



The Global Values Discourse

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Abstract:

Values are not merely utopian ideals or empty platitudes. They represent the distilled quintessence of accumulated human experience regarding the foundations for stable social existence and sustained evolutionary progress. Values direct and determine the social process. Humanity's remarkable social advancement in recent centuries can be traced back to its progress in embracing and implementing a core set of universal values. The multiple crises the world confronts today are indicative of a growing gap between the values needed to support continuous social evolution and the retardant and reactionary forces which cling to outmoded conceptions and anachronistic social attitudes. This article explores the central role of values in resolving the crises now confronting humanity.

The founding of the World Academy of Art and Science was inspired by a conviction that knowledge and technology alone are an insufficient basis for human development, unless guided by and subordinated to the pursuit of universal values inclusive of all humanity. The founders were cognizant of the challenges of complexity and interdependence consequent on the increasing flow of goods, services and people resulting from rapid globalization. They recognized that rapid social evolution was undermining traditional notions of sovereignty, giving rise to new conceptions of global responsibility and human rights. Concerned about the social consequences and policy implications of these radical changes, they searched for new principles of global governance based on the common interests and rights of all humanity.

The current crises confronting humanity today reinforce the importance of global values as the essential basis for global social progress. Unregulated markets that serve the few at the expense of the many, undemocratic institutions of global governance, rising levels of inequality, unsustainable exploitation and destruction of our natural resource base, rising alienation of human capital from productive employment and rising levels of social instability are signs of a social fabric increasingly divorced from and insensitive to the welfare and well-being of large sections of humanity. At the root of the multiple crises confronting humanity today is a crisis of values that must be resolved before there can be any hope of lasting solutions to the problems facing humanity.

Concurrently, we are compelled to recognize the enormous progress humanity has made over the past few centuries in enhancing the values by which we live — the unprecedented freedom consequent of the expansion of democratic forms of governance, the unprecedented

security resulting from rising levels of economic development, the greater recognition and enforcement of human rights, the gradual emergence of principles of a global rule of law and justice governing relations between nations and global society, which until recently were dominated almost exclusively by power politics and military power. Each of these changes is partial and certainly incomplete, but the direction is evident and the will for progress still growing. Thus, we must reconcile our growing sense of dissatisfaction with the absence of values with a perception of their increasing importance. Jasjit Singh attributes this paradox to the fact that aspirations and expectations are rising faster than ground level social realities.¹

The concern for global values, their meaning, and salience have also been a concern for the Club of Rome (CoR). The Club's own interests in rational global economic policy and practice in the common interest represent a challenge to it to better understand what the common interest actually is and what it implicates. Both WAAS and CoR have felt a compelling need for a deeper and wider transdisciplinary inquiry into fundamental questions relating to the values in the global system. Such an inquiry is essential for understanding the present state of the world order to which we have arrived as well as for charting a better collective future for humanity based on universal values for sustaining a world order in the common interest.

Over the past two years, the World Academy and the Club of Rome have been exploring the root causes of the crises facing humanity relating to the international financial crisis, unemployment, growing inequality, ecological destruction, global governance, international security and social stability. It soon became evident that the problems we face are rooted in the ideas and values that underpin the current global system, and the effective lasting solutions to these problems will require fundamental changes in the normative foundations of global society in the 21st century. In order to validate this premise, the Club of Rome convened an eclectic group of 18 individuals from diverse cultural, intellectual and moral frameworks to participate in a two-day workshop in Bristol, UK conducted in association with the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) to reflect on the impact of myth, narrative and values on social evolution and to provide insights into the values needed by the global community to support constructive development of all humanity in an increasingly cross-cultural, value/pluralistic world. The group included four Fellows of the Academy, including the authors. Following two days of very stimulating creative discussion, participants were requested to submit answers to the following questions summarizing their insights into the role of values and narrative in the past, present and future development of global society.

1. What are the key stories that have brought us to where we are culturally today and, which have been creative and which problematic?
2. What do you see as being the key values that could shape the future and where would they come from?
3. Which value, e.g. Liberty; equality; compassion — is the crucial one for you? Could you do a brief piece on both why and also on how it has changed its meaning in the last couple of hundred years?
4. Going back to your roots, what were the key stories and values that shaped you? How have these changed? Do they shape the present? If so, how?

