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**REPORT ON THE BRUSSELS SEMINAR
ON**

"GOVERNANCE AND CIVILISATIONS"

CDP Working paper

Seminar Held in Brussels

May 14-16 1998

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The aim of the Seminar

The aim of this Seminar, organised by the Forward Studies Unit and the “World Academy of Arts and Sciences”, was to reflect in common and to look for new ideas.

At a time when the European Amsterdam Treaty was coming into force with a new provision that “The Union shall define and implement a common foreign and security policy” (Article 11), it seemed appropriate to initiate an informal reflection with some Foreign Ministries of the Union. As we see it, there is an implicit communality of visions in many Member States, for example in disliking the “Clash of civilisations” approach. This was the starting point for our discussion on these difficult matters. How to imagine a proactive and innovative common policy in order to prevent Professor Huntington’s prophecy from becoming self-fulfilling?

The World Academy, has done research on the topic of “Governance and Religions”.¹ After two seminars of research and discussion, it came to the conclusion that the most dangerous conflicts of tomorrow could be between paradigms and interpretations rather than between religions and civilisations.

The Forward Studies Unit, working with a group of researchers within the Foreign Affairs Ministries of some of the 15 Member States of the European Union and within university circles, has been looking into these matters for some years now. Its reflection is based on internal research concerning Religions since 1991.² In April 1996 the Unit organised a first seminar on the “Religious factor in European and World Geostrategy” in Florence.³

The two organisations realised they were working along the same lines. They decided to “globalise” their reflection and to organise a common research Seminar in Brussels (May 1998) on “Governance and Civilisations”.

1.2. The working hypothesis.

1.2.1. a transition towards transmodernity

The first hypothesis underlying this Research Seminar is that we are in a period of deep change. The changes in cultures and civilisations cut through all our societies and through all the organised religions also. The West is currently undergoing a crisis of modernity, as it were. This crisis could be interpreted as a transition from modernity to transmodernity.

- Premodernity, or the agrarian view, is the view of several billion people. It is an “enchanted” view, according to which all values have a sacred and eternal foundation and are rooted in God himself.

¹ A first meeting was held by the « World Academy of Arts and Sciences » on this topic of « Governance and Religions » in Minneapolis, March 1996, and a second one in San Francisco, in February 1997.

² Marc LUYCKX :”Religions confronted with science and technology: Churches and ethics after Prometheus” Brussels, European Commission 1992. (Original in French), 201pp.

³ “The religious Factor and the European and world geostrategy” European Commission, Forward Studies Unit, 1996, 27pp.

However, its hierarchy of priest above politician and men above women shocks our Modern mentality. In the premodern view, religion dominates politics in an equally intolerant fashion

- **Modernity's** most important feature is the distinction between religion and politics, “private” and “public”. Unfortunately the **distinction** has become a strict **separation**. Modernity has thereby secularised the world. It does not accept public or political discourse that assumes a transcendent basis for values, and is thus intolerant. It has also “disenchanted the world”.

- **Transmodernity** is a kind of synthesis of the other two. While retaining the positive achievements of modernity, it attempts to correct its excesses. It upholds the distinction between religion and politics but dispenses with the separation. At the core of politics, account must now be taken of religion. This approach is tolerant and respects individual lifestyles, but it is not relativist. A Truth exists, but no one has the right to claim sole ownership of it; we can only progress towards it. Transmodernity also assumes that all people can return complex-free to their own cultural and religious roots. There is no longer a dominant culture, nor are there cultural inferiority or superiority complexes.

This means that citizens in the West but probably also elsewhere, are asking more and more questions about the ultimate significance and meaning of life and about the foundation of values. There is, so to speak, a new – formulated or unformulated – quest for transcendental meaning. Some, like Malraux, spoke of the rediscovery of a spiritual dimension of life in the XXIst century. The same questioning seems to be happening through every culture, so that in Asia, or in Islam, we could eventually find citizens asking the same questions. They want to return to their religious roots in order to search for God. In our jargon those citizens world-wide could be defined as “transmodern”, which means keeping the best of modernity but going further in search of transcendental meaning. They should not too quickly be stigmatised as “fundamentalists”, neither in the West nor in other cultures. The point is that we see the same type of conflicts of interpretations within every culture

In other words, we are wondering whether we perhaps need to change our vision and our political analysis. Hitherto Western policy has tended to consider every desire to include a transcendental approach in politics as anti-Modern and therefore “fundamentalist”, and the political judgement has been squarely negative. Are we sure that this judgement is correct? What if this new questioning is, in some cases, evidence of a transmodern search for meaning? Are we, the Western political analysts, ready to opt for a new type of dialogue instead of confrontation?

