

China's Ecological Civilization from a Hungarian Viewpoint

By Attila Grandpierre, Ph.D

We Hungarians preserve at the very depth of our heart the remnants of our ancient history connecting us through the Huns and Scythians with the East. It is this ancient layer of our past in which our genuine Hungarian identity is rooted. It is already more than a millennium since, by corruption and western infiltration, our history became aligned around western patterns. Yet Hungarian identity can still be characterized as an apple having an ancient Eurasian core and modified outer shells infiltrated by Western influences.

I was seventeen years old when I read Ervin Bauer's book *Theoretical Biology*. Ervin Bauer had been one of the greatest scientists of the last centuries. Tragically, his oeuvre had become completely forbidden after the Stalinist terror killed him in the Soviet Union in 1938. Reading his book re-published in Hungarian in 1967, I realized that life has its own universal law. This principle states that all living beings mobilize all their vital energies against the equilibrium that should occur within the same conditions under the exclusive influence of physical laws. It made clear that Western civilization manipulating people's minds towards material goods, comfort, the least resistance, mediocrity and unhuman behavior, cannot be maintained forever. The way towards the least resistance is congruent with the physical laws, which are only the laws of matter. The fact that life has its own law, different from that of matter, opens completely new perspectives for civilizations' future. The life principle permanently initiates a vital urge in all people to act in the direction of uplifting life which is the opposite of the direction forced by Western civilization. The question arose: when will a fundamentally new civilization friendly to Nature, life, humanity and all people will be developed?

As a Hungarian astrophysicist, I was led to search the nature of the Universe with the help of Bauer's law, generalized as the life principle. During the next decades I was led to develop the theory of the Living Universe, and discovered that ancient Hungarian and Eastern traditions are rooted in this worldview. I realized that if the Universe as the unified whole of everything that exists is living, than humanity on Earth lives in this cosmic living organism. Now humanity is the unique species on Earth endowed with the capacity of the highest level of teleological behavior corresponding to essentially universal knowledge, in order to enhance the most favorable decisions for all living beings in harmony with the life principle. As such, humanity is an important "brain center" of the Living Universe. Since the cosmic life principle is capable of governing Nature in its entirety, the Universe will regain its complete health within a relatively short period of time. In a healthy brain center, the cells are cooperating with each other and with the entire brain peacefully and fruitfully on the basis of the universal life principle and their own characteristics. Therefore it is the law of

the Living Universe that all nations on Earth cooperate peacefully and fruitfully with each other, like the cells in our brain, while preserving their own original, Nature-given characteristics. Living in the cosmic brain demands cooperation.

In this way, the life principle told me that history will change. World history will become the history of nations' harmonious cooperation with each other, humanity and Nature. The domination of western civilization will be replaced by a healthy, co-operative civilization. It is high time to replace physics' hegemony in the scientific worldview with a more balanced, profound and broad one in which life and ecology, the latter being the science of communities of life, come into the focus. In this new, life-centered scientific worldview a cosmically grounded biology elevates ecology into a cosmic context. Ecology becomes the fundamental science of the Universe as the unified whole of all communities of life. In the 21st century, this profound turn from a physical to an organic cosmology is highly timely. Western civilization has fulfilled its mission by creating a high level of material well-being. In the last decades Western civilization has lost its appeal and attractive power for Westerners. At the same time, improving the quality of life, including emotional and mental dimensions, has become more and more important.

The next question is: where will it begin, in which country? At first I hoped in India since she has an enormous population and ancient culture. When I visited my colleagues in India, they told me there is no hope, because, among other reasons, the value-neutral Western school system based on the materialistic worldview orientates students toward a Western mindset, alienation and nihilistic tendencies. India walks a similar road to the US.

My attention turned towards China. The population of 1.3 billion and the more than 5000 year-old, life-centered Chinese philosophy and culture raised the hope that China could save mankind's future. This hope seemed to be confirmed by realizing that since 2007 China has been building an ecological civilization. At the same time, the fact that China is led by a Communist Party made me suspicious. As a Hungarian, where communism had been extremely materialistic, and wiped out Hungary's ancient history and traditions, I was quite skeptical and guessed that the slogan "ecological civilization" was "ecological" in the same way that "communism" had been a beneficial community for most Hungarians.

Therefore it was important to realize that China has brought 850 million of its people out of poverty. It was important to learn that in China the aim of ecological civilization is, first of all, to respect, accommodate to, and protect Nature, which is understood as God (for westerners) and Heaven (for Chinese). It is also important to know that the education ministry of China "has decreed that traditional culture, including classical literature wiped

from the curriculum a century ago, be taught in schools and feature prominently in university entrance exams.”

It was great to learn that the two broadly influential movements in China today are “the zeal for traditional culture” and “Constructive Postmodernism” (Tang Yijie, *Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, Christianity and Chinese Culture*, 279). This latter is based on process philosophy which corresponds to an organic cosmology. These authors added that ecological civilization requires a fundamental transformation of worldview, values, and lifestyle. I already realized that the general worldview is the basis and the most powerful tool of civilizations, so much that it can be regarded as the essence of the given civilization. A well-chosen worldview, especially when it is scientifically well-grounded, and corresponds to an organic cosmology, is the right tool for developing an ecological civilization because it endows us with a cosmic ecology. A healthy, cooperative civilization, necessary to save mankind seems to fit with the cosmically grounded ecological civilization.

My interest led me to the Wulong International Forum on Green Development Practice and the International Symposium themed “Process Philosophy and Traditional Chinese Eco-wisdom,” held in China, July 2019, which was cosponsored by the

Institute for Postmodern Development of China (IPDC) and the Center for Process Studies. I am greatly indebted to Dr. Zhihe Wang and Dr. Meijun Fan for inviting me to participate in these two conferences.

I experienced through these conferences a series of talks and conversations. Here I can mention only one example. Professor Wang Kun from Zhejiang Normal University, author of the book *The First Handshake of Whitehead with China*, noted that the crisis of Western psychology is the greatest crisis of mankind because the Western people lost their genuine natural identity. For most Westerners, consumption comes first. This attitude makes people stressed. In traditional China being a big person is the virtue of the Universe. The nature of man is to become a big person, understanding the Universe, Heaven and Earth, to love people and cherish all living beings.

Both of these conferences confirmed firmly to me that China has the potential to save mankind. In the 21st century the birth of a highly developed, healthy civilization establishing harmony with Nature, humanity, all nations, and all living beings can be expected first of all from China. ♦

19TH Annual


FEB 13-16 2020

CELEBRATING THE WISDOM OF **ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD**

Common GOOD

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

"Ideas won't keep.
Something must be
done about them."
— Alfred North Whitehead



★

4 DAYS

10 FILMS

*Renew your faith in
the COMMON GOOD*

★

INDIVIDUAL FILMS

\$5

Tickets available
at the door or online

FULL FESTIVAL PASS

\$100

Includes Thursday
Banquet and all films

NEW LOCATION

ABRAHAM CAMPUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE

2000 Second Street
La Verne, CA

FIND MORE INFORMATION AT:

COMMONGOODFILMS.ORG

909.621.5330