These questions produced a number of wide-ranging responses reflecting the professional and cultural diversification of the group. Since the World Academy currently puts a major emphasis on Individuality, our initial contribution provided a perspective of the Academy which focused on the evolution of individuality and its implications for the values fundamental to the global social process. We summarize the central points that we submitted stressing the evolution of a narrative of individuality from a global perspective. In this regard, we suggested that the present is on a trajectory launched far in the past and moving well into the future. To know where we are going, we must first understand where we have come from and how we have arrived at the present. Viewing the past few centuries in the light of four value-based narratives offers important insights regarding humanity's recent achievements, current problems and future challenges.

The Rise of the Individual

The rise of the individual has been the dominant story in Western civilization over the past few centuries and has in recent decades spread to encompass almost all of humanity. With rare exceptions, such as a brief period in ancient Athens, throughout history the individual has been subordinated to the collective and compelled to conform to the beliefs, behaviors and actions endorsed by the collective. This was especially true during the Middle Ages in Europe where the Church suppressed education and literacy and imposed a common dogma throughout the continent. The emergence of the modern conception of the individual can be traced back to the Italian Renaissance, as Augusto Forti discusses in his paper in *Eruditio* Issue 1, Part 1, when the commercial revolution in the great Italian city states broke the stranglehold of feudalism, and the revival of classical learning restored freedom of thought in art and literature. The Reformation, Enlightenment, birth of science and the rise of modern democratic ideals marked further stages in the progressive emergence of the individual in Europe.²

For present purposes, it may be sufficient to consider the human narrative that emerged from the French Revolution, which played out with most dramatic results across the Atlantic in North America. The Revolution marked a definitive stage in the rejection of traditional feudal values and class structures and the affirmation of the rights of the common man. It challenged the notion that birth, blood, heredity and class status were forever fixed. It affirmed the fundamental value and, therefore, rights of every human being. Although it was quickly followed by a new aristocratic class structure in Napoleonic France, the spirit of freedom and equality spread far and wide throughout Europe.

The ideals of freedom and equality born in Europe but stifled by the inertia and resistance of centuries of social, cultural and religious structure found freer play and greater scope in the North American wilderness. Millions of nameless, impoverished immigrants escaping social, political, economic and religious persecution discovered a new world where they were free to start afresh and create a life for themselves liberated from the inherited traditions, social prejudices, religious intolerance and quixotic circumstances of European history.

The American Dream is not so much the story of a nation or a system as a narrative about faith in the value and power of the individual. The nation came to embody a faith of mythic

proportions in the capacity of the individual human being, who was liberated from tyranny and constraining social conditions he faced in Europe and given the opportunity to act independently and achieve almost anything. The heroes of the American dream were pioneers, explorers, inventors, and entrepreneurs, — self-made men and liberated women — ordinary people like Lincoln born in log cabins and self-educated, incessant inventors like Edison, resourceful men of industry like Ford. British historian Paul Johnson recorded that during the late 19th century, penniless European immigrants landing in New York and living in slums rose to middle-class status in an average of 7 to 77 weeks based on the strength of their own capacities and effort. America symbolized the rise of a dominant middle class politically, economically, socially and culturally. The idea that any and every individual could escape the fickle fortune of birth, blood, class, caste and attain middle class levels of security, comfort, leisure and status spread around the world and became a dominant motif of the last half century.

Freedom inevitably carries with it both positive and negative expressions, freedom for progress and for destruction, freedom of the oppressed to determine their own future and freedom for the strong and advantaged to exploit and dominate over others. The result depends on the idealism and self-restraint with which it is exercised. Of the three ideals of the French Revolution, only liberty took strong root in America. The interpretation of freedom widely associated with egoistic individualism was strongly influenced by circumstances and experience in early America, so it is important to liberate the value of freedom from the limitations arising from its natural evolution in society. Freedom in the New World meant freedom to act individually without encumbrance and with minimal responsibility for the welfare of the collective.

