

Times Call for the Integration of Civilizations and a Community of Shared Future of Mankind

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Web Editor:

If civilizations understand the world differently, because they rely on different mindsets and belief systems, how can they understand each other? How can civilizations having a profoundly different worldview continue a mutually beneficial dialogue? What is the way towards the continuous enrichment and improvement of humanity, and preserving the healthy diversity of cultures?

Let us illustrate the situation with the following simplified example. There are two persons living in the same room, very sensitively depending on each other. One thinks by a selfish, individualistic mindset, the other by a broader mindset including communal aspects as well. The selfish one thinks that everyone is selfish and acts only for selfish, individual goals. What can the other do, in order that their life should be the best possible? The only possibility is to call attention to the fact that both of them are living in the same room, and so if they want the best for their life, they have to cooperate on the ground of their common interest. The situation can improve because even the selfish one wants to live the best life possible. This is the reason that he has to take into account all facts accordingly. The fact that their life is jointed means that their life is a joint life. To live the best life means, in that case, to live the best joint life possible. Therefore, even the selfish viewpoint dictates to appreciate the common interest to make their joint life the best possible. By the fact that their life is coupled, individual selfishness must expand and extend to the communal level of joint life. In that way both the selfish and the broader-minded can preserve or even expand their identity, viewpoint and philosophy of life.

Such questions are among the most important ones in the 21st century. The Fifth Nishan Forum on World Civilizations, initiated by Mr. Xu Jialu, vice chairman of China National People's Congress, held in Qufu, Shandong, China, released a call for the integration of civilizations and a community of shared future of mankind. The 263 scholars from over 20 countries and regions reached a consensus that the integration and mutual learning among civilizations would promote the building of a community of a shared future for mankind.

As Zhihe Wang and Xue Ying argued, 'entity thinking' depends on things as independent, eternal entities, which can exist on their own without relying on anything else. Actually, the so-called "individual" as an entity is merely a derivative of the process of relationship. What is truly prior is the relationship. There exists an intrinsic link between man and other man, nations and nations, man and nature. We share our being in the deeper aspects of our identity. Our actual, full identity is the ecological identity, extending to all communities of life into which our individual life is embedded, that is, including humanity, the life of the planet Earth "Gaia" and the living Universe. We are much more than individuals. Constraining our life to its individual aspects means an alienation from our family life, our social being and our natural being. The Universe is living within us, urging us to act in accordance with its cosmic goals, the flourishing of all the communities of life simultaneously. Similarly, Dr. John Cobb, Jr. a world renowned process philosopher and the Founding president of Institute for Postmodern Development of China (IPDC), pointed out that human evolution over hundreds of thousands of years adapted us to life in hunting and gathering societies. Hunting and gathering has been a communal activity, in societies in which the human self has not been alienated from Nature but living in symbiosis with it. The domestication required to "civilize" us to become mere individuals is in tension with our deeper nature.

In this spirit, David Bartosch emphasized that China's function in world history in the 21st century today is to be defined as the peaceful integration of humanity and all of its traditional and modern cultures and societies and civilizations into one planetary organism of humanity, creating a peaceful win-win-environment for all peoples from all world cultures and civilizations past and present. It is timely to be aware of the most general structures of all human life, "inter-humaneness" of Confucius, the world-society, which is humanity at large. Naturally, human beings are organized as a harmonious unit of our heart, mind and body, emotions, ideas and actions. The harmony between our heart and mind is the basis of „good knowing“, 'liangzhi'. As Chinese philosophy teaches, it is to be understood as the continuous exercise of the innate goodness of life, developing the quality of our emotional and intellectual world towards their full light, in respect of our individual, family, social and cosmic life! It requires practicing an intellectual and emotional openness and reverence towards the amazingly profound intellectual and emotional depth of all life. If we want to live the best life, the road is to follow our own inborn goodness, our own Inborn Confucius, as Wang Yangming once put it, and our own effort in guiding the practical force of the cosmos which expresses itself in its highest possible form as human consciousness in between Heaven and Earth in the form of our daily actions and reflections. Only our own actions and our own conduct can warrant us a

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meaningfulness which provides us with peace and happiness at the same time. In this context, Wang Yangming's notion of ' zixin', that is, self-believing, becomes important. It is related to the idea that the reverence of all of humanity and of all life itself should be permanently grounded in our experience. We have to practice our goodness, instead of believing and hoping. This is the central idea which characterizes the best of the Chinese civilization.

Such a solution is offered by the Manifesto for the Integration of Civilizations and a Community of Shared Future for Mankind, released by the organizers of the Nishan Forum. It is based on the realization that all civilizations live on the same earth. The future of mankind is more and more tightly bound together for good or ill. In the face of the complex world situation and global issues no country or nation can stand alone and no civilization can move forward in isolation. In this challenging situation Confucianism advocates "harmony among nations", "solidarity" and "the whole world as one family". Instead of considering the nations as individuals, Confucianism offers a new, communal perspective for thinking about the future of mankind to promote the world's peace and development. The Earth presents a naturally given unifying constraint for the activity and cooperation of all nations. Besides the individualistic idea of nations, it is time to realize the importance of a broader idea, the idea of the family of nations.

About the author:

Attila Grandpierre is an astrophysicist, musician, writer and speaker, retired senior research fellow of *Konkoly Observatory of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences* with a Ph. D.

His publications include: 12 science books, 70 research papers and 400 popular science articles on solar physics, astrobiology, theoretical biology, philosophy, ancient history of Eurasia and ecological civilization. He is the director of the Collective Consciousness Group of the Club of Budapest founded by Ervin Laszlo, the founder of system philosophy. He is also the singer of two internationally recognized cultic music groups reviving the cosmically inspired folk music of ancient Eurasia.



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