the possibilities of attaining it. To deal with this tension, it is necessary to explore cultural institutions that will enable societies to develop a different and fuller understanding of both the negative implications of the dream, and a broader vision of Enlightenment, progress, and purpose.

In this effort, such Enlightenments must be considered:

-Enlightenment of the Christian spread of liberation,

-Enlightenment of the Buddhist idea of self-knowledge

-Enlightenment of the Islamic notion of the glorification of God, and

-Enlightened understanding of one's relevance to the world as exemplified by
many indigenous peoples, or the enlightenment of human knowledge

The question is how to bring about reduction in the power of the prevailing materialist message of Western Enlightenment and usher in these other forms of enlightening vision whose impact would be to render less aggressive, less appealing, and less exclusionary the practice of the dominant culture.

The question is not necessarily one of forced homogenization under the weight of the economic power of the West, but can be seen as the result of accepting Enlightenment ideas as part of the common heritage of humankind. No country, however, has a monopoly on ideas. Countries are free to adopt or not ideas they consider to be in their own best interest. If China adopts capitalism, it is not because it is forced to, but because it is attractive, and the idea is free for the taking.

Part II–The Spiritual Dimension and the Public Interest

Beyond questions of conceptualization, the need for a spiritual dimension, the obstacles to it, and the relationship of concepts to religion and philosophy are a whole range of issues that involve the practical manifestation of the human spirit in society, its public policy and its arts. These are examined in Part II below.

Society and the spirit

Pursuance of the relationship between the spiritual and the secular is not just a private matter but of vital public interest. While spirituality can be a private adventure that ultimates in neglect of society, it is also a vital positive power in the social fabric. For the Stoics, as illustrated in the works of Cicero and Marcus Aurellius, the moral and the spiritual were closely linked in wisdom for the individual and harmony for the society.

In human nature there is both energy and desire to grow as an individual and the need to communicate and establish a close communication with family, society, nature and the universe. These faculties have to be encouraged and brought into balance. Well functioning institutions such as responsible and compassionate families, schools, churches, and other local organizations are imperative to mediate between individuals and large, powerful, potentially coercive structures of the economy and state. Mediating institutions shape the character and behavior of the individual. They instill values, stimulate imagination and generosity, and put checks of responsibility on appetites and freedom. As principle sources of education and discipline, mediating institutions are vital to the functioning and survival of democratic societies. In addition, informal gathering places, such as in traditional western societies, pubs, clubs, barber shops, and country stores are places to learn decency in social relations.

Traditionally, mediating institutions have been responsible for generating *the fuels* on which the macro-social structures have run. When successful, governments and market economies, are fed by virtues of moderation, integrity, and enlightened self-interest and altruism. Governments and markets have self-destructive forces that require tampering by habits of spirit and the heart instilled in the human person by those institution so familiar as to be forgotten.

Today society appears to have largely forgotten the fact that private and public powers run on fuels they do not generate. The modern western ethos gives much weight to quick individual success and gratification and neglect the need for interrelatedness on many levels. For example, the endurance of hardship taught as a virtue in older days is a source of energy that leads to generosity and the pursuit of creativity and excellence. The satisfaction of want or greed is not the source of greatness. Expediency rather than patience and hard work produces a culture which, in the long term, is neither individually satisfying nor socially sustainable. Modern telecommunications most often fueled by the baser instincts of self gratification and excessive greed – perceived as the motivators of modern market-- and rarely premised on higher values of the human spirit. The mass media, filling the void left by declining traditional mediating institutions are by default becoming the global socializer. The loudest message they are carrying to the next generation is pleasure through possession and consumption. As long as the media remains wedded to the monetary and material goals of the market there is little room for the spiritual dimension of life to have any practical impact on society.

A real democracy requires awareness of civic and moral obligations, entitlements, necessary to promote solidarity and equality have to be balanced by individual initiatives. Freedom of enterprise, necessary to generate economic growth and material progress has to be mixed with responsibility. Entropy begins with excesses and imbalances. Democratic societies with impoverished mediating institutions can no longer protect or encourage the virtues of the human spirit. A silent erosion of values, notably among the middle class, generates obsessive acquisitiveness, political license, and moral decadence. Countless examples of expediency, graft, and cover-ups among the so-called civilized classes manifest the extent of the problem.

The decline of the family, the primordial mediating institution is foreboding for the future. Homes have become houses, that is mere shelters from the elements. Volunteer labor, that provided the warm and nurturing heart and soul of families, and also of hospitals, churches, and communities at large, is progressively absorbed by the exigencies of the market. Never have children been separated from their parents so early and never has this early separation been so widespread. Thus, the family has, in a sense, virtually dissolved and society has not found an alternative. The results may be catastrophic.

Heartfelt satisfaction, a purposeful life and, by natural extension, appreciation of Earth and Universe depend on being able to respond to one's own and to others' intangible needs.
This response begins with parenthood just after birth. One may imagine a serene and dignified polar bear cuddling its young as an image of unequivocal, unconditional love and affection for the infant. Such an affective environment is essential to the development of the future adult's "basic trust, sense of well-being, and optimism." It

is from these initial seeds of trust and love that the inner "spirit" is awakened. These ideas were articulated in the pioneer work of Erik Erikson who said that:

> So-called basic trust in life is developed in a loving maternal environment. It then leads to optimism which carries a person through the rest of its life. That's where faith, hope, and the inclination to care seem to come from.