In a globalised world, we are thus confronted conflicts not so much with between cultures but rather between interpretations inside and outside every culture. These different interpretations or paradigms actually apply across each of the great civilisations and religions. Our hypothesis, therefore, is that the most difficult conflicts to manage tomorrow will be conflicts between world views. Such conflicts will be all the more difficult to manage as they are invisible. The paradigms are like a pair of spectacles which we cannot see. They constitute a frame of reference. The frame is normally neither conscious nor visible. The positive side of this hypothesis is that dialogue between representatives of different cultures turns out to be much easier than foreseen if they share the same interpretation.

As we see it, the most dangerous conflicts of tomorrow could be between interpretations rather than between religions. And the West could be creating some of the worst and dangerous conflicts in misunderstanding the rise of a search for meaning and transcendental values in the rest of the World as purely premodern and/or “fundamentalist”. In our hypothesis a completely different approach may well be desirable and urgently needed.

1.2.2. The most difficult conflicts to manage will be conflicts between world views (paradigms) within each of these religions and cultures.

Such conflicts will be all the more difficult to manage since they are invisible. The paradigms are like a pair of spectacles which we cannot see. They constitute a frame of reference. The frame is normally neither conscious nor visible. These conflicts are all the more dangerous in that their protagonists do not understand what they are actually fighting for. In practice, the following three types of conflict surround us, but are little analysed:

a) - The pre-modernists v modernists conflict

It is the conflict between the sacred -authoritarian- religious values driven - tradition anchored- vision and the rational-Human rights- free trade - secular approach. This kind of conflict can be observed everywhere.

Example: Third World populations feel disillusioned with development: many in the third world are beginning to feel discouraged. Their position is worse than it was thirty years ago. They have become secular and materialist but they have not been enriched. They feel that they have sold their souls for nothing and might just as well return to the world view of their ancestors. They have lost interest in becoming modern, and westernise.

b) - Premodern against transmodern

This is the most invisible conflict within each culture. This conflict is between those who adhere to a rigid interpretation of the Tradition and those who accept the tradition but in a dynamic and adaptive way.

Example 1: In Iran, for example, there is conflict between the opinion of the majority (many women) who voted for the moderate new President Kamenei, and who considers themselves to be Muslim but also tolerant and open to the positive aspects of progress, and a "clerical" minority which is fiercely premodern. If this conflict really exists, usually we in the West do not apprehend it. And so we tend to classify all the non-modern in the same category, as "fundamentalists". But in doing so we are blind to trends that could be similar those at work inside our Western Societies.

Example 2: Inside Christianity there are groups have a very rigid concept of tradition (e.g. the Jehovah's Witnesses) and others that do not (liberal Christians). Conflict has often brought explosions and separations.

c) - Modern against transmodern

The conflict here is between the rational- scientific –secular approach and the post-secular- complexity-networking- flat organisational, spiritual- vision.

Example 1: In our societies, moderns ridicule and underestimate the importance of the transmodern tendency, treating them as "marginal New Agers". This is what the media often do. We interpret this as a subtle form of conflict between the dominant modern view in crisis, and the new emerging transmodern view.

Example 2: Another form of conflict is the sustainability approach (transmodern), which calls for a different view of society, economics, governance. They are no longer satisfied with the modern view, because it is not sustainable. Modernist opponents claim the opposite.

d) - Finally, if we analyse some conflicts with a religious dimension more closely, looking for instance at India or Northern Ireland, those who wage "religious wars" are usually premodern (I. Paisley, in Northern Ireland). Their definition of Truth is intolerant. The citizens who resist those wars are usually transmodern, and tolerant (part of the liberal clergies in Northern Ireland) . And the political authorities too often have a modern approach, which is also intolerant. Unhappily the solutions they propose are too rational (Peace in Israel presented as a rational choice) to be accepted by premodern fighters. A transmodern approach would be more suitable.