The extreme emphasis on freedom made legitimate the individual pursuit of self-interest to the exclusion of all concern for community. Individuality was largely subverted into egoistic individualism, a creed of every man for himself. The excesses of Neoliberalism illustrate the obvious dangers of affirming the value of freedom in isolation from the other two. The excesses, which arise from a culture of individual freedom are not an indictment of the value of the individual, but rather of the particular variety of self-centered, egoistic individualism, which has been its first form and remains its dominant expression in the world today.

It is probably inevitable that some may regard the emphasis on the individual as an imposition of a Western cultural bias. While the modern forms of individuality described here have certainly been more prominent in the Occident in recent centuries, the case is rapidly changing. The younger generation in India today is reminiscent in many ways of the generations born in America before 1940, when the quest for education and material achievements broke down many of the traditional bonds of family life. India's ancient cultural tradition has always affirmed the ultimate right of the individual to pursue his own religious or spiritual path, which is why the country worships God in so many forms, embraces such a wide variety of spiritual disciplines, and reveres its greatest spiritual individuals — the Vedic rishi, the yogi, sage and Mahatma — as embodiments of divinity.

But the issue of cultural differences remains an important one and hopefully will be a source of humanity's future salvation. For all the apparent superficial similarities between Mumbai, Moscow, London and New York, deep-seated cultural differences still underpin

and differently shape the expression of values. It is likely that as human rights, democracy, education and prosperity spread through the rest of the world, the form which individuality takes will be quite different from the extreme form now prevalent in the West. If so, that may be humanity's salvation. It is not by rejecting the individual but by defining his/her rightful place that humanity is likely to arrive at the most fruitful future. The West has much to learn from Asia in that regard.

Self-Determination and Nationalism

The rise of individualism during the 20th century coincided with the rising aspiration of suppressed peoples everywhere for self-determination, resulting eventually in the end of colonial empires following World War II, the spread of democracy in successive waves throughout Europe, Asia and Latin America, the resurgence of Asian power, and the evolution of international institutions designed to represent and safeguard the interests of the nation-state. These historical facts give expression to a belief system centered on the value of the nation-state. Creating larger self-governing aggregations of people based on common language, history and culture marks the definitive end of political and military imperialism. At the same time, nation-states jealous to protect and advance their own interests in comparison with those of other people have given rise to a competitive global security system and a competitive economic system that pose serious impediments to global governance. Competitive nationalism was the principal cause of the two world wars. As Jasjit Singh has eloquently argued, it has given rise to a global security system in which each nation is responsible for its own self-defense. This is the reason why nations spend \$1.5 trillion annually on defense, why nuclear weapons states refuse to give up weapons whose use would be a crime against humanity, and more states strive to acquire these weapons, why small arms trade proliferates and why in the name of democracy, we persist in affirming the validity of a highly undemocratic United Nations system. So too, we are prevented from adequately addressing the global financial crisis because of a competitive monetary system; and from responding to the ecological threats to earth because of an economic system in which nations compete for access to scarce resources.

The storyline behind the present global system can be summarized by the use of the word 'sovereignty'. In current conception, 'sovereignty' refers to the rights of nations represented by their governments, not the rights of people within nations or of humanity as a whole. In practice, the claim to sovereignty is applied with equal self-righteousness by democratic and autocratic governments, whose authority for representing their people is subject to debate. It is applied by a few powerful nations on behalf of the entire unrepresented humanity or in direct contradiction to the rights and interests of other peoples. As we have argued elsewhere, it is necessary to alter our fundamental conception of the source of rights throughout the world and weave a new narrative which embraces and assigns a rightful place to the individual, the community, nation-state and humanity.³

The emergence of the European Union acquires great significance in this light as the most serious endeavor thus far for a group of mature nation-states to overcome their centuries-old rivalry, prejudices and sense of separateness to forge a political and economic union based on social and cultural inclusiveness. This marks the attempt to write a new narrative for the human community. The whole world has a tremendous stake in the success of this enterprise.