Thus, the foundation of any kind of humane or caring society is that parent-child relationship and that sense of trust which generates a basic confidence in life. To respond to the problems created by lack of this early nurturing experience society needs to do more than pass down the tablets inscribed with the ten commandments and simply say, "Reread them."

How to socialize the next generation? How to keep the framework of the human spirit? How to impart values? The "parental/environment question" is all too often overlooked. It should figure in documents such as the Earth Charter. The maternal/paternal environment is the key requisite for developing a global community that is capable of respecting Earth. Care for Earth cannot be imposed nor easily stirred up in mindsets that have never experienced a nurturing maternal environment, the soil in which the inherent seeds of spirit begin to grow. The parental problem is certainly a strong explanation of social entropy and few people are paying attention to it. Day care centers are not the answer. As recent statistics indicate, in the United States, less than 10% are adequate. There is little to be done as long as the virtues of the spirit are inconsequential in the modern mentality where success is measured by wealth and power and everyone must be out in the marketplace to get a piece of it. What will the future bring if it is to be guided by generations of insecure, undereducated, grasping individuals whose only goal is money and self gratification?

To avoid increasing tides of alienation, and/or fundamentalism of all types, children, whatever their starting point, need to have some religious or spiritual upbringing. Freedom of thought and freedom of conscience do not develop in a vacuum. A young person needs a framework of values, including to question it, to rebel against it and to evolve his/her own mindsets, What sort of institutions would meet this need in the next century? What to do to maintain and invigorate the human spirit in society? Some are advocating a cosmogological ethos fueled by an alignment of the main religious institutions. Others are putting emphasis on the primal values nof religious traditions. Still others see the need for <new social contracts> that would embrace spiritual values and virtues undrelying environmentalism and other great sociaal concerns of the people.

The imminent environmental crisis, the growing alienation in societies, and the weakening of traditional intermediary institutions that provided moral education and encouraged humility, service, and discipline, have provoked many to reconsider the prevalent notion of progress and to give greater pause to a more transcendent vision. The goal is to facilitate the realisation of humankind spiritual potential. And the immediate problem is a metamorphosis of the common mindset. To change the direction of contemporary thought is a daunting task requiring a radical change in present mainstream thinking. It is comparable to turning round a giant ocean liner. It will take many tugboats to do it and those tugboats will have to work in coordination. New linkages between politics, philosophy, and spirituality are imperative. Economic drives must be tempered by spiritual insights to realize a sustainable environment. There is much that lies in the Biblical injunction, *Man does not live by bread alone*. Similar injunctions are clear in Confucian teachings and those of other great religions and cultures. It is an old Viking principle as well.

Today, people can adapt to their advanced technological culture and rekindle the 'spirit', as the independent decision-maker and determinant of progress and human destiny. Science suggests that today's humanity is not significantly different from the Neolithic people. Genes have not changed since the Ice Age. How did these people live? In small groups. They knew each other well. To achieve viable communities today, solidarity is certainly a starting point. People may, for example, embrace a rite of competition in caring. The Sioux Indians gave away everything and in so doing, they competed with each other in how much they could give away. In this way they attained their self-esteem. The study of other cultures *is essential*. According to Carl Popper, it is very difficult if not impossible to arrive at the truth if you remain immersed in the same universe you are talking about and analyzing. By analogy, we are all in the same social system so to get at the truth scientifically we have to step out of the system.

In sum, responsibility at all levels is a condition for regenerating a sense of the spirit and from there a sense of ethics. Harmony in a democratic society is dependent on the contribution of its participants. Every society requires balance, respect for nature, and moderation in all aspects of human endeavors. Society would benefit from awakening to the presence of a transcendental vision of life that would offer humankind a way to peace and harmony with the universe. For this, as well as for the acquisition of knowledge and sociability, education has an essential role to play. Education has the capacity to develop the virtues that lie dormant in the human heart. These virtues are particularly important for public servants, merchants, entrepreneurs, and information suppliers in all the media - who have the power to influence society. A spiritual identification of the self is a strong basis for self respect and can be fostered by education that instills appreciation of the humanities as well as the acumen needed to be effective in a particular vocation.

Political Institutions, Public discourse

Among contemporary political thinkers and leaders, Vaclav Havel has articulated the religious spiritual dimension in the public arena most ardently and compellingly. His discourse is persuasive even for those who have rejected the traditional vision of God. He wrote:

> Genuine politics, politics worthy of the name and in any case the only politics that I am willing to devote myself to, is simply serving those close to oneself: serving the community, and serving those who come after us. Its deepest roots are moral because it is a responsibility, expressed through action , to and for the whole, a responsibility that is what it is -- a "higher"responsibility, which grows out of a conscious or subconscious certainty that our death ends nothing, because everything is forever being recorded and evaluated somewhere else, somewhere "above us," in what I have called the"memory of Being" an integral aspect of the secret order of the cosmos, of nature, and of life, which believers call God and to whose judgement everything is liable. Genuine conscience and genuine responsibility are always, in the end, explicable only as an expression of the silent assumption that we are being observed "from above" and that "up there" everything is visible, nothing is forgotten, and therefore earthly time has no power to wipe away the pangs brought on by earthly failure: our spirit knows that it is not the only one that knows of these failures.

