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RESETTING POSTMODERN TRENDS OF EDUCATION: TOWARDS A TRANSCULTURAL GLOBAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The causes of the social syndrome shaking the very foundations of the human ecosystem are as follows: first, strong interrelationships between the various phenomena surrounding pollution, the environment, resources, and energy; second, the process of rapid economic growth, large-scale plants with extensive production equipment and advanced technologies were set up in the heavy and chemical industries; third, the pursuit of profit margins neglecting the development of technologies to render harmless the environmental pollutants; fourth, seriously distorts the cyclical structure of the ecosystem.

Remarkable progress is being made in the field of biotechnology demonstrated in the areas of genetic engineering and cell fusion. Progress in robotics accompanied advances in computer science. In many universities, technology enabled active learning environment advanced as a teaching format that merges lectures, simulations and hands-on desktop experiments to create a rich collaborative learning experience. This 21st century blended learning model enabled the emergence of a true synchronous/ asynchronous and virtual/physical matrix of learning opportunities. Blended learning matrix combining face-to-face physical and online learning, virtual and physical on-line learning, time dependent and time independent. The vortex is on the 3rd space which supports social forms of student interaction. Students can now learn off campus on line. Learning technologies exemplifies that acoustics, furniture, lighting (both natural and artificial), mobility, flexibility, air temperature and security must support the educational technologies being designed by those spaces.

In spite of this hopeful prospects, however, not all is well with the ongoing post-modernization throughout the globe. Technology as tool of economic development not only enables the liberal values found in every society to thrive and advance but also erodes the personal, spiritual and moral milieu of postmodernity project by subjecting individuals to consumerism thus producing mindless citizens. Fueled by technological innovations, unnecessary needs are conjured by mass media, and society is seduced into all devouring consumerism accompanied by a bland acceptance of the status quo.

KEYWORDS:

social syndrome, biotechnology, Dostoevsky, educational technologies

INTRODUCTION

Today, our postmodern millieu can be described as follows:

1. ***Deconstructive Criticism*** – is not synonymous with destruction. The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text itself. If anything is destroyed in a deconstructive reading, it is not the text, but the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over another. It is a mode of interpretation work by a careful and circumspect entering of each textual labyrinth. The deconstructive critics seeks to find, by this process of retracing, the element in the system studied which is alogical, the thread in the text in question which will unravel it all or the loose stone which will pull down the whole building. The deconstruction annihilates the ground on which the building stands by showing that the text has already annihilated the ground, knowingly or unknowingly. Deconstruction is not a dismantling of the structure of a text but a demonstration that it has already dismantled itself.

2. ***Dialogic Criticism*** - originated from Russian critic Mikhail Bakhtin (1920-1930). Bakhtin was interested in the novel. Two types of novels: the monologic novels "Leo Tolstoy" and dialogic or "polyphonic" novels of Fyodor Dostoevsky. In monologic novels, the author takes command and "undertakes to subordinate the voices of all the characters to the authoritative discourses and controlling purposes of the author. In dialogic novels, characters "are liberated to speak" a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousness, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices. Baktin favored Dostoevsky.

   The monologic character of certain novels does not make them worthless for critical study. For Bakhtin, a novel can never be totally monologic, since the narrator's reports of the utterances of another character are inescapably "double-voiced" (author's own ascent and inflection), and also dialogic (author's discourse) continually reinforces, alters, or contests with the speech that it reports. Don Biatostosky, dialogic criticism's spokesman, said: As a self conscious practice, dialogic criticism turns its inescapable involvement with some other voices into a program of articulating itself with all the other voices of the discipline, the culture, or the world of cultures to which it makes itself responsible.

   Neither a live and let live relativism nor a settle-at-once-and-for-all authoritarianism but a strenuous and open-ended dialogism would keep them talking to themselves and to one another discovering their affinities without resting in them and clarifying their differences without resolving them.

3. ***Hermeneutics*** – the term is from the Greek *hermeneia,* which is derived from the notion represented in Greek mythology by Hermes, messenger of the gods. Its general meaning is interpretation.