Natural Law*

In Europe, the rise of individualism was also associated with the rise of science and the search for an objective standard of truth liberated from the dogmas of religion. Natural law was frequently cited by early political idealists as a basis for affirming the rights of man, for framing democratic forms of governance and new legal concepts founded on objective principles. But, as science expanded its discovery of the laws of the physical universe, a strange alchemy has occurred. Material science founded on universal mechanical laws of nature has come to reject or discard the most sacred elements of our humanity — denying the existence of free will other than as a product of chance or uncertainty; denying the existence of individual uniqueness, other than as the result of genetic mutation; denying the essential reality of all that is immaterial; and thereby according greater reality to a mud pie or plum pudding than to patriotism, idealism, romantic love, goodness, Plato's Symposium, the Mona Lisa, Hamlet, or Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. In a world governed by impersonal laws of nature, human choice has no real place. Consciousness is merely a freak accident. Nature affirms only the value of the species, not that of the individual. In attempting to discover the truths of the world around us, science has arrogantly rejected and discredited the collective psychological knowledge and spiritual wisdom of humanity acquired over millennia.

Science applied to society has led to an unquestioned faith in mechanism, which undermined the principle of individuality from which modern science rose. If society like nature is merely a giant machine, then all we need to do is discover the laws by which it works. Applied to governance, it gave rise to state socialism. Applied to economics, it gave rise to Newtonian laws that place inordinate faith in self-governing social institutions such as free markets (glorified social Darwinism). The Cartesian divorce between the scientist and observer, the separation of man from nature, has also driven a wedge between humanity and the social mechanisms it has devised to promote its welfare. David Korten's classification of cosmologies is an important reminder that science has become the prevailing religion of humanity.⁴ The old religions based their claim to authenticity on scripture and teaching. The new religion bases itself on a materialistic metaphysic that is equally blind and intolerant of diverging opinion, yet wields far more power than any religion ever did, and therefore, is potentially far more dangerous.

The Rise of the Machine

The rise of science was associated with a growing faith in mechanism, technology, and the power of the machine. Modern science was born in Europe during the Enlightenment and reached its creative heights of original thinking on the continent. But the adoption and application of science for physical processes gained their greatest traction in America where land was abundant, labor was in short supply and new means were urgently needed to quench the growing needs and aspirations of a rapidly growing and fast rising population. The inventor and the engineer have always been revered in America. Labor-saving devices such as the washing machine and processed food liberated women from drudgery at home, enabling them to seek employment and pursue careers earlier and in greater numbers than in any other

*The term 'natural law' here refers to the laws that emerge from the material world of causal relations. This is distinguished from the natural law used in legal discourse which focuses on the normative dimension of natural law.

country. The working women became a symbol of the liberated feminine gender, liberated from the traditional role model as a subservient housewife. The faith in science-based mechanism was embodied in America's invention of the atomic bomb, the race to the moon, and the personal computer revolution. Technology was perceived as a liberating force and answer to all problems.

Humanity has a strange propensity to become enslaved to the instruments it creates for its advancement. Technology can dominate social existence and enslave as well as liberate. Technology in the factory is making human labor dispensable and converting employment into a privilege rather than a fundamental right. So too, a blind faith in the wisdom of the impersonal marketplace can destroy social integrity and undermine human values. So completely have we accepted this voluntary bondage that we regard as legitimate almost any scientific quest and any technological invention regardless of its impact on humanity. We do not even hold scientists responsible for the consequences of the technologies they invent.

Physical mechanism has its social counterpart. The quest for impersonal principles governing physical nature has also given rise to unprecedented creation of new forms of social organization rooted in practical arrangement rather than tradition and culture. America, in particular, exhibited a remarkable capacity for organizational innovation. Freed from the inertia of centuries-old traditions, generations of Americans were compelled to fashion new types of organization adapted to the changing times and circumstances. Both the strengths and weaknesses of American society can be traced to the replacement of traditional social institutions with the rapid proliferation of new types of social organization. On the positive side, the American constitution and democratic political institutions, land-grant colleges and universities, mass production, telephone networks, stock and commodity exchanges, motion picture and television studios, international credit card systems, overnight courier delivery, community colleges, and the emerging social organizations of the 21st century — the Internet, world wide web, global retailers such as Amazon, social-networking — not all of them were invented in America, but these and countless other organizational innovations were adopted in the United States more rapidly and extensively than anywhere else to transform the way work is done, people interact and communities are organized.