1.3. The logic behind our Agenda:

We have tried first to investigate whether our working hypothesis corresponded to the participants' experience. In the first part we investigate the changes occurring inside and across the world religions. Are those changes so similar that they indicate a common paradigm change? Is there a parallel shift of paradigm inside each of the great religions? In the second part we ask the same question in the political field. Is political governance confronted with the same type of changes? In the third section we try to see how we could put together both analysis of the changes, or absence of changes. We did not intend to conclude this research Seminar with a binding declaration. The concluding part is thus more of a round table discussion, where everyone can express points of agreement and disagreement.

1.4. Structure of this report:

In the first part we will reproduce the texts of the presentations. This report will concentrate on the issues which we consider as central to our research. In the second part we will give an outline of the main topics of the debates, always following the line of our main questioning.

Marc Luyckx

NB: Broad definition of Religion.

Religion can be defined as spiritual experience linked to a system of beliefs. This narrow definition is not discussed here. But there is a broader definition of religion as the vector of culture and identity, ethics and values. This latter concept is what we are studying here.

FIRST PART :

TEXTS OF INTERVENTIONS

1. Harlan Cleveland and Marc Luyckx: “Governance and civilisations”

(Working document proposed to the participants)

1. Introduction

In the modern era, the separation of religion from government has been a doctrine often repeated and as often ignored, bypassed, honoured in the breach. That separation was in turn a subhead of the distinction between “private” and “public”, a dotted line fading fast as governments farm out to private entities a growing proportion of the public business, and private organisations play a more muscled part in making public policy.

In the post-modern era, however it comes to be described, we already use the word “governance” to suggest that the organised functions required for a people to govern themselves go far beyond what “governments” can effectively fund or cause to happen. Within this framework, it now seems overwhelmingly likely that “religion” (defined as “organised spirituality”) will play a weightier role in governance – and indeed, that individual spirituality will be an increasingly important element of leadership in every domain.

Both concepts, “religion” and “governance,” will carry into the 21st Century a great deal of cultural baggage, the heritage of long spiritual traditions and of theory, trial, and error in organising human beings to work together toward common goals. It will be important to understand this inherited mix of wisdom and unwisdom, to analyse the changing dynamics of spirituality as they interact with the changing dynamics of governance.

2 – Shifting ways of thinking

It may be useful to think of our time as a time of transition, from a **modern** way of thinking, still besieged by the backlash of **premodern** mindsets, toward a worldview that (because not even its advocates know just how to describe it) we will call simply **transmodern**.

The premodern worldview is an enchanted vision which evidently was functional in primarily agrarian societies of the past. There is one Truth, given to all people by a higher wisdom (“our God” or plural gods), the source of authority and the foundation of values. Spiritual authority is delegated to religious intermediaries; they, as surrogates for the spiritual authority, are responsible for making the rules of behaviour for individuals and supervising the morality of political authorities. Authority of many kinds is exercised mainly by men, who in turn oversee the functions of women and children and are responsible for their behaviour. The core values of society are stable; the sacredness of tradition is society’s unshakeable foundation.

The modern outlook began as a healthy reaction against religious authorities who feared scientific discovery, resented independent thinking, and resisted technological development. Modernity pushed the clerical authorities aside; in the resulting secular societies, it relegated religion to the “private” sphere – making it harder in “public” affairs to raise questions of meaning, ethics, intuition, or the spirit. If premodern society, asserting a sacred foundation for values, was “enchanted,” modern society was “disenchanted.” Rational analysis and empirical proof were in the ascendant; truth was what could be discovered, rationalised, and proved by the scientific method. Science was itself sacralized, and religious intermediaries were no longer required as channels to the Truth.