The conjunction of spirituality and politics lies behind the pledge of the Social Summit that societies should respond to the "*material and spiritual needs of the individuals, their families and the communities in which they live*".Should this be read as an appeal to provide people with the necessary economic base and enjoyment of their human rights in order that they can then pursue freely and autonomously their spiritual quest? Should this be read as an injunction to governments and all institutions to encourage human beings to be fully human and not only producers and consumers ?

Jurgen Habermas, who is particularly concerned with the need to recreate a public sphere in modern societies, sees the enlightenment as a not yet finished project. The reign of reason has to shape not only the person and the family but also the community. For Habermas, contempora ry societies dominated by consumption and the mass media suffer first from a regression of the polity.
Injecting notions of the spiritual dimension of human life in market places and political fora is a way to give space for reflection on what society values. There should be some reflection in the largest sense on what really constitutes "the good life", beyond the targets and expectations for public policy than can be measured monetarily or in terms of physical outputs..

The Third Millennium prompted expressions of the view that human evolution may be reaching a new stage where spiritual well being will be more important than material success. The state and international organizations would be eclipsed by social movements expressing the demands of the collective spirit. The culture of the new millennium would ignore the past and reach for a new harmony of body and soul more responsive to the spiritual needs of humanity. Humankind would be be on the threshold of reversal in the relative importance of the material and the spiritual.

In giving spiritual dimension to secular policy making, the distinction made by Martin Buber is particularly appropriate. Consider, for example, changing the mind set that approaches environmental policy. Since the enlightenment, nature has been separated from humanity and treated as the objective *It*. The *I* versus *It* mind set ennobled human efforts to bring nature and all its manifestation under total control. Material power and psychological influence became a means to dominance and control. To change this approach it is necessary to recast the relationship between humans and the environment. The objective distinction I/It or Them is to be transformed into the inter-subjective, personal *I*/T*hou* relationship referencing all life as part of an organic whole. Today, an imperative for human survival is to rehumanize nature, to move from smashing its essence to an empathic appreciation and sense of oneness with it.

Related to the question of spirituality and politics is the familiar notion of progress. It has taken different roads during history. One is directed towards the whole flourishing of the individual as a person independent of economic or material growth and the other is progress along the material road toward bigger and better things through economics and exchange in the market. The later is the preeminent vision in today's society. It associates human dignity with attainment of a certain level of material comfort - to be achieved through the market or, for the poorest, by assistance.. The non-material vision of progress views dignity as inherent in the spirit of humanity - the well source of charity, native intelligence, and a sense of oneness with the other creatures that animate the universe.

The purely material vision of progress leads humanity towards a dead-end. A number of people, including Adam Smith, warned of the dangers of the division of labor accompanying specialization and stimulated by competition in the open market. Smith noted that specialization could render people the most stupid of creatures if governments did not step in to stimulate the mental and cultural development of those in danger of becoming so immersed in the market as to become incapable of considering other aspects of human life. As already noted, Karl Marx foresaw that progress along the economic road might terminate in a situation where machines would dominate human lives. A number of contemporary philosophers have made the point that in time technology takes over and that all moral choices and objectives became conditioned by "things" rather than some transcendental ideal which, in other times, gave meaning to society. If markets, things, and machines control moral decision making, where is humanity progressing?

The reinsertion of "*spirit*" into the political discourse has largely been the work of the environmental movement, and in particular, its more radical advocates. The deep ecologists and the Gaiists have brought to the public conscience images of a living and feeling earth, which could only be fully grasped or experienced through thought and emotion or by attributing to nature qualities of sacredness and religiousness. Religious institutions have been tapped to lend support to this vision and to find justification in their holy writings for a deeper reverence for life and a greater sense of responsibility. Religions can play a major role in protecting the environment in non litigious societies, as their proscriptions and exhortations substitute for law.

Preserving Earth, or moving society towards support for a sustainable and meaningful lifestyle is an inherently spiritual, ethical, and common good question that requires responsible public attention. Strong governments must oversee this common property resource, or reliance on concentrations of wealth through market mechanisms will tear that common resource apart. Unless some set of institutions takes primary responsibility for the authoritative allocation of values in a society, humanity is likely to lose that dimension. Society cannot abnegate the use of government simply in favor of markets and preserve that humane dimension from generation to generation. Something has to take the long-term view and markets do not do that well.

Plato taught that governments could only be as good as the political actors and the motivations that fuel their public decision making and action. Aristotle, pursuing the same line of thinking, drew a distinction between bad and good governments on the basis of whether the governors served personal interests or whether they served justice and the common good. In considering spirituality and politics, one must address the quality of thinking of the powerful that govern society, its economics, and its politics. If there is to be a humane tone for the global village, leaders must set it. Young people are longing for such standards and for people to show them the way, to take an interest in them as individuals, to let them know that there is a right and wrong, and that knowing this difference matters. It is interesting to note that the League of Nations had an Intellectual Committee. Something comparable should be considered for the UN.

Spirit and Art

The theater and institutions for the arts expand the imagination and delve into the heart of society. Fundamental social change begins with imagining beauty. Beauty and aesthetics are closely related to the notion of the human spirit. Art embraces painting, music, architecture, literature, and other means for expressing form and emotion and for replication of a personal perception of the world. Painters, playwrights, architects, poets, musicians and other artists can contribute greatly towards moving society away from excessive materialism.

