



# World Public Forum “Dialogue of Civilizations”

## Conference proceedings

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## **New Human Order – Hurdles on the Path of Dialogue of Civilizations**

With the conflicts of so many interests, the emergence of a new human order without violence and wars and through a civilizational dialogue will not be an easy task. We are discussing here some of the fundamental issues which need to be addressed through dialogue. All changes of the social order start with culture. Between science, religion and tradition there are many basic issues which need to be addressed and harmonised. ‘Armament Protected Consumerism’ started a kind of cold-war and made the entire world insecure through aggregation of arms.

These are some of the major hurdles we have to cross before a dialogue of civilization can take place.

### **CULTURE**

Cultures as an expression of continuity progressively evolve out of the environment, faiths, metaphysics, aesthetics and science. The roots of some cultures go back many millennia, and are perennial, with belief in nature, the unity, oneness and interconnectedness of all its phenomenon. There is a continuous process of evolution of all parameters; which sustain the creativity and the continuity of the cultural streams in balance. And from this continuity evolve civilizations. If we freeze the continued evolution of cultures, further development of civilization stops. A civilization at a moment of time cannot go beyond the culture.

The creativity of many of the contemporary cultures has been largely conditioned and dominated by techno-economic and material factors. As culture is not a linear process; it does not follow the pathways of science and technology.



The scientific evolutionary processes will not lead to the evolution of ‘universal values’. Contemporary Science itself has now reached a stage of uncertainty, where it cannot harmonise with the metaphysical concerns of cultures.

A rudderless monetised science must either take a step to the next level of consciousness and be disciplined science must evolve an ethical and moral code or it will continue to drag cultures, into its own labyrinthine future and lead humankind into an aggregating and a continuing civilisational crisis of vast magnitude. The consequences of the globalisation of an ‘Armament Protected Consumerist paradigm’ is the manifestations of this process, and an expression of the imperial ambitions. Its infrastructure and structure of values are designed to advance and protect an increasingly autonomous system. The Globalisation of consumerist values is also undermining the continued evolution of millennia-old perennial values. All this to sustain an illusion of a new human future on earth, while in reality we are proliferating to their very end; our ecological, physical, cultural and human resources.

The understanding of the perennial cultural streams, and nature-based tribal cultures; and myths; with their reverence towards nature or ecology becomes the bridge between science and spirituality, both children of consciousness can possibly provide us deep insights into the ecological, social, and psychic tragedies which are becoming a part of the twenty-first century. Some cultures of the East, with deep-seated restraints (as against the excesses of the consumer society), and Confucian hierarchical orderliness can play a role and help to trigger new, sustainable and compassionate lifestyles; and make a much wider contribution to the human future. But to this, there is a very big question mark as to whether the aggression and violence in the international system will let this transformation take place in peace.



From the colonial times; behind the declared humanist objectives and civilising missions, of democracy freedom and human rights; there was an unstated agenda of integrating vulnerable economies into a narrowly controlled financial system for the benefit of a few. Working under an illusion of the invincibility of their armed might; the dominant systems all along have been endeavouring to prevent the evolution of new paradigms of human development (Soviet Union was one such example). Civilisational parameters, where they are directly under human control as was in the case of pre-colonial crafts, evolve harmoniously. But when external, technological and colonial factors begin to intervene, such harmonisation recedes.

But an unplanned dismantling of the consumerist paradigm will not be possible without providing a humane and sustainable replacement. Millennia of human knowledge and experience within traditional cultures and religions needs to be protected. There is thus a need for a new world view. We have also to reflect on the mind sets of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that still prevail; and are being projected onto the twenty-first century issues. For example:-

It was February 1835, a time when the British were striving to take control of the whole of India. Lord Macaulay, a historian and a politician, made a historic speech in the British Parliament, commonly referred to as The Minutes, which struck a blow at the centuries old system of Indian education. The essence of his words were to this effect:

‘I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and, therefore, I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, and her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own, they will lose their self-esteem, their native self-culture and they will become what we want them, be a truly dominated nation’.



How do nations save their cultural heritage from the increasing intensity of an onslaught by the forces of unreason?

Our world is now being pushed onto the path of uni-culturisation of cultures, globalisation of consumption and is being brought physically closer, spiritually and sub-consciousness apart. It is changing with every scientific breakthrough and descending, uncontrolled to the lowest common denominator of human existence and survival.

We are standing at the crossroads, in a significant moment in the history of human civilisations i.e. between two worlds.

How are we to preserve or safeguard the potential and the effectiveness of dialogue as a civilised instrument for a peaceful discourse? In the midst of fundamental concerns about the illusions and the aggressive intents of the major beneficiaries of the globalising world, who are not prepared to face the shifting realities of the changing world environment, and who through new social arrangements, are attempting to bring the entire world into a single civilisational model, with its own definition of democracy, human rights and justice.

Therefore, our only hope is to find ways for the creation of ‘Universal Values’ through a dialogue. There is also a need to decelerate the consumerist paradigm and to re-examine the limits of the free market economy and enforcement of ethical, moral and policy constraints. This is exactly what the power system today is fighting against.

The socialist systems made a historic blunder by continuing to accept the Cartesian separation of matter and mind in policies. Also that of the basic structure of the physical universe and the unique awakening into consciousness. Both exist but not independent of each other. One belongs to the realm of culture and the other to civilisation.



As everything spelled mono translates into hegemony, a dialogue of cultures, presupposes plurality, and a desire to seek new and more harmonious and sustainable possibilities for the co-existence of diverse, material and metaphysical arrangements.