The pedestal of Reason has in this century been eroded by experience that scientific discovery and technological innovation can lead not only to miracles of change but also to unprecedented dirt, damage, and disease; by repeated demonstrations that rational planning can take us efficiently to where we don't want to be when we get there; by new kinds of science, such as chaos theory, that seem to depend as much on intuition as on reasoning; by testimony of some scientists about how much they don't know and can only guess, or pray to understand; and by the increasingly obvious limitations of the hierarchical, pyramidal, bureaucratic structures which had earlier seemed the rational way to organise human cooperation.

A transmodern way of thinking is now emerging. It features a creative mix of rational and intuitive brainwork; an enthusiastic embrace of new information technologies; a tolerance, even celebration, of diversity; a conviction that protection of the physical environment has to be a central concern for every human being; a dawning realisation that scientific discovery and technological innovation have made human beings the dominant actors in their own future evolution; a new openness to spiritual guidance as a basis for "private" behaviour and "public" policy; and a move away from vertical authority systems toward "flatter," more "horizontal" organisations, away from "recommendations-up-orders-down" management and toward more consensual decision-making.

It is important to observe that the very concept of "transmodern" indicates that the best of modernity has to be kept, but that there is an urgent need to go beyond. Modernity has brought us indeed excellent and indispensable progress. It has helped us to distinguish what was confused. As Ken Wilber rightly explains, modernity has enabled us to create art, science and morals, in installing the distinction between those disciplines which were interrelated before. This "distinction" has been crucial for the intellectual, artistic and ethical and religious progress of humanity. The problems began when an innovation became an excess: when the distinction became separation. It is indeed at this stage that the problems began to arise. Because the separation became exclusion. And as we have so greatly gained in civilizational level in shaping a space for ethics, aesthetics and science to be able to develop, we also suffer from those distinctions which have become separations and even exclusion of ethics and religion from science and public life.

The transmodern way of thinking is still a minority mindset, but it can no longer be discounted as a neglectable fringe. In the United States, recent survey research suggests that it is gaining ground with astonishing speed. In 1996 *The Integral Culture Survey*, by Paul Ray, counted 24 percent of U.S. adults, or 44 million, as "cultural creatives," who "are coming up with most new ideas in American culture, operating on the leading edge of cultural change." Two-thirds of this large category are women. The cultural creatives are of course a statistical category, not a "group" and certainly not "organised."

Duane Elgin's study of *Global Consciousness Change*, also published in 1996, finds five recurring themes as defining "the emerging worldview": global networks of information technology; global ecological awareness and concern; a shift in social values (toward environmental sustainability, toward greater tolerance for ethnic, racial, and sexual differences); a new interest in and practice of "lay spirituality"; and "shifts in work, diet, consumption patterns, transportation, relationships, or other areas that express a desire to live more sustainably".

The most ambitious effort, so far, to measure shifting values world-wide was the 1990-91 *World Values Survey*; it collected and collated a mountain of data from 43 countries containing almost 70 percent of the world's population, "covering the full range of economic and political variation".

Ronald Inglehart, its global coordinator, found what he called a "post-modern shift" well under way in about a dozen countries, all in North America and northern Europe. As summarised by Duane Elgin, people in these countries "are losing confidence in all kinds of hierarchical institutions" and in traditional institutions as well, "placing more emphasis on personal authority or the authority that comes from an inner sense of what is appropriate". They feel materially more secure, so they value "more meaningful work and the quality of the work experience, and tend to rank environmental sustainability over economic growth". Declining participation in organised religion is "linked with a growing interest in discovering personal meaning and purpose in life". In these countries especially, there is "a greater tolerance for ethnic, sexual, and political differences. And new roles for women are emerging "that allow for greater self-realisation".

Generalisations such as these cannot draw a neat picture of so complex a moving target as shifting ways of thought by millions of individuals. Anything said in this mode is likely to overstate the shifts where they are most prominent, and understate similar shifts of thinking among smaller proportions of people elsewhere.

Some of the “global mind shift” that is obviously going on can be attributed to opportunities stemming from quite recent technological change – the marriage of computers and electronic telecommunications, the stunning developments in genetics and biotechnology, the new choices opened up by space exploration and the chance to observe our home-planet with a genuinely global perspective.