4. ***Marxist Criticism*** – this is grounded on the economic and cultural theory of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.
   a. "In the last analysis," the evolving history of humanity, of its social relations, of its institutions, and of its ways of thinking is largely determined by the changing mode of its "material production", that is, of its overall economic organization.
   b. Historical changes in the fundamental mode of production effect changes in social class structure, establishing in each era dominant and subordinate classes that engage in a struggle for economic, political, and social advantage.
   c. Human consciousness is constituted by an ideology, that is, the beliefs, values, and ways of thinking and feeling through which human beings perceive, and recourse to which they explain, what they take to be reality. An ideology is the product of the position and interests of a particular class. In any historical era, the dominant ideology embodies, and serves to legitimize and perpetuate, the interests of the dominant economic and social class.

5. ***New Historicism*** – an early 1980s reaction against the formalism of new criticism and deconstructionist criticism. Underlying new historicism is a *cultural materialism* inherited from Marxism. It is also a postmodern trend. It denies the privileged position of literature and authors, that literature is just one type of text among many others. It has also shown much interest in cultural studies in whose context literature comes as one of the readable texts. The interest in folk and popular culture is a mark of new historicism, and it gives about the same space and attention to popular cultural artifacts as to what used to be called "high art." There is, therefore, significant attention given to the "literary, artistic, and intellectual productions of women, the working class, ethnic groups, and colonial, post-colonial, and third world cultures.

   The critical strategy of new historicism is to conduct studies with thoroughly rigorous and exhaustive reconstruction of the social, political, and economic conditions of an era under study, and to identify the correspondences in a great variety of texts and to come up with a vivid view of the network of interacting and interplaying forces and factor which help configure the ideological geography or topography of an era. The authors are decentered; their historical world is fore grounded.

6. ***Phenomenology and Criticism*** – there is no pure consciousness, but that being conscious is always a "being-conscious-of. Humans are not more reactors to stimulus. Reaction necessarily involves an acting entity, but whose action is codetermined by the presence of something to it. He called that process of becoming aware as ***noesis***, and the object known (whether real or fictional) as ***noema.*** Consciousness is constituted by the mutuality of presence to each other by the knower and the noema. The relationship that exists between the act of consciousness and its object. Husserl, called ***intentionality***, that is, the act of knowing. The consciousness is toward the object, and the object toward the knower. They become present to each other immediately, that is, without anything between them. For example, if you witness a fire right before you, your knowledge is unmediated. But if you read about the fire from a report, you know about it from an intermediary – the written report let us say, or a rumor. That is mediated. Phenomenology is interested in the kind of consciousness of an unmediated reality. To make this possible, Husserl proposed that one's approach to the noema must be free from the interfering preconceptions or biases. The object of knowledge must be allowed to reveal itself to consciousness in its originality. In this way, knowledge becomes authentically scientific.

7. ***Post – Structuralism*** – phases with structuralism the rejection of the paradigm of the human subject as self contained cogito or consciousness found in phenomenology and existentialism. It also negates the static internal relations of the structuralist paradigm opting instead for multiple possibilities within the signifier-signified combinations.

Four Theories

a. The Primacy of Theory – theory is a comprehensive account of the conditions that determine all meaning and interpretation. It is not a theory of what is or is not literary; rather it is a theory that seeks to explain the genesis of any text. A text is any set of representational or signifying social or cultural product, which embodies or concretizes itself in text. Theory understood this way makes theory responsible for making an account of how works or texts come into being, and what such texts signify regarding the social and political world in which the text emerged.

b. The Decentering of the Subject - in post structuralism, human personality is rejected. It is absurd to attribute weighty significance to authors, nor even to the characters written into their literary works. He is merely a mere "space" assembling the material he did not create. Its intelligibility and ideology are derived from the cultural community to which the writer belongs. The author becomes decentered, that is, removed from center as controlling factor and creative genius.