Every positive has a downside. The rise of impersonal organizations for a highly mobile, uprooted population also contributed to the breakdown of family and community relations, and rising sense of isolation and loneliness. Fifty years ago, John Galbraith prophesied that the modern corporation would replace the family as the basic unit of American society. In doing so, it has liberated individuals from the limitations of a particular family background but also deprives them of close social and psychological relationships and cultural inheritance. Organizational know-how has replaced community and social culture as the bond between people and communities. Physical isolation, social alienation and psychological loneliness have grown dramatically as a result. An inordinate faith in organization, technology, money and markets has reduced social existence to a mechanism for connecting discrete and separate parts, replacing the organic concept of living cultural community with impersonal social machinery. The gains in productivity and efficiency have been offset by the loss of human relationships, collective responsibility and cultural enrichment. Ironically, the culture founded on the value of the human being is in danger of dehumanizing society.

In sum, the rise of individualism has been closely associated with the Reformation, democratic revolution, spread of education, and unprecedented economic prosperity of the modern age. Ironically, the very movement that was apparently intended to liberate our humanity has done much to dehumanize society, replace culture with mechanism, impersonal organization, competitive nationalism, and a rational science striving to apply Newtonian laws of nature to human life. The age-old struggle between the individual and collective is approaching the end of an evolutionary curve. After a long history of collective tyranny, a world view emerged, which justified a new form of state tyranny in the name of freedom, of which Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union and Chinese state socialism have been exemplary models at the national level and which the present United Nations Security Council exemplifies internationally. The old ideal of individualism affirms itself today as a social version of Darwin's survival of the fittest. The inalienable democratic ideals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness have become a front for governance by plutocracy and a justification for the wholesale pursuit of selfish self-interest. The nexus between corporations and government is compounded by the fact that it transcends national boundaries, enabling multinational businesses to leverage their independence to compel national governments to compete for their favor and yet remain beyond the pale of national law. The faith in free markets has become a justification for unbridled greed and unconscionable inequality. The greatest tragedy of the modern era is that for the first time in history humanity possesses the capacity to meet the needs of all human beings, and yet we stand enslaved and helpless witnesses to a system run amuck.

Key Values Shaping our Future

What are the key values that could shape the future and where would they come from? The three great values of the French Revolution can form the basis for a powerful new narrative of human evolution. One of the great challenges humanity faces today is how to reconcile unprecedented freedom with greater social equality and community in full affirmation of the value of the human being. Faith in impersonal mechanism has to be replaced by institutions dedicated to the rights, dignity, welfare and well-being of all humanity. Every existing legal concept, institution and policy has to be revamped to reflect the new values. True democracy has to be established locally, nationally, internationally, in fact, as well as in word, replacing the prevailing political system of power and privilege. Plutocracy has to be supplanted by true political and economic democracy. Economic democracy must come to mean not merely the freedom to work, but the guaranteed right to access to gainful employment opportunities, education, medical care and economic security. The sovereign sanctity of the nation-state — a relic of a previous age — has to be supplanted by a conception that recognizes the legitimate rights of people at all levels from local communities to the global human community. Individuality implies rationality, for the domination of the collective is characterized by blind conformity to social norms, which leave no scope for true rationality. The superstition of blind conformity has to be outgrown in all its forms, scientific and academic as well as religious and ideological. A shift is needed from faith in money and technology for their own sake to faith in human beings and an effort to maximize the welfare and well-being of all. A competitive culture based on selfishness and greed needs to embrace the psychic values of goodwill and self-giving.

These changes cannot be brought about by a return to collective domination over the individual, as state communism and state socialism attempted, or even by a compromise between opposing ideologies. The collective has demonstrated time and again its disregard for the integrity of the individual. Nor can the change be achieved by according unlimited freedom for individuals to pursue their own personal benefit. The contradictory principles have to be reconciled at a higher level and converted into mutually supportive complements. That requires a new narrative, a new image of individuality and society for humanity to aspire for.