The value of art is judged by the responses it evokes. Spirit meets art in evoking experiences of transcendental meaning and in the clarification and awareness of values, tasks which are in the province of art, rather than scientific inquiry, to express and explore. While there is a great deal of debate presently as to what constitutes aesthetic value, traditionally *truth, beauty,* and the *good* represent this value. If a work of art has this traditional aesthetic value it could evoke such responses as deep appreciation, elevated thought, and intuitive understanding of the message.

The perception and understanding of the Spirit is through the mind. It is experienced, for example, in receptivity to the radiation of Soul. This idea was articulated by Wang Wei, an aesthetician, poet, and painter in the Chinese Middle Age. He said, "For the painting of a mountain, it is not necessary to let us identify what mountain is painted here, but it is absolutely necessary to let us feel the spirit of the mountain." According to Wang, painting is not to be an exercise of photographic representation of material forms, its purpose is to make the spirit of the painted object shine out in order that the viewer may feel the spirit of it. Thus, there is a relation between spirit, art, and mind.

Artists contribute to awakening the spirit of humankind through their unique insights into higher truths and higher stages of Self-realization. Art offers opportunity for vivid perception of colors, forms, and sounds of the world. The true fairy tale, in the view of J.R.R. Tolkien, offers a subset of reality as a complete system that calls upon the unconditional belief of the reader. As a piece of art it offers fantasy, the opportunity for recovery, escape and consolation. It is in fairy tales that Tolkien first divined the potency of words and wonder of things such as stones, and wood, and iron, trees, grass, houses, and fire. For him, the primal desire at the heart of the fairy tale is the desire of humanity to hold communion with other living things, to perceive a magical understanding of the languages of birds, beasts, and trees.

Art aids in gaining understanding of human behavior. One of the functions of literature, playwrights and theater is to explore all the sides of human nature. Literature like religion, often explores the private dark side of human nature. If the dark side is not explored it is difficult to arrive at any spirituality. The courageous examination of this dark side is a route to progress. Dostoevsky, for example, used religion to analyze the nature of evil and confront the depths of humanity.

Playwrights, for example, Arthur Miller, have the capability to see truth with their hearts and minds and to strike at the core of the human person. This skill is central to communication in society. Thus, at the same time and without personal risk, the audience explores the nature and evolution of a whole range of different human actions and social interactions.

People have the need to express and share their aesthetic viewpoints. Art can satisfy this need. Street art facilitates forming of relationships between people who cannot do so through intellectual discourse. Poetry, whose essential quality is honesty, is a magnificent medium for communicating people's feelings.

In Europe, the traditional process of aesthetic development broke down at the end of the 19th century. Impressionism changed the perception of art, in particular, the ability to perceive light and its quality. Also, the language of art changed for music, theater as well as for painting. Confusion was caused by the inward looking or self focusing tendency of the artists. To find beauty in art today is, perhaps, more problematic than in the past.

Equally worrisome is the observation that art has become detached from the mainstream of society. The artist works and creates for his or her own satisfaction rather than to satisfy an externally impelled inspirational necessity, be it a contribution to society, or a tribute to God. At the extreme of this evolution is the position of the artist stating that he or she creates for the self, that he or she has responsibility only vis a vis the self; that the quality of the work is to be judged only by the artist, and that the affect of the product on society is fundamentally irrelevant.

With the demise of the traditional concept of beauty, it is legitimate to question whether the issue of beauty is for the creator or the audience to decide. Does a creation of beauty emerge from the inner heart and soul of the artist, or should the viewer or listener determine the issue as the image or the sounds reverberates in their visual or audio receptors? Beautiful or not, rock music functions profoundly for young people, in the brutality of a culture focused on getting more and never to be satiated.

Individuals must now somehow be trained to perceive the spiritual message and essence of art. Training of senses to appreciate art must be included in the education of the new generation. This is particularly important since the cultivation of the contemplative mind is missing in schools. If education of the audience is necessary for artistic messages to be communicated, it should not be through media whose livelihood depends on profit.

Art has the capacity to be a positive or negative force in society. The question of whether or not artists should be expected to be governed by a sense of social responsibility remains valid. The difference between eccentricity and creativity is important in this context. And, it is difficult to be spiritually creative today given the commercialization of art products and the advances of technologies permitting, inter alia, computer generated art. The question of how much public support should be given to art and artists is highly controversial.

Modern art, while, obviously still evolving, appears to have the common characteristic to offer to the receiver the artist's anticipated message - often still hidden in the subconscious of the artist. This suggestive anticipation is the message of the present age of formlessness. Thus, works of art have no precise or clear message. For appreciators of art the situation is highly enigmatic. Every appreciator is at liberty to interpret what he/she wishes far from any sense of reality. This situation illustrates the above mentioned impact of the shift in the major proposition of the Aristotelian syllogism.

Writers and playwrites are important mediators in their role as cultural interpreters. People in theater are constantly putting on different costumes and as a result see the same issue from many different points of view. The theater is suspicious of the Hegelian state. The abstract concept of spirit is also mistrusted for it implies something from above rather than from within. In the theater, private lives on stage are a metaphor for the public actions of the state.

Poets and dramatists, contrary to the popular stereotype portraying them as being withdrawn unworldly creatures, have frequently lent their lives and their words to revolution. There is a remarkable book called *Voices of Conscience*, published in England, wherein each of the persons (poets) represented has suffered imprisonment, torture, and execution because they stood for the human spirit in threatening circumstances. It is always necessary to stand for the human spirit in spite of whatever dangers one faces in ones' professional way of normally identifying oneself as a ful human-being.