So as to be able to absorb the emerging new knowledge, not only external, that of science, but also internal, that is spiritual. Because cultures, are the software around which civilisational forms are structured and the clash of civilisations transcended. Therefore, every step in the direction of containing, abridging or aborting the continuity of perennial nature-based cultures will be a step towards an uncontrolled chaos, and a rapid descent from the eternal to the temporal.

The destruction by colonialism of traditional, largely self contained societies brought a great poverty to the world. By bringing about a still more radical break with old traditions that is now being attempted, all potential for creating a more humane order will be obliterated. We are already witnessing this breakdown being brought about by an unchangeable, Illusion of world domination and an urge to control and define all things and phenomenon. This has brought us to an uncertain world with an uncertain science, an uncontrolled economic and human crisis and a disrupted evolution of consciousness. We are losing its control points.

Thus two different worlds with different basic experiences of reality, provide two different values of feeling, thinking, and living. With one launched on a self-destructive path and the other struggling to reconnect its past with the new world of science and evolve sustainable lifestyle within their own cultural restraints and in harmony with nature. To safely transit from the present to the future and to restore sanity to the human system, we have to start with culture, and reconnect the realm of culture and civilisation because through culture alone



the dying human instincts can be restored and order directed towards a new stream of peace. Nations or ethnicities, faiths and cultures, needs and resources, need their own civilisational forms to integrate with their own continuity. Thus the diversity of cultural continuities is the foundation for the potential for friendship at the level of the people.

Civilisation can never be safe by confining the true culture to a small minority and converting the large mass into mere consumers, whereas consumption is transformed into a cultural expression. The consumer culture of senses is now being enlarged and globalised to save the ‘Armament Protected Consumerist Paradigm’. Since the colonial period, partnership of civilisations has been and continues to be a partnership of interests. Now cultures are being abridged and peoples are the victims. When reasons and sensitivities are restored, it is the partnership of the peoples that will prevail.

### **SCIENCE, RELIGION AND TRADITION**

Before the middle of the last century, classical Newtonian Science and Einstein’s theory of relativity were challenged by Werner Heisenberg when he introduced what came to be known as the ‘Uncertainty principle’. His principle implied that scientific quantities and concepts do not have an absolute independent meaning and get conditioned by experiments and those who perform them. This undermined the cherished belief that the science can reach out for the reality within the existing understanding.

There was a linear connection between science and the emerging social structures, institutions and limitations which gave shape and direction to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. First came economic changes subsequently followed by political institutions and the entire processes of industrialization.



When Einstein's theory of relativity unveiled other parameters and linkages, the need arose to raise the levels of human understanding beyond the concept of the Newtonian science and establish another support structure i.e. supramental on a spiritual or super consciousness scale. This is when the problems began to arise because there is a disconnect between the disciplines of science and spiritual meditative techniques to reach out for higher advances in physical sciences and by taking these beyond the uncertain parameters. This leaves the uncertain sciences bereft of moral and ethical constraints. The human process which dominate the science dictated twenty-first century are also without such limitation and we are thus blindly and recklessly advancing towards material horizons, without resolving the uncertainties of science. We are witnessing that the high rise pyramids of affluence are collapsing in an insecure and turbulent world.

**Research is on, and attempts are being made to evolve new concepts, which can be compatible with the present state of physics and cosmology. We have to seek power of understanding through elevation of the human mind, to enable us to penetrate and cross the barriers of uncertainties of science and the disorderliness, violence and injustices of the processes of material development.**

### **ARMAMENT PROTECTED CONSUMERISM**

The capitalism began with the Industrial revolution. Over the centuries, it went through many transformations to colonialism, Imperialism and consumerism. We are now at its final stage that of 'Armament Protected Consumerism', which in other words means that evolutionary flexibility is no longer possible and arms of growing lethality are now needed to maintain its



security and viability. This has already reached a point of no return. Its only option was globalization of the paradigm and its financial control.

For Millennia human disputes were settled through violence, sometimes wars. These became more and more lethal during the nineteenth and twentieth century as the so-called international community claimed to have become more civilized. After the fast development of science and its evolution into a consumerist culture, it rapidly evolved into a consumerist civilization. This has begun to rule growing millions around the world and has become a part of the globalizing process. Consumerist paradigm and financial control are the instrument for its domination.

Many culturally advanced nations such as India, China and many others are now being obliged to step back; or down so as to be in step with the consumerist culture. The level of economic development of these countries gets conditioned by the closeness or the integrative potential of their culture with that of the role-models. Or in other words, transition from culturally based restraints and orderliness to media-promoted consumption and extravagance, and all the way to armament protection in an increasingly insecure world.

Should the psyche of the people of the perennial cultures that evolved over the millennia, be transformed for the acceptance of an alien technological culture and its vision of the world. Nirvana or salvation or realisation of the highest human potential- all belong to the realm of spirituality or super consciousness and are far away from the infrastructure of materiality and also includes big pressure media mind control; with inbuilt aversion to the spirit of religions and consciousness. Mass moronisation, terrorism, genocide, poverty and wars are the consequences of such desensitisation of the finer human instincts. And this path is visibly leading us to great social upheavals and ecological disasters.



It is becoming obvious that the failure to enforce the process of globalization by the powers that be carries within it the potential of conflicts and prolonged war. With the financial and economic breakdown of the paradigm in most of the developed countries of the West. These prospects and threats have now further increased.