The dichotomy has to be bridged between man and nature, the individual and the collective. The conscious individual is nature's most remarkable creation, the representative peak of humanity, who embodies and gives expression to his cumulative endowments and future aspirations. The individual is the catalyst and leader of the evolution of society, the representative of society and not merely a lone, isolated person. It is not by subordination of the individual but by an evolution of culture from egoistic individualism to true individuality, from selfish egoism to identification of the individual with the common good of the social collective and of humanity as a whole that the dichotomy can be reconciled. The true individual, described by Jung, Maslow and others as one who is self-actualized or self-realized, is conscious of him or herself as part of the community, one with humanity, and aspires for the good of all, not merely for their own personal benefit and salvation. That is a story worth writing. Aspects of this narrative are found in the work of Harold D. Lasswell and Myres McDougal, Fellows of the World Academy, in their study *Jurisprudence for a Free Society: Studies in Law, Science and Policy*.⁵

Narratives and Collective Myths

Idealistic proclamation of universal values is a relatively recent mode of capturing the essence of cultural wisdom and emerging aspirations of humanity. Traditionally, values have been embedded in the form of myths and complex narratives containing within them doctrines and formulas around which social life is to be organized. The story behind myths may generate doctrines encoded in both ideology and counter-ideology. Again, the stories behind ideology and counter-ideology suggest that in the social process, there is often a contestation about the very values behind myths and narratives. In addition, symbols possess an immense power to convey human understanding and comprehension. We could say that myths and narratives are generated as signs and symbols, which also implicate myths and counter-myths, ideologies and counter-ideologies. The concepts of myth, narrative, symbol and sign, are an ongoing issue about the values that should guide our global society in ways that avoid destruction and enhance a brighter human prospect.

Transcendental vs. Existential Values

The problem of values invariably implicates sacred and secular issues. In general, religion stresses the importance of the transcendent spiritual life and the importance of this life for the nurturing of the soul in the next life. This seems to imply that values are largely important for transcendental rather than existential experience. Buddha thought it was a waste of time to contemplate the absoluteness of deity and was searching for a way out of suffering in the here and now with his famous Eight Fold Path of Virtue. To some extent, he was making

a break with the values for transcendental purposes only. For Confucius, humanity has not yet learned to know life. If it does not know how to live, why be concerned about another life before you know how to live this one. Hence, the sage wisdom 'live one life at a time'. This carries the implication that in doing good in life, one is not doing it for a reward in the next life; one is doing good for good's sake. That is a challenge for altruism. One of the most important insights that Confucius generates is his insistence that social good emerges from human interaction from micro-social family ties to ties that are community-wide. In these relationships, decorum, humanity, uprightness, tolerance, and sincerity are paramount values. His additional focus on etiquette, dress, and style was a way of making morality a component of civilization enhanced by the polite style. Confucius' aspirational personality type emphasized the expression of human nature in terms of a golden mean, which was balanced, tempered and under control. He saw this in the gentlemen scholar. The fundamental values that we can distill from his legacy include intelligence and learning, the high value of labor, the importance of life, the value of good manners, an avoidance of extremes, and sensitivity in human relations to the principle of reciprocity. In this latter context, Confucius does not endorse the Christian view of returning good for evil. He instead requires that evil be repaid with justice. The Confucian idea of rooting morals and ethics in human interaction and reciprocal relationships is an idea that is also reflected in the African principle of Ubuntu. In effect, people realize their moral value in relation to other people.

Secular Values in Our Time

Let us fast track from Confucius to the modern age. Modern anthropologists have tended to view values as essentially related to the fulfillment of human existential needs rather than transcendental aspirations. As the social sciences developed, leading figures, using anthropological insights, effectually defined politics as the authoritative allocation of values. And operational politics reflected the objective of dominant interest groups to get the most that they could out of those values. The evolution of human perspectives began to focus on the content of the values, the institutional mechanisms by which they were produced and distributed, and an appraisal of what this actually meant for still higher values that focus on equality, fairness, and dignity. The concept of values and needs was well developed in the psychological literature by Maslow's idea of hierarchy of human needs:

1. Physiological — hunger, thirst, bodily comforts, warmth
2. Safety/Security — out of danger, order, law, stability
3. Belongingness and love — affiliate with others, be accepted
4. Esteem — to achieve, be competent, gain approval and recognition
5. Self-Actualization — realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences

During the 1930s, Franklin Roosevelt, the American President, made a critical linkage between the value of liberty and the value of economic deprivation. According to Roosevelt, necessitous human beings have their freedoms diminished by economic necessity. Later, he spelled out his vision in the Atlantic Charter, which Churchill joined in support. In the Charter, he stated the values implicated in the war aims for which the allies were fighting.