Tools for thinking and communication don’t guarantee mind shifting. The spread of knowledge in our time is quite as much the result of social choices and political leadership – expressed in the starvation or feeding of quality schooling, vigorous or tepid support for higher education, protections or violations of the freedom to question and explore and invent and create.

Many countries’ citizens have been slow to change their minds because their leaders fear the consequences of “many flowers blooming” – as Mao Tse-Tung did, even though he popularised the phrase – in gardens they wish to control. But it’s dangerous not to take full advantage of new learning technologies; the breakdown of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union bears witness.

3. – Impact on religions and governance

The transmodern mind-shift – still far from dominant even where it is noticeable – has important implications for religions and their impact on governance in the early part of the 21st century. One of these is that organised religions will be sharing their turf with “unorganised spirituality.” Another is that their leadership, traditionally monopolised by men, will be increasingly shared with women. Yet another is that in the emerging worldview, the rigid separation of “us” from those professing other faiths will no longer be saleable doctrine or feasible politics; the acceptance of variety, the protection of diversity, and doctrines of tolerance seem more and more essential to security and survival. A fourth result of the transmodern worldview is this: the pervasive and continuing impact of globalisation on every human activity is reinforced by the growing *acceptance* of globalisation by those “coming up with new ideas . . . on the leading edge of cultural change”.

Toward the end of our current century, one of the striking current trends is the large number of people who, professing a belief in God by whatever name, are moving away from the institutions which have traditionally intermediated divine worship and provided blessings on births, deaths, and everything important in between. In so doing, many of these people have by no means abandoned spirituality; they have found outlets for their spirituality in small-group practices that “search for God” in ways that are genuine alternatives to traditional practices in churches, temples, mosques, and synagogues.

In the US, the membership in “mainline” religious denominations is already down by some 25% from earlier peaks. Some of this certainly counts people who drop out of “organised religion” while actively searching, in New Age or other environments, for personal or small-group ways to express their natural spirituality. There may also be more “shopping around” and switches of allegiance between organised religions than ever before; the growth of Islam in the United States is one example.

These trends thus do not betoken a veering away from “spirituality”. Human beings often seem naturally to reach out for more satisfying belief systems. In the absence of settled certainty, every organised religion is bound to be a “temporary home” to a good many restless spirits in its constituency.

The growth of “unorganised spirituality” certainly complicates the interaction between organised religions and the institutions of governance (governments, but also corporations, associations and the many other elements of “civil society”). Among the people who don’t feel the need for spiritual guidance from large established human institutions will be a good many activists on secular issues – such as human rights, environmental protection, or economic fairness – who will nevertheless present their case as motivated by spiritual concerns with wide political appeal.

As we move toward the changes implied by the transmodern worldview, it appears that women are often quicker to understand and more open to adaptation than men. That is, for example, the lesson of Paul Ray's finding that two-thirds of the subset of Americans he calls "cultural creatives" are women. Why would this be? And what does it portend for the nature of the coming changes and for the leadership in bringing them about?

First, why? One reason that leaps to the eye is that in every modern society women are on the average less identified with or beholden to the patriarchal structures, pyramidal management, and vertical leadership styles characteristic of modern industrial society. Women are also typically more intuitive than men. If moving toward "transmodern" ways of thinking and acting implies a new openness to spiritual guidance, women can be expected to be among the frontrunners. Even in traditional religious institutions, a majority of congregations have been women, and the same seems to be true – anecdotally but observably – of communities where "unorganised spirituality" is strong.

The transmodern mindset gives promise of dialogue that avoids trying to persuade the not-yet-modern first to "modernise" (a goal now freighted with cultural baggage from the industrial era, including vertical authority systems and super-rational thinking). If women in other cultures can see a possibility of improving their personal situation (in terms of subsistence, rights, equality, and love) without having to dig up the roots of their cultural identity, the resulting dialogue might well be more fruitful than if it starts with "modernisation" as the first requirement. Within non-Western cultures, there seem to be a growing number of women who are reinterpreting their scriptures (the Koran, the Bible) in post-patriarchal ways – to produce a softer, more tolerant approach that doesn't threaten the basic faiths themselves. Such a dialogue might best be initiated by Western women accustomed to the uses of indirection in improvising on a general sense of direction.