c. Reading, Texts and Writing – the author is absent from a text. The text is merely a structure of signifiers, which are capable of being read. The reader is also denied of a personal identity. Literature is not merely a kind of text belonging to the general sub-classification of writing or "written text." It is not given a special distinction from other writings such as philosophical, historical, legal, scientific or journalistic writings. All these can be read and what emerges from such a reading would reveal the relations of power, and other ideologies. And what ideologies will tell you are why things are the ways are in present-day society: manipulative, hegemonic, exploitative, commodificatory, oppressive. Thus, the adversariality of post-structuralist criticism.

d. Discourse – is the real intent of a statement regardless of what form the sentence may have.

8. Reader-Response Criticism – cautions critics regarding any assumption of objectivity and fixed interpretations of text. ***Two Types of Reader:*** 1] ***The Implied Reader*** is established by the text itself. 2] ***The Actual Reader –*** for any reason reads the books for reasons entirely unforeseen or intended by the writer. And being unintended and unforeseen (to an extent), he had no control over such a reader's reactions.

9. Semiotics – a science of signs developed by Ferdinand de Saussure. He studied the auditive relational nature of signs and their communicative properties. The linguistic sign as a structural relationship by an acoustic signifiers and to concept of signified. "Semiology" are alternative names for a general science of signs as these function in all areas of human experience. Pierce classified signs according to their relations to things they signified:

a. Icon – functions as a sign by means of inherent similarities, or shared features with what it signifies. Example: portrait of a person it depicts.

b. Index – is a sign which bears a natural relation of cause and effect to what it signifies, thus smoke is a sign signifying fire, and a pointing weather vane indicates the direction of the wind.

c. Symbol – "sign proper" – the relation between the signifying item and what it signifies is not a natural one but entirely a matter of social convention. Example: the gesture of shaking hands.

10. Structuralism – is grounded on a theory of language. It is a process philosophy wherein the meaning of things is grounded on their relationship to other factors in a process. What they did to literature?

a. Literary work became a mere text. It is the product of the interplay of components elements behaving in accordance with specific conventions and codes. Literature has no-truth value outside itself.

b. The author is a mere "construct" that is a product of the linguistic system. (There are authors because there is a language). His mind is an imputed space within which the impersonal, always already existing system of literary language, conventions, codes, and rules of combinations gets precipitated into a particular text.

c. Structuralism replaces the author by the reader as the central agency in criticism. It is anti-humanism. The meaning of reader is not that of a personal subjective identity called "reading" and what is read is not a text imbued with meanings, but "ecriture, writing."

The foundations of knowledge have been transformed from a modern to a postmodern condition. This transformation changed the "game rules of science, literature and the arts." The feature of knowledge was its search for universal and fixed answers to the queries of human existence. Those queries were answered through scientific rationality and political ideology. Modern science held that nature had a language that would enable us to totally control our fate. Nationalism convinces us that the interests of every individual were best served by patriotism. The growing disrespect for these universal ideas caused chaos. The mass society collapsed. The needs and desires were diversified. Multiple media innovations, such as satellite communications, have contributed to the development of a new order wherein national politics and economies are dwarfed by new global structures. All the economic boundaries of nation states were eclipsed by global ones. So, the grand universal schemes of national political leaders and movements are redundant and powerless in the face of a global economy wish is beyond their control.

Lyotard establishes a different mode of grasping knowledge. In his book *the Differand,* Lyotard affirms the idea that every particular cultural identity can be construed as a language game. Within any particular language game there are rules and methods and common vocabularies which participants use to differentiate their own language game from others. In this world of multiple overlapping language games, no one particular language game has total control. The differences between some language games can be so great that their rules render communication between them futile.