He brilliantly couched this in terms of four aspects of liberty: freedom of speech and expression (political freedom), the freedom of conscience and belief (confessional freedom), the freedom from want (economic freedom), and the freedom from fear (basic security).

From a global point of view, the needs-based focus of the anthropologists and the values-ideas of the social scientists came to be expressed in the form of a political morality for the global community. And these were expressed as values relevant to this earthly life rather than to a subsequent spiritual transcendental existence. It is from these roots that there emerged the United Nations Charter, one of whose specific goals was the commitment to the universality of human rights values, although these values were not defined in the Charter itself. Subsequent to the adoption of the Charter, the UN set up a Committee to draft a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That draft came in record time, and its values had gravitated from the idea of a non-enforceable moral obligation to the status of a juridically enforceable obligation and a part of the positive law of the global community. The Universal Declaration is formulated in terms of rights, but carried some complexity about the nature of these rights (moral vs. legal). More importantly, however, at the back of the rights on the Declaration are identifiable values and institutions that are specialized in whatever degree of efficacy to the production and the distribution of these values.

Values and Social Process

The central importance of values to policy-making is highlighted by a perspective which recognizes values as one essential element in an integrated social process, as described by Lasswell and McDougal, both former Fellows of the World Academy of Art and Science. To give values a foundation of social realism, we may describe the Global Social Process as comprising the following:

Social Process = People + Values + Institutions + Resources

Lasswell postulated eight fundamental values driving the social process:

1. Power — The making of decisions enforceable by severe deprivations or high indulgences; making and influencing community decisions.
2. Enlightenment — gathering, processing and disseminating information and knowledge.
3. Respect — Freedom of choice, equality and recognition.
4. Well-Being — Safety, health and comfort.
5. Wealth — Production, distribution and consumption of goods and services; control of resources.
6. Skill — Acquisition and exercise of capabilities in vocations, professions, and the arts.
7. Affection — Intimacy, friendship, loyalty, positive sentiments.
8. Rectitude — Participation in forming and applying norms of responsible conduct.

The above approach may have some value for this discourse because it comes in a form directly related to the policy-making arenas of concern to the World Academy of Art and

Science and the Club of Rome. The approach outlined above provides us with eight value categories and provides us with a marker, which targets the institutions that control and regulate the production and distribution of these values. It has an added element, namely, that rather than isolating economics from society and social realism shows that economics can influence every other value, and every other value may have an influence on economics. That is an important insight for the CoR. Second, the values identified here are those that had emerged from the secular give and take of global politics. These values have extraordinary traction, although in the area of economics this has not been widely recognized in recent decades due to the strenuous but failed attempt of neoliberal economics to mimic the objectivity of natural sciences. According to this perspective, human beings do not invent values; we simply present the formula or the relevant myth and the accompanying narrative relevant to our time. The importance of the categories of values is their clear connection to identifiable institutions whose efficacy may well be questionable at this time. This approach provides a pointer to focus on critical inquiry into institutions crucial to human progress, and with a possibility of recommending reform or improvement.

Human Rights Values

Finally, we conclude this segment with reference to the secular values expressed in the most recent work by the Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen. Sen conceptualized the basic values in terms of basic human capabilities that are important for a democratic society. These include life, bodily health, bodily integrity, sense, imagination, thought, emotion, practical reasoning, affiliation, other species players, and control over one's environment. Sen's capabilities/values catalog has some overlapping affinity with Maslow's, and the human rights values identified by Lasswell and McDougal. The problem with Sen's categories is the difficulty of identifying fairly precise institutions specialized to the production and the distribution of his capabilities values. For example, if life is valued, then all human institutions are implicated in it. That is too vast. However, Maslow's needs hierarchy and Sen's human rights perspective may serve as the foundation for generating policies and devising institutional mechanisms to implement them on a global basis.