The emerging transmodern image is a round table, around which people of both genders and all races, cultures and faiths sit to consider how to manage our common planetary home in a way that is responsible not only to its current inhabitants but to their grandchildren's grandchildren as well. There is plenty of room in this pluralistic scene for striving toward an ultimate, universal Truth – but the search requires tolerance of other peoples' chosen paths to the elusive goal, and of the differing liturgies with which they celebrate the goal and describe their search. And it doesn't require any seeker to concede that any of the other seekers has already found the Holy Grail – or that the universal/pluralistic search can now be called off.

This image is a far cry from today's reality, either in secular governance with its mostly two-sided processes for resolving conflict, or in the mostly exclusivist politics of organised religions.

Indeed, just when individual human rights have achieved superstar status in political philosophy, just when can-do information technologies promise what the UN Charter calls "better standards of life in larger freedom", distortions of cultural difference have scattered big, ugly boulders in the road called Future.

Cultural diversity is not the villain, but "culture" is being used – as *Kultur* has been used in other times and places – as a reason for repression, exclusion, or extinction. The trouble lies in overenthusiasm for cultural loyalties, which can create something akin to a runaway nuclear reaction. Without the moderating influence of other enthusiasms in civil society – acting like fuel rods in a nuclear reactor – the explosive potential gets out of hand. What's needed is the counterforce of wider views, global perspectives, and universal ideas. Equality is not the product of similarity; it is the cheerful acknowledgement of difference.

"The goal", as John Gardner says about communities large and small, "is to achieve wholeness incorporating diversity. That is the transcendental task for our generation".

The rapid spread of knowledge through global networks has already required business and finance, and the news and entertainment media, to adapt their workways, their marketing, and their planning to appeal to world-wide audiences. And this is only the front end of a long-range trend; the so-called "global networks" are still far from global in a world where some two-thirds of the people don't yet have a telephone.

It is not, therefore, surprising to find each of the Great Religions operating in a more and more global context. They proselytise beyond their traditional geographic regions. They become more eclectic as they try to appeal to more and different kinds of people. And, since religious experience depends heavily on how it is expressed and received, they are interpreting or modifying their stories to make them more understandable in more languages.

Moreover, world religions are more and more universally available. Pilgrimages to Mecca or Rome or Jerusalem – or China or Tibet or India or Sri Lanka – have been speeded up by jet aircraft; and their virtual equivalents are now coming into homes by television and into personal computers via Internet.

The opportunities are also enhanced for “unorganised spirituality.” Teachers, preachers and therapists representing hundreds of varieties of specialised inspiration are spreading wherever freedom of speech, freedom of communication and freedom of peaceable assembly are protected.

In other domains the globalisation trends illustrate an ambiguity of outcomes: global standards coexist with global diversity. In matters of cuisine, for example, the standardisation of healthy hamburgers and tasty fried chicken is spreading in every world city, but no faster than the proliferation of ethnic restaurants in those same cities. The new information technologies help exclusive faiths to spread beyond traditional jurisdictions; they also may amplify the voices of those reaching for a wholeness that incorporates the religious diversity. “No one can speak for the world of faiths”, says the Episcopal Bishop of San Francisco, William Sweet, in his forthcoming book about United Religion. “But someone must shout to hear an echo. I do believe that an echo will be coming from the indigenous, from women, from spiritual margins, from the restless pious, from children, from refugees of religious intolerance, even at last from religious leaders. . . . I have an utter urgency because of the squandering of the treasure chest of spirituality which religions could offer the world if they could grow beyond mutual hatred to a place of mutual respect.”