Post modernity is incredulity toward metanarratives, the repudiation of metaphysical philosophy, philosophies of history, and any form of totalizing thought such as Hegelianism, liberalism, Marxism or positivism. He seemed to concur with theorist of post-industrial society on the primacy of knowledge, information and computerization. Thus, the postmodern society is the computerization of society. The metanarratives of modernity tend toward exclusion and a desire for universal metaprescriptions. Modern act of universalizing and homogenizing metaprescriptives violates what he regarded the heterogeneity of language games. The act of consensus also violates the heterogeneity and imposes homogeneous criteria and a false universality. Lyotard upholds dissensus over consensus, diversity and dissent over conformity and consensus, and heterogeneity and the incommensurable over homogeneity and universality.

Our postmodern milieu can also be described as ***hyperreality.*** Hyperreality alludes to the virtual or unreal nature of contemporary culture in an age of mass communication and mass consumption. It is a vast cultural void where the real and the unreal are merged so completely that distinctions between them disappear. America is so engulfed in the imagery of mass media that the lines between reality and fiction are blurred. People's lives are played out as if a film or soap opera. Our contemporary society has entered into a phase of implosion. The old structures of class have vanished. This is known as the void of the masses. The masses no longer make themselves evident as a class. They lost all meaning. They have been analyzed through statistics, polls and marketing and no longer respond to enlightened political representation. They have absorbed neutralized ideology, religion and the transcendental aspirations. The law that is imposed is the law of confusion of categories. Everything is sexual. Everything is political. Everything is aesthetic. Each category is generalized that eventually loses all specificity and is reabsorbed by all other categories. In this ***age of simulation*** wherein computerization, information processing media, cybernetic control systems and the organization of society in accord to simulation codes and paradigms replacing production as the organizing principle of society. Modernity is the time of production restrained by industrialist. Post modernity is the time of simulation. There is a passage from a metallurgic into a semiurgic society. Radical semiurgy is the proliferation of signs to dominate social life. With the advent of Hyperreality, simulations stems to configure reality itself. In the postmodern mediascape, boundaries between information and entertainment, images and politic implode. A similar ***implosion*** between politics and entertainment is evident. Implosion is a key component framework of postmodern social paradigm. Implosion is a process of social entropy leading to a collapse of boundaries such as the implosion of meaning in the media and the implosion of media and the social in the masses.

THE SOCIAL SYNDROME

The emergence of social syndrome for a few decades now poised to shake the very foundation of human ecosystem for it constitute a group of phenomena known as "the social syndrome" relating to pollution, the contamination of the environment, and the wastage and depletion of resources and energy. The causes of the social syndrome are as follows: first, strong interrelationships between the various phenomena surrounding pollution, the environment, resources, and energy; second, the process of rapid economic growth, large-scale plants with extensive production equipment and advanced technologies were set up in the heavy and chemical industries; third, the pursuit of profit margins neglecting the development of technologies to render harmless the environmental pollutants; fourth, seriously distorts the cyclical structure of the ecosystem. In the process of rapid economic growth, large-scale plants with the extensive production equipment and advanced technologies were set up in the heavy and chemical industries. The genesis of these syndrome is in the method through which heavy and chemical industries accumulate capital, through mass production, mass consumption, and mass disposal. Obviously, it is energy from fuel that usually drives the production processes, and it is the large-scale complexes that make intensive use of this energy. The petrochemical industry, embodied in these large-scale petrochemical complexes, repeats the cycle of burning massive volumes of oil as fuel and passing on the cost of this in the form of higher prices of the final products, thereby creating the risk of environmental pollution and the depletion of fuel resources. Not only the degeneration of the fertility of the land through the widespread dispersal of agrochemicals, but also atmospheric pollution, water contamination, land subsidence, and the creation of large-volumes of waste matter have disrupted the self-sustaining stationary state of the metabolism upon which all types of organism share a common reliance. They have created a situation so serious that it has become difficult to place a low-energy ecosystem as the basis of the human social system. Serious consideration should be given to the dangerous side of the remarkable progress in science and technology. Its use should be restricted. Particular concern, for example is organ transplant, in the field of medicine.