True poets are good at capturing the context and nuances of how it feels to live as a human being in a particular place and a particular time. It seems that humankind comes to a particular moment in history when there is greater practical need than ever before imagined to keep in mind some reasonable reflection of the cruel nature of humanity.

In the 1940s in his last book, *Truth and Revelation*, Berdaiev wrote prophetically of a revolution in thought and spirit, which would suppress the desire to be alienated objectified. William Barret closed his book *Death of a Soul* by asking how a civilization or culture would benefit from gaining knowledge and power over the material world, while losing any adequate idea of the conscience, mind, and the human self as the center of all power. In his book, *The Tangled Wing*, Melvin Connor a medical doctor, anthropologist and poet wrote:

> I suspect that the human spirit is insufficiently developed at this moment in evolution, much like the wing of Archeoptorics. Whether we can free it for further development will depend, I think, on the full reinstatement of the sense of wonder. It must be reinstated in relation not only to the natural world but to the human world as well. At the conclusion of all our studies, we must try once again to experience the human soul as soul and not just the buzz of electricity....

Connor knew that the indefinable had to be said and that the flesh had to be made word.

Poetry has more to say about the spirit or soul of humanity than all the world's economists and political scinetists combined. It is time to look to the poets, film makers, dramatists, artists, musicians, philosophers, religious persons and to listen to every voice that articulates the core humanness of which society has to become more conscious if human beings are going to survive as humane beings.

Revolutionary, not evolutionary, change is needed. The current pace of theory and debate is too slow to save humanness from being swallowed up in opportunism and materialism and from being redefined, disbursed, and gone. The world needs not just the historian's sober assessment but the poet's passionate outrage and alarm. Under each person's self awareness of national, academic, or professional identity--whether it be lawyer, economist, or educator-- must be a readiness to measure ones' own consciousness of the human spirit against the terrible deadening of morality and spirit that leads to atrocity and the loss of civilization. Society needs a vivid sense of the practicality of resisting the sophistry and the mesmerizing promises of progress which so often involve something less than human, whether it is advertising or corporate goals.

Architecture
Architecture is a litmus test of spirit in culture and society. A particularly tangible subject area is the assessment of progress in meeting the basic need for shelter. Obviously, development is achieved by providing buildings for housing. The question considered was whether the multiplication of buildings contributed meaningfully to social progress when criteria of the human spirit were added to the equation. There is considerable controversy in the field of architecture related to this issue.

One of the most basic needs considered in contemporary development discourse is housing. A world conference recently took place in Istanbul on this subject. Providing adequate shelter becomes increasingly pressing as population growth in major regions of the world escalates at exponential rates and concentrates in cities. A *realist* response to this pressing demand is: A*Think not about roses when the forests are burning.*@

This stance, presently dominant in major schools of architecture and driven ostensibly by the urgent necessity to house hoards of urban poor, sacrifices aesthetics in the hard business of building construction. In the design of basic shelters and of related physical amenities emphasis is on efficiency and economy. Concomitantly, design is subordinate to the prescriptions of mechanistic technology and the limitations imposed by low cost building materials. This view has dominated the field since World War II.

Another view, also present in major schools of architecture, continues to contend for *the value of roses even where forests are ablaze*. If architecture is a litmus test of culture, the rapid global spread of low-cost, concrete complexes with scant aesthetic appeal is poor augury for the fabric of society. The lack of attention to aesthetics in this modern age reveals a culture of impoverished imagination wherein needs of the human spirit are secondary to the dictates of technological machinations and financial calculations. Mass-produced concrete apartment complexes are not only the public response to poverty-stricken masses in densely populated urban centers, but these common block buildings now pepper the planet sheltering rich and poor alike. Functionalism of this kind blurs the distinction between beauty and ugliness.

Uniformity, *per se,* is not the only indicator of crisis; and variety, in and of itself, would not solve the problem. To be a positive factor, variety must be accompanied by quality and express a diversity of cultures. The principal problem emerges from failure to consider buildings and shelters as reflections of the human spirit. This view holds that architects must seek inspiration and give necessary time and thought to fulfill their responsibility for feeding humanity=s innate
hunger for aesthetic satisfaction from its surroundings. Beauty and the sense of poetry disappear in a cultural mentality that suppresses or ignores sensitivity to the quality of its surroundings.

Environmentalism=s criteria for progress and what constitutes aesthetic appeal challenges both the architectural *fire fighters* and *proponents of roses*. It says to the first: economic resourcefulness and construction efficiency without concern for sustainability is short term expediency with long term wasteful entanglements. To the other, it suggests that aesthetics are not only visual but are reflected in the way buildings use resources. True *roses* are buildings that are functional and constructed in harmony with sustained resource availability in the natural environment. Thus, the modern aesthetic should embrace concern for energy consumption and the environment. Teaching in schools of

architecture should emphasize the synthesis between the various requirements - including housing needs, aesthetics, cultural individuality, functionality, and environmental sustainability.