4. Some examples of transmodern view

The majority of our political analysts have a bipolar vision of the world. They consider the existence of only two visions of the world, a good one and a bad one. The good one is the “modern” one. To be modern is to accept the rule of (Western) law and the superiority of rational and linear thinking over intuition, poetry or spirituality. Time is framed by the concept of linear progress. Law is framed by the Western “universal human rights” definition. The paradigm is best translated in the concepts of “progress” and “development through economic growth and free trade”. Those key concepts are the supreme values to be accepted world-wide if one wants to be “modern”. Naturally, it is not just anybody who is able to accept those truths. An important group of humans are not able to live up to such high standards of civilisation. They are considered underdeveloped. They are “backward”. They are in the other paradigm, the bad one : underdevelopment or backwardness.

If one accepts this clear distinction, the aim of politics world-wide is rather clear and does not need much discussion. We all agree that we should encourage by all means a maximum of people to leave the bad vision in order to embark on the good one. This is what the industrial paradigm calls progress.

The transmodern point of view is different. One accepts that there is a third paradigm, a third vision. This simple fact means that we are no longer in a period of stability. We are in a rather unusual period of historical change. Such periods are not frequent in history. It is thus normal that politicians are reluctant to embark on such a hypothesis. Politicians are not accustomed to manage change. Nobody is. And it is frightening.

In a modern vision, it is evident that Western Governments must defend the secular concept of government and help the forces which strive in that direction (e.g. the army). They must oppose a return to any kind of religious State.

But in a transmodern vision, we should ask ourselves if we really are certain that the fate of Turkey is to follow the path of a secular State which Attaturk imposed on the Turks at the beginning of the century? Why not listen to the growing new interpretation of Islam in Turkey and to the growing group of transmodern Turkish women? Perhaps we could help them to revive the tradition of

tolerance of Ottoman Muslim history. Perhaps Turkey could then shift to the side of the tolerant “Asian” Muslim block, which constitutes a majority of the Muslim world.

The peace advocates in Israel, on both sides, are strictly “modern”. They must limit themselves to explaining that peace is a reasonable choice, a “rational” one. This position is logical and understandable. In no way the peace advocates have to be activating any kind of religious war.

In fact, religious motivations are left to the opponents of both sides, because modernity has not and should not have anything to do with those religious arguments.

In the new vision, there is a distinction but not a separation between religion and politics. This means that political leaders could use religious arguments if they really believe in them. They could for example say publicly that: *“if there is only One God, He is certainly not so cruel as to give the same land to two different nations at the same time, in exclusivity. If God exists, He certainly wants the people to live in peace on the same land.”*

In a transmodern view religious, even theological, arguments are eventually usable arguments in politics. The taboo on religions (separation) is over. Is it not important to counter the exclusivists on their own battlefield?

Madeleine Albright (US Secretary of State) is totally right to oppose any discussion of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Human rights are universal and the core of modern vision of politics. *“She does not think that countries have the right to reconsider the UN Human Rights Declaration”*.⁴ She is, like us all, in a modern view.

In a transmodern view, we could say: Yes, human rights have been a creation of Western culture. Yes, Western culture and more precisely Christianity have invented the concept of “person”. And this is definitely a positive contribution to the world. But why not to listen to other (Asian) cultures who insist on other crucial aspects of life like the “community” aspect? Would it not be wise to get rid of our superiority complex? And if we are going towards a new tolerant paradigm open to a transcendental dimension, why not agree to sit down with the other cultures on an equal footing around a table? Why not trust and value the different cultures of the world? If we then really dialogue on human rights with the other cultures, we will be probably confronted with real differences and oppositions. We will probably have to use non-linear logic. But is there another way out?

For the moment the European Union and the West are sending Russia a message of “modernisation”. And this is necessary. It is also a fact that Russian culture wants to assimilate the best acquisitions of modernity, but perhaps not the defects. Does “orthodox” culture have to pass through the same path of secularisation and laicization as us? And could the orthodox culture not become an enriching partner in the building of a transmodern global culture open to transcendence and tolerance? Has orthodox culture not a rich mystical and contemplative tradition to offer which is so needed today? And so have they not an indispensable contribution to make to the new global civilisation?

If we were shifting to this policy, would the whole dialogue with Eastern Europe not change pattern?

5. - Synthesis

It is clear that the wall between religion and government is so porous as to be an unreliable guide to attitudes and actions. “Governance” describes a scene in which decisions about public policy are formulated and carried out by multiple organisations, “public”, “private” and (mostly) mixed. “Religion,” organised and unorganised, is therefore likely to play a growing part in the making of public policy and carrying it out.

If, in the early part of the next century, world religions come to play the important role that André Malraux foresaw and others are forecasting, what kinds of conflicts are most likely to occur?

Based on our analysis, it seems likely that conflicts will *not* mostly be either (a) because organised religions collide in the historic “clash of civilisations” envisaged in the recent writings of

⁴ See INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE : July 29.1997. p. 1. “Albright warns Malaysia US. will fight for rights”.

Samuel Huntington, or (b) because politics inside and between nations reverts to another historical precedent, the clash between clerical and secular authority (i.e. between “premodern” and “modern”).

But a third kind of clash, increasingly visible both in internal and international politics in recent years, is now making its way to centre stage. It is the split between “fundamentalists” of many varieties who see their traditional scriptures and teachings as so absolute as to divide humankind into irreconcilable believers and infidels, and others who see their ancient traditions or new spiritual insights as raw materials for wider human reconciliation, as the basis for an intensified search for common purpose among people of differing races, creeds and national origins. In short: the split is between “premodern” and “transmodern.”

“Fundamentalists” of many faiths – in Eric Hoffer’s language, “true believers” – often feel threatened by modern society and modern worldviews. The reverse is equally true. Huston Smith suggests that we are all both absolutist and tolerant – but about differing beliefs. “Conservatives” often fear the messiness and disintegration that tolerance of pluralism can produce. “Liberals” often do not understand “the wholeness that certainty can bring” to the human psyche; because humans are fallible, some absolutes seem required as the glue that holds communities together.

The “transmodern” way of thinking outlined in this paper is *actively* tolerant. It acknowledges that it’s important for all civilisations to be receptive to that which is alien, whatever form this may take. It is open to the transcendental, while resisting any authoritarian imposition of religious certainty. The Truth is at the centre of things; each person converges toward it with his/her own culture, along his/her own path. Nobody has a monopoly of the Truth any more – yet it does exist.

To begin a constructive dialogue with societies immersed in cultures different from our own, we might do well to start with a moment of truth-telling, along these lines:

We, for our part, are products of a secular industrial society. But we realise that we can no longer discuss political futures without also discussing questions of meaning, spirituality, and cultural identity. We are therefore asking you to join us in a serious effort to project mutually advantageous futures for our societies. In order to do this, we will all have to set aside our superiority complexes, our intolerances, whether based on scientific rationalism or on spiritual tradition, and our dreams of having our views prevail in the whole world.

2. Buddhism: Susantha GOONNATILAKE

The origins of Buddhism are in the region of Bihar and Nepal in 242 before Christ. One can define five "core beliefs" which represent a common approach of all Buddhist branches.

1. "Come and See" This is one of the main characteristics of the teaching of Buddha. I have nothing hidden in my hand. You and you alone have to experience the Truth.
2. Yes, in fact don't trust anyone, your father, your mother, the scripture, don't trust even me, but find out by yourself what is life.
3. Another core belief is that "it has no self, it has no soul", "I" do not exist, "I" am a constructed temporal entity". When my father died we hang up a board saying: "All compounded things decay: Being, thoughts, entities. We are all are part of a process and go from the past to the future". It is like a Whiteheadian process".

4. Description of the human condition and how to get away from it. It provides with a lot of "mental technologies": How to jump within your subject, how to observe it and how to observe the prime reality that one does not exist except in a conventional sense.
5. There is no God. Women and men are equal. There are no casts. Ethics is very fluid, situational.

Starting from those core beliefs the main groups are Teravada (Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, South Vietnam), Waytiriana (Tibet, Mongolia), and Mahayana (residues in China, Korea, Japan). Buddhists were the first missionaries in the World and travelled very extensively around the World in the 4th century. Buddhism died in India where it was born, but its cultural influence is still visible.

Dr Goonnatilake believes that in the coming years Asia, notwithstanding its current problems, will become the centre of economic gravity of the world, even if the per capita income is lower than in the West. In this context, the question facing Asians is a very