Science and technology have a complementary relationship. Science searches for objective rules governing things, and gaining from this an intellectual grasp of the truth. Technology is the application of science. Technology has advanced through the application of science, and scientific research has been greatly facilitated by progress in technology. Today, utilitarian's industrial economy, technology appears to become less an indispensable pillar of scientific progress. It has transformed its character in a utilitarian method of pursuing industrial advantage. Technology has become divorced from science and began to follow an independent course, becoming the mechanism with the strongest utilitarian character in today's industrial economy/technology associated with major corporations.

Meanwhile, multinational giant corporations prioritized the pursuit of profit margins. They demonstrated their interest in developing new products taking full advantage of the market mechanism, go in pursuit of lower costs and raising productivity, and simultaneously, neglected the development of technologies to render harmless the environmental pollutants given off during their production processes. Remarkable progress is being made in the field of biotechnology demonstrated in the areas of genetic engineering and cell fusion. Progress in robotics accompanied advances in computer science. In many universities, technology enabled active learning environment advanced as a teaching format that merges lectures, simulations and hands-on desktop experiments to create a rich collaborative learning experience. This 21st century blended learning model enabled the emergence of a true synchronous/asynchronous and virtual/

physical matrix of learning opportunities. Blended learning matrix combining face-to-face physical and online learning, virtual and physical on-line learning, time dependent and time independent. The vortex is on the 3rd space which supports social forms of student interaction. Students can now learn off campus on line. Learning technologies exemplifies that acoustics, furniture, lighting (both natural and artificial), mobility, flexibility, air temperature and security must support the educational technologies being designed by those spaces.

In spite of this hopeful prospects, however, not all is well with the ongoing post-modernization throughout the globe. Technology as tool of economic development not only enables the liberal values found in every society to thrive and advance but also erodes the personal, spiritual and moral milieu of postmodernity project by subjecting individuals to consumerism thus, producing mindless citizens. Fueled by technological innovations, unnecessary needs are conjured by mass media, and society is seduced into all devouring consumerism accompanied by a bland acceptance of the status quo. The Bible narrates that technological application of scientific knowledge of nature made the construction of Noah's ark and Solomon's temple possible while it gave the builders of the tower of Babel a false belief in no limits to human ability that destroyed their ability to live together in harmony. There is no doubt that the technological use of scientific knowledge of nature is absolutely necessary to the welfare of all humanity. But we must be concerned about such unfortunate consequence as ecological change of our mother-earth that the misuses of scientific discoveries and technological innovations have brought about. However, technical wonders make the consumers in the emerging markets oblivious to this critical predicament in which they are in at present. While the traditional market usually moves in a balanced cycle of production and consumption under the condition of limited resources, increasing consumerism demands more production by tipping the balance. Now, it seems obvious that the ethic of the conventionally static market of Asia is nearing to the recognition of the consumer-based mechanism of the economy: the creation of new wants is the engine of the market and that the ethic of self-restraint and frugality has become no longer a useful theory/paradigm with which the movement of the present day market economy can be explicated. The workers are forced to work harder and more in order to possess the goods that satisfy their insatiable needs.

In today's volatile economy, Asia is still considered a big source of growth, and investors are pouring money into the emerging markets of this region that are with full speed to outperform their counterparts elsewhere. The rapid economic growth appears sufficient for the emerging markets to promise their citizen consumers the continuing availability of inexhaustible abundance. Whereas natural necessities such as hunger and thirst are easily satisfied, needs for luxury food, clothes and housing, which Epicurus deemed unnatural and unnecessary become uncontrollably efficacious and endless. This latter phenomenon is taking place in the new developing societies. As vain needs are forged by ever renewing technological innovations, frugality and temperance, such virtues of the old days of scarcity, come to be undermined as market hostile sentiments. Consumers prefer high-end boutique items by Louis-Vuitton, Gucci, Chanel, Barburry and Prada, to name a few. These luxury goods are becoming raving obsessions of consumers and this growing consumption represents grand opportunities for foreign companies to rake profits.