Soulless or not to begin with, the appearances of buildings, once inhabited, reflect choices and behaviors of the residents as they turn their dwelling places from houses to homes. Beyond their visual appeal, the attractiveness of buildings depends on the willingness of inhabitants to respect property and to police destructive behavior. All too often new buildings are rendered ugly by the filth, graffiti, and slovenliness of the dwellers and the neighbors sharing the environment. This behavior is perhaps as symptomatic of rebellion against poverty in the spirit and soul of humanity as it is of rebellion or despondence for lack of pecuniary wealth. In this connection it is observed that buildings, beautiful in a natural way, are often left unscathed while the unbecoming and the more ostentatious buildings with beauty bespeaking class or affluence are particularly vulnerable to attack.

Thus, by measure of the human fulfillment criteria, the completion of building programs alone is an inadequate measure of social progress.

Elites and Arts
In considering leadership, democratic societies must not deny the usefulness of the role that an elite class can play for the betterment of society. *Elite* is not synonymous with *rich*. Elites impose on its members moral responsibilities: 1) to remain informed 2) to act as providers for the less fortunate and, 3) to understand the long-term interests in society.

Traditionally, elites were patrons and protectors of the "arts". Without a true elite class, the future of art as it was known in the past is in jeopardy. In today's global society art is a luxury for the rich and a well-spring for advertising. To the extent that art reflects the destruction and hopelessness of the modern world; the public now questions art as being essential in the moral society.

In the former Soviet Union, productive education was found to be more important than art as the way of improving society. In the first year after the October Revolution in the Soviet Union, the Minister of Culture came to Lenin asking for help to rescue the Bolshevik Theater. Lenin couched his answer in a very interesting way. He said, "My advice is, that you should be more concerned about liquidation of illiteracy in the country than to rescue the Bolshevik Theater."

In terms of raising the living standards of the whole society Lenin was right. The arts, however, remain vital for the spirit of society and for the arts to survive they need an elite of public intelligentsia to foster and protect them and to lead society towards their appreciation. If not the prophecy of Fukuyama may come true: "In the post-historical period there will be neither art nor philosophy, just the perpetual care taking of the museum of human history."[1]

The Ethical Dimension of Social Progress

Spirit and Ethics
The spiritual dimension would seem to introduce, as the foundation for ethics, attitudes forged by humility, compassion, appreciation, and grace. Its foundations include an awareness of an infinite consciousness, a sense of timelessness, and an inherent instinct of responsibility.

Many different criteria developed in moral philosophy compete to determine right or wrong behavior. Consistent with enlightenment and modernity thinking, criteria can be material or utilitarian. Other criteria derive from Kant's universal value or moral imperative; others are sourced in intuition, or represent classical Greek virtue, etc. The

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[1] Francis, F. *The End of History*, The National Interest, Summer 1989, p. 18.

necessity to preserve free will and choice in societies valuing individual liberty and human rights marshals against the notion that ethics should be based on revealed or intuitive values.

The modernist approach is primarily subjective and utilitarian. In contemporary political economic discourse, ethics has often taken on a dynamic western-oriented ideological aspect. In diplomatic circles, ethics refer to normative rules of human behavior contained in negotiated covenants on human rights and codes of conduct for governments and corporations. Social ethics swirl around the need for tolerance, stability, good order, and the protection of private property. Enlightened self-interest is one of the most prevalent criteria. Economically and politically, ethics are tied to the sharing of scarce goods, services, or public benefits for a shared self-interest.

In a sense, contemporary ethics derive from fear. Human life is an accident in evolution. Life is precarious and mankind has, in the interest of survival, to manage it well. The precariousness, however, is not overcome in the criteria that this perception of life offers, for example, tolerance. According to one interpretation, while tolerance is better than conflict, it does not do more than create a period of suspended conflict. Tolerance can be likened to a fence encircling fear and ignorance. Remove the fence and hell breaks out.

Buber's *I and Thou (1923)* grounds ethics and spirituality in a similar dialogical encounter. Fundamental human attitudes of turning towards or leaning back are the defining line between I/It or I/Thou which constitute the self and other in radically different ways in terms of uses, causes, and effects, and challenges to be overcome. Authenticity, responsiveness, and genuine presentness (and thus freedom) are attained only in the I/Thou relationship.

Ethics and Politics

On the first level of analysis, the calls to avoid corruption and to practice the virtues of honesty, integrity and care for the public good, are non-ambiguous and non-controversial, as the bridge between ethics and politics. While there are many differences of views on whether or not such and such government or society is entirely, partially, or only marginally corrupt, there are no disagreements on the need for ethical behavior of individuals in public and private institutions.

Of much greater complexity is the second level of analysis: are ethics and ethical behavior compatible with the positions and stances on the political spectrum? Is it possible to be leftist and ethical? Conservative and ethical? Typically, a true believer in a political philosophy or doctrine, or a militant in a political party, will associate his or her political convictions and positions with a full respect for sound and even universal moral principles. And will, sometimes, in all sincerity, believe that political opponents are deprived of any moral principle and have no respect for ethical behavior. At the same time, the politician or militant immersed in a democratic culture, knows that tolerance and respect for the opponent is actually the first ethical principle to be applied in a civilized society.