Viewing Maslow, Sen, and the human rights values in the historic context of Confucius' insights, we see that the overriding moral values implicated in all the values and institutions are the dignity and worth of the individual human being on a global basis. The human rights angle with its focus on universal global dignity presents an important challenge for providing the normative guidance for the future of political economy of the world community.

Other Important Perspectives

It is not possible to do justice to the richness of thoughts exchanged during and after the conference. Important contributions came from Martin Palmer (ARC), Ian Johnson and David Korten (CoR).

Palmer noted that his values are rooted in Christianity, Marxism, Socialism, and Chinese culture. His values seem to suggest the pragmatic side of communication and interaction in which human beings can be persuaded to be responsible choice makers. This means having people examine their own narratives to learn from them and to sometimes liberate from them.

His contribution is a challenge to the fatalism of apocalyptic futures or those that predict an inevitable nirvana. Ian Johnson initiated his discourse by focusing on the pernicious reality of human segmentation and stratification. This compels us to recognize that in society, we still give credence to the ubiquitous symbols of the “we” and the “other.” He reminded us that this outcome is reflected in such tragedies as the killing fields of Cambodia. Applying these insights to economics, we emerge with a code of “dog eat dog,” driven in part by the corporatization of economics. Current free market ideology conspires to enhance individual interest and depreciate the common good. How can we escape from this dilemma? This brings us to the importance of value clarification.

Johnson stressed the importance of individual roles and responsibilities, the need for a new compassion that is global, the importance of working against the trust deficit, the question of whether our institutions undermine our faith in them, and how we handle diversity. He finds it difficult to provide a priority of values regarding, for example, liberty, equality, and compassion. He sees some importance in human rights and concludes that indeed global values matter.

Korten submitted a more comprehensive paper examining the implications of three alternative cosmologies on humanity and its relationship with nature: cosmos as a grand machine, cosmos as the rule by a distant patriarch, and cosmos as an integral spirit. He projects the third cosmology as more conducive, sustainable to arriving at a harmonious relationship between humanity and nature and cosmos.⁶ This view emphasizes the unity between the cosmos, nature, and spirit, the unity of all beings, and the idea of the pervasive action of a conscious intelligence shaping the destiny of the universe.

Korten objects to an exclusive anthropocentric focus on human rights on the grounds that it leaves out a crucial dimension that is currently coming to the fore in the controversies surrounding Rio+20 — the recognition that Earth is sacred and that our survival as a species depends on balancing our concern for human rights, property rights, and corporate rights with a corresponding concern for the rights of nature. The framing challenge before us as a species is to reconcile the rights of nature, human rights, property rights, and corporate rights. He believes that they are properly viewed as a hierarchy of rights and that the rights of nature must come first, because we humans are derivative of and imbedded in Nature. Without Nature, we do not exist. As living beings, our rights are derivative of the rights of nature. Human rights in turn come before property rights because property rights are a human creation and have no existence without humans and no purpose other than to serve the human and natural interest. Corporations are a form of property, and their rights exist only as a derivative of property rights. Stressing the incestuous relationship between corporations and politics, which transcends national boundaries, he argues that our current global civilization gets the order exactly backward. We give corporate rights precedence over the property rights of individuals, property rights precedence over human rights, and human rights precedence over the rights of nature. And we are paying a terrible price.

These ideas do not exhaustively represent the insights drawn from humanity’s past development of the plethora of creative suggestions regarding a more viable basis for its future progress. But they do go far to highlight the importance of a serious systematic inquiry into the values that underpin social evolution and the compelling need for an evolution of those

values to keep pace with the rapid strides in technology, globalization and social power. For, all participants agree on one point, that the overall purpose of the global social system must ensure security and support the fulfillment of all human beings in a sustainable manner. The values behind global human rights are an important narrative providing normative guidelines for human progress. This discourse about clarifying the narratives, the myths and the values of global society in the 21st Century is projected to be continued. We, the Fellows of the World Academy, hope that this discourse will attract the interest of many distinguished Fellows of our Academy and that it continues to be a major point of emphasis in our programs and related interests.

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