On the other hand, it is to be noted that foreign tourists can hardly miss the sight of glass-windowed tower office buildings and high-rise residential quarters in megacities of Asia and throughout the world that shamelessly devour exorbitant amounts of fossil fuels per daily dose. This landscape may display the national pride in the economic success being finally able to catch up on the advanced industrial countries whereas the resources exhausted for such extravagant construction projects should have been turned over to assuring the consolidation of infrastructure that can cope with devastating storm surges and massive flooding caused by increasingly unmanageable global warming.

One more, no less indispensable, ecological crisis to be mentioned here is the imminent oceanic catastrophe being caused by overfishing, climate change and pollution destabilizing marine environments across the world. In Southeast Asia, the population's ever increasing appetite for gourmet seafood is reinforcing fishing for juvenile fish that can be used for fee for coastal prawn farms, and lamentably, this is heading toward an end game. Affluent life-style does not come cheap. Higher productivity costs sacrifice on the discretion making process for the sake of enhancing development. Many governments of the new market economy whose civil society is still in its sprouting stage tend to be less willing to allow full-blown democracy and rather take control of societal discretion-making process which usually results in immediate devastation of the surroundings of our lifeworld for higher productivity.

One greatest hindrance to the self-awakening of individual citizens as being self-determining subjectivity is undoubtedly consumerism driven by the pervasiveness of high technology which can hardly evade turning totalitarian. Consumerism paralyzes the intelligence of ordinary people by luring them with material convenience to a vacuous consciousness that now pervade in emerging market societies. As Marcuse described that consumerism encourages sensitivity to others and to one's environment, creating a numbed ignorance of life itself. So many parts of God's creation are externalized and exploited, and humans prefer domination to stewardships in their relation to non-human, and many of our fellow people.

The precarious state of postmodernity should call us, educators gathered here, to join a common task in bringing forward critically reflective competence of individual citizens through manifold education so that there could be instituted the legitimate democratic discretion-making process, in those new industrial countries so that both intellectual and professional groups and civil society, all can participate. The role of educators meeting the challenges of the ethical use of technology must accentuate how discretions concerning the usage of technology are societal contentions, and should be democratic ones as well. Education is first and foremost indispensable. It is needless to say that education concerning human rights and social responsibility of scientists, technicians, and planners are essential. Education goes beyond these citizens to a governmental consideration of seeing that all members of society have access to pertinent information so that they can participate in discretion-making processes relating to technological contentions. Every member of society should have an opportunity to be educated on human development. Practitioners in all fields of technology should have a clear understanding that humans

are not instruments of technology and that technology exists for the betterment of society, to foster citizen's welfare and enable them to unfold to their fullest capacities.

Technology should be a tool to enhance the quality of life for all citizens. The ways in which we can face science and technology are numerous and all of them are predicated on the notion that they are human achievements and that society and individuals decide the usage of technology. For productive endeavor, we observe nature and discover laws with which we make tools to transform the earth to meet our needs. We contrive science and technology in the capacity of the stewardship of the planet entrusted to us. New laws and principles about nature which the worldwide scientific community provides are being applied into improving technology. Out of the discoveries of bioscience can arise a whole new industry in agriculture and medicine that could benefit all humanity. Technological innovations certainly are products of imaginative competence of self-actualization which humans came to possess through cultivation of generation after generation. But much of their ill effects are becoming irrevocable.

The earth is home. Even more escalating high consumption only protracts the destruction of this earth without allowing time for its recovery. Research depicted that the state of our environment is alarmingly impaired, and most scientists as well as the general public accept this. Global warming has become the most pressing contention we are facing. The ongoing build up of greenhouse gases produced by the burning of fossil fuels is already pushing toward the limit point. The organization for economic collaboration and development warned that urban pollution will become the top environmental cause of mortality worldwide by 2050, and it estimated that up to 3.6 million people could die prematurely from air pollution each year in China and India.

Contrary to the generally accepted scientific theory that our planet's climate has to a great extent shaped the history of the human species, our observation of the global environmental change rather demonstrates that human impact on the climate appears no less powerful. Many of natural calamities that we are experiencing are climactic and they are mostly anthropogenic. As years pass by, anthropogenic damages to climate, land, oceans, and biosphere are worsening to an irrevocable extent.