In considering this question, the following basic points are put forth:

- Some political positions and doctrines, like those stemming from fascist and racist principles are unquestionably unethical; and the only problem is whether or not a democratic society has to remain fully ethical in the choice of means for combating such doctrines.
- For most political stances and issues, ethics is compatible with different positions, especially when the debate and the options are about the means. To use a very simple example, it would be unethical to state that poverty is a normal and desirable feature of society, but perfectly ethical to state that the market can take care of the problem, or to believe that only governments can do so effectively.
- For most political debates, especially within a country, there are advantages to limiting the number of issues and the number of debates with explicit reference to ethical questions. In this domain, inflation is dangerous.
- It is very tempting to believe that politics and policies have a great chance to be in harmony with ethical principles if moderation is a shared value by all citizens. Yet, there are causes and problems requiring passion and an immoderate use of energy and imagination.
- Is concentration of power unethical? Not necessarily. The problem is that global capitalism with unbridled market force and social Darwinism is a central concern and some kind of counter measure must at least be

imagined if one does not exist. Do we allow it to continue without any ethical qualms where whoever's moral power is enhanced becomes a major player? Absolute power corrupts absolutely. The question further arises as to whether by criticizing the policies of a particular government, one is "politicizing ethics."

- Moral leadership is as vital for industry as it is for government. If global companies stressed leadership according to a moral and ethical code it would solve many of societies problems.

While there is a striking difference between business and military leadership it is no less vital for a sustainable society. The increasing number of business schools that are incorporating ethics courses in their curriculum reflect this recognition.

Within this loose framework, more ideas have been developed:

By using the term ideology is meant that there is a generation of economists in the U.S. that have dominated the social sciences by looking at only one side of free-market theory. Free-market ideology means free trade, optimization of the production of goods and services world-wide. While most people would agree that economic affluence is a good thing, there have been a lot of side effects and those are the things that have not been effectively dealt with because there is nothing to counter the movements of markets worldwide, that is ethics have no explicit place in the governance of the global village.

One stimulant of human initiative and progress is greed. Adam Smith propagated that one of humanity's natural instincts is greed and greed breeds a good product. Although in excess reprehensible, it is a powerful force. Like all powerful forces such as nuclear power, greed can be destructive to everything else. The same may be said about capitalism. For both individual greed and capitalism the best control can be the individual's own self control according to internal moral codes. There are also government regulations. In applying government regulations great care should be exercised to protect and nurture human motivation rather than to suffocate it.

While greed is the motivating force of a King Midas society, greed is not the only motivator or stimulant to human initiative in real societies today. People may be moved by imagination and creativity as well as an inherent need to be of service and the related desire to better the lives of others. Such motivation is most apparent on a national scale in the Nordic countries with very modern and affluent economies. These countries have adopted tax policies that temper divisions between people along income lines. Gaps between CEO's and workers salaries in Norway are in the single digits whereas, in the United States it can be several hundred. In return every member of society has access to free education and health care services on a genuine egalitarian basis. Likewise, Denmark has committed 1% of it GNP to foreign aid. Most other OECD countries have refused to do this.

From an economic perspective, however, peacefulness and orderliness are not the requisite ingredients of progress:

In Scandinavia there is a wonderful life but to the business eye no great innovations are taking place there. In a sense there is a running down, a using up of capital from the past. In human society things happen, some bad, some good. Once you start to bring things down to peacefulness and orderliness much less takes place. Many great leaders have attributed their success to some traumatic event in their lives, like General Eisenhower and others. In the art world, there have been no more tortured people than artists like Van Gogh--slicing his ear off. Perhaps there is something in human nature that says that when things are nice and easy it is time to relax. The same is seen in economic competition. Human beings need challenges; they need to be up against something tough or maybe even painful to be creative. If so, there is a dilemma.

Transmission of ethics and values

Particularly troubling today is the perception that the well springs from which ethical or moral values and the conduits through which they are transmitted are disappearing.

Where do ethics come from and how are they passed from one generation to the next?

Institutions are templates which pass on values and ethics to the next generation. They include primary institutions like families and secondary institutions like schools: templates which replicate human behavior that have been

successful in the past and ethical codes have been part of that successful behavior. Traditional family structures are presently under assault and are breaking down, as are many other institutions including religious organizations historically responsible for passing ethics from one generation to the next. Over-emphasis on resort to market life, materialism, and scientific progress to satisfy all material human needs and to quell all its fears contributes to the destruction of these institutions.[2] Because of breakdowns in the mediating institutions, youth have a limited acculturated sense of doing right or wrong which, in many materially advanced countries, is now a matter of perception rather than transgression. The world of today, however, is shaped by a form of homogenization rooted in the Western industrialized states.

Many people perceive no ethical codes in markets which, as arenas for transactions, are amoral in definition, structure, and purpose.

Ethics are the codes that organized religions have for many years handed down. Organized religious institutions are a valuable source of information on how humans can get along. But if one does not choose to adhere to a religious institution, there is an inherent morality in the human spirit that can be normally relied upon to pass on moral values to one's children. That point never seems to be emphasized. But, when one makes such a pronouncement the question of moral relativism versus moral absolutism arises.

Does the same morality exist everywhere so that parents, teachers, people on the street can all offer the same correct moral answer to a child's question of whether something is right or wrong? Do all religions even pass on the same morals? If there are moral absolutes in human nature, why doesn't the whole human species collectively try to pass them on?

Certainly, if one does not go to church, one does not forget the difference between right and wrong learned as a child. Looking back in history, one finds that the things considered right and wrong today are the same ones that Socrates and Chinese philosophers talked about. There is a universality in the common chords: Do not lie. Do not cheat. Do not steal. Do not murder. And, treat others with respect for their dignity. The underlying problem, however, even where ethics are enounced, is turning these values into habitual behavior. Ethical behavior has to do with not just knowing what is right and wrong but practicing that knowledge so that the behavior becomes habitual, because, beyond punishment for non-ethical behavior and reward for an ethical act, one realizes that one experiences satisfaction, well being, and even happiness in ethical living. This does not come without long term, consistent, daily education.

One often says today that young people do not even know the difference between right and wrong. While most people, whether taught by their parents or not, do have a sense of what is right and wrong, society does not offer much stimulation to act along those lines. One of the problems is that children are growing up in modern societies wherein parents are frequently absent and increasingly children are being raised in single parent families where that parent has to work one, sometimes two jobs. In a great many of these cases, there is no continuous parental presence to show the young how they ought to act, let alone reinforce that instruction consistently. What the young do get on a regular "day in/day out" basis is what they see from their peers, leaving the possibility for a "group mentality take over", where lying, cheating, stealing and, killing, is not only accepted, but not infrequently coming to be expected.

Education is the most important of all. Education means to lead out not to "drum in."

With the breakdown of institutional religion and families as moral templates, perhaps, one of the only institutions left to transmit values is the public school system. But many in the United States say: "*We spend quite a bit of money and don't get results*." Schools cannot be expected to do the job of transmitting ethics that parents as the primary institutions are not doing or even reinforcing at home. Part of the problem is that the US establishment has decided that public schools are *not* the place to transmit moral values. And, consequently:

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[2]This point is emphasized in William Ophuls, <u>Requiem for Modern Politics: The Tragedy of the Enlightenment and the Challenge of a New Millennium</u>. Society has given up civic virtue in favor of the market.

In the U.S., people are increasingly resorting to home-schooling because in the public school system no values are being taught. There is no consensus on what it means to be a good person, and no sense of a national dream. Money and materialism are left alone to dominate the life field. Children, when asked what they want to be when they grow up, say "I want to make a lot of money." Well, what do you want to do with the money, "I want to buy things." The market depersonalizes. There is no spiritual backing out there. To have a meaningful life, you need to have relationships.

Beyond the mother, we do not encourage the nurturing of any other relationships. To be pursued is the idea of Erik Erickson: *"Strengthening people strengthens yourself."*

The schools should have a part in value transmission. If the military has to do it, so must the public schools. Returning to the Scandinavian model it is noted that *"In Norway, school children have to take a course in civic virtue or religion and they are baptized either in church or in a civil service where they are baptized as "good citizens."* But elsewhere in Europe there are other examples:

> In my childhood, I went to grade school in a grape growing village on the outskirts of Vienna where they follow the custom of having the same teachers remain with their students from the beginning to the end of their course of education in a particular school. So, I had the same teacher for the first four years of my school life. I don't know what I would've done without him because my father was a resident and quarantined with his patients for two weeks at a time. I only saw him every two weeks. This teacher was my surrogate father. The interesting thing is that at the end of the school year there was a custom of bringing flowers to the teacher and this teacher had an entire hay-wagon full, the village appreciated him so much. My suggestion is to recruit more male teachers who have the personalities of father figures in response to this breakdown of the family and where single predominately female parents are frequent. Peter Kulka

The military illustrates an institution that can ill afford to overlook the ethics question. Leadership in the military is the end-all and be-all of its function. The military stresses the idea of ethics and also trust. Responsibility carries with it accountability. There is also a high standard of integrity to be adhered to. Such leadership is essential because the military is dealing with issues of life and death where these values are essential. For this reason the military has seriously the notion of ethics and has resisted the onslaught of modernity. This resistance has lead to a growing chasm between the military and the rest of society. Many students now entering the military schools and recruits entering the service do not come prepared to share this strong sense of ethics. Much time must be spent teaching students and servicemen basic values such as the importance of honesty. In a relativist society, the military, with its inflexible ethical code, amounts to a sort of counter-culture. But, the military is not immune from breaches of ethics and morals. Often it seems that there is a contradiction between what the military expects and what it permits. Awareness of this problem has stimulated the military to give renewed impetus to fostering its traditional ethic of altruism, service, and sacrifice.

Conclusion

In sum, human nature has two basic needs: energy and opportunity to grow as an individual and relationship connections through family, institutions, society, nature and the universe. Both of these aspects in human nature have to be encouraged and brought into balance. What seems to be a source of trouble in dominant western societies is that their educational institutions and socialization processes give too much weight to the first need while virtually neglecting the second. Such emphasis is consistent with these societies single minded focus on the market as the central focus of the life experience.

Responsibility at all levels is a condition for regenerating a sense of the spirit and from there a sense of ethics. Harmony in a democratic society is dependent on the contribution of its participants. Every society requires balance, respect for nature, and moderation in all aspects of human endeavor. Society would benefit from awakening to the presence of a transcendental vision of life that would offer humankind a way to peace and harmony with the universe. For this, as well as for the acquisition of knowledge and sociability, education has an essential role to play.

Education has the capacity to develop the virtues that lie dormant in the human heart. These virtues are particularly important for public servants, merchants, entrepreneurs, and information suppliers in all the media given their powerful influence on society. A spiritual identification of the self is a strong basis for self respect and can be fostered by education that instills appreciation of the humanities as well as the acumen needed to be effective in a particular vocation.

The Golden Rule stated in the negative is a most potent prescription for present society- *thou shall not do unto others what you do not want others to do unto you* .