Meanwhile the widening gap between what major industrial countries have pledged to do for emissions reduction and the increasing amassment of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is a great concern of the international community. This concern seems to be easily overridden by the interests of big businesses. It cannot be negated that political and economic interests have been long in compulsion with the vital contention of the environment protection. In Asia, some regimes let their citizens get rich and live exuberantly as long as they do not challenge their legitimacy and they keep themselves from politics and concern mainly with personal welfare than political reforms while they are all out to support higher productivity constantly stimulating people's appetites for new goods so that the dynamics of the market may never lose its steam. So, it is not so surprising that these governments never fail to sound off warning about global warming and environmental endangerment, and all this fanfare usually ends up being just a lip service to clean energy technology.

The post modernization milieu in Asia and throughout the globe through economic growth is pregnant with perplexing problems that are destined to push the region and the whole world to undesirable direction. However, the dominating worldview that thrives on a belief in the constant progress and growth in markets and the institutions we have generated and the technologies we have contrived all depend on which paths we make available to us.

The question is: How can we intervene in worldviews that are blind to reason? How can the knowledge of the fragility of the earth's resources become imparted to decision makers and citizens? It will not be easy to overcome the prevalent market value views in pushing forward reform activities. First of all, we educators must be joined with natural and social scientists in coalition-construction for interactive problem solving ways. The solidarity among academic intellectuals is devoutly wished. We need to revitalize the voices of those intellectuals so that discretion makers and citizens can hear. Above of all, we need to find ways to invigorate the role of civil society.

A new social order able to cope with this has not yet been prepared, but clear signs of a major shift are already obvious. It could be interpreted as a warning for us to use science and technology to speed up the advent of an epoch-making new era in human society. To overcome this syndrome, it is now extremely urgent for human society to develop and establish a new system of science and technology. It must be in the form that is no longer associated with heavy consumption of oil and energy. It must also be nonmilitary in character. To ensure that technology does not once again deviate from science and degenerate into industrial technology devoted only to utility. The system must have a framework that ensures that priority is given to the public good. To ensure that the dangers inherent in advance science and technology are not permitted to get out of hand/bounds, it will also be vital to ensure that there is a pervasive system of controls and ethical awareness based on a high level of knowledge, and that if possible, a multilateral regime for cooperation is formed on a global scale.

The development and establishment of this kind of advanced new knowledge-intensive system of science and technology will inevitably demand a great deal of time and expense. Based on consideration of the global prevalence of the social syndrome, steps have been taken in the right direction. There have been attempts at international collaboration, both on an intergovernmental and non-governmental basis. Through these there have been a process of trial and error aimed at collating for knowledge on subjects such as pollution, the environment, resources, and energy, at exchanging and spreading this knowledge internationally, and at using it as a basis for formulating and implementing international policy. For our human society, the efforts and experiences in the promotion of international cooperation and interchange on environmental problems have been invaluable.

TOWARDS BUILDING UP ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND ETHICS

In spite of the remarkable accomplishments and scholarly efforts attained by physicists, chemists and biologists, etc. there are still many uncertainties surrounding environmental problems. Accordingly, the government authorities of all states as well as international governmental organizations should take revitalized initiatives to increase scientific knowledge about global environmental contentions. It is essential that we gain more knowledge concerning climate change, ozone

layer depletion and other environmental problems. It is important to support existing international research programs. In gathering scientific knowledge, appropriate steps should be taken immediately to avert the risks for present and future generations.

After all, planning for a sustainable future beyond the 21st century will demand a new commitment to environmental ethics by the 5 billion humans on earth. Action can be taken by integrating a society of socio-economic policies, enabling people in developing countries to meet their basic needs, and modifying socio-economic industrial activities, including the life style in developed countries. Broadly based participation by the public and the contribution of concerned special interest groups are needed and intensive information and awareness activities should be fostered. In this regard, the role of the educational and religious world as well as the press would be vital. The curriculum of all university faculties might be regarded as incomplete if it does not include courses on environmental matters. Elementary and secondary education should also introduce some units on environmental problems into social studies.

As for changes in the atmosphere, the emission of radioactivity and chemically active gases from industrial sources and from current land use practices is a major cause of concern. It is maintained that the accumulation of these gases in the atmosphere is depleting the ozone layer and may be altering the global climate, with possible health risks from increased ultraviolet radiation; heat stress from rising temperatures, damage to plants, animals and ecosystems, loss of lad and settlements due to rising seas, flood or drought risk from changing precipitation patterns, and other major disruptions of the social and economic well-being of many of the earth's inhabitants. Indeed, of al the environmental challenges humankind has conformed in the course of history, none has been as far-reaching as the challenge of the greenhouse effect. No one nation can mitigate the extent or consequences. It will require a global solution. It is urgent to support research, monitoring, assessment and impact study programs, and to engage in the identification of national roles in the global response to limit or delay climate change and adapt to its impact. In this regard, the initiatives taken in various international conferences should be paid attention.

It is to be deplored that natural forests within the tropics are being destroyed and seriously degraded every year at an unprecedented rate, the principal causes being pressure of population, economic imperatives and the hunger for land. Only a small proportion of this forest is removed for well planned and executed developments; the majority is the victim of unwise conversion in agriculture, badly executed timber exploitation, over-grazing and over collection of wood for fuel, many of these factors being closely linked to each other. Since forests are not only a highly important reservoir of biological diversity, but also contain a substantial bank of stored carbon, there is a reciprocal relation between deforestation and global warming. On the one hand, deforestation contributes to the build-up of CO2 in the atmosphere; on the other hand, global warming will have an effect on forest productivity and the choice of species for afforestation.

To prevent further degradation of forests, a series of measures should be taken within the framework of national and international policies. A long-term strategy for the conservation and utilization of tropical forests should be fully integrated into the overall development plan of each country, taking account of the renewability of forests, and conservation of ecosystems and biological diversity. In view of the fact that the financial burden on developing countries is a powerful incentive to harvest their forests, financial resources from developed countries should be directed toward relieving this burden. For example, the developed countries can encourage enterprises that may be consistent with the sustainable utilization and conservation of tropical forests.

The business firms of developed countries having engaged in bulk purchases of timber products in their tropical countries, should be seriously concerned about the possibility that their transactions might involve reckless deforestation and should be well aware of their responsibility in uniting their efforts with the sustainable utilization and conservation of tropical forests. As for international cooperation, there are already many international organizations and programs related to tropical forestry. These organizations and programs should be more strongly supported by the world community to expand their activities for conservation and sustainable utilization of forests.

Today, in spite of this hopeful prospects, however, not all is well with the ongoing post-modernization throughout the globe. Technology as tool of economic development not only enables the liberal values found in every society to thrive and advance but also erodes the personal, spiritual and moral milieu of postmodernity project by subjecting individuals to consumerism thus producing mindless citizens. Fueled by technological innovations, unnecessary needs are conjured by mass media, and society is seduced into all devouring consumerism accompanied by a bland acceptance of the status quo.

Baudrillard posited a return to symbolic societies as his revolutionary alternative. His symbolic exchange is not synonymous to the logic of production, utility, the exchange of looks, prodigality, festival and instrumental rationality governing capitalist and socialist societies. Baudrillard anchors his symbolic exchange with the cultural revolutionary projects of the time in his contradictory deal in the revolt of marginal groups such as the blacks, women and gays who subverted the code of racial or sexual difference and are more radical and subversive than socialists operating within the code of political economy. Baudrillard was calling for a cultural and total revolution. Cultural revolution engenders new practices, institutions, signs, codes, values etc. For Baudrillard, all practices and signs are restrained by and absorbed into the almighty cod. He is commending a total repudiation, to all negativity and utopia of radical otherness [Baudrillard, The Mirror of Production, 130ff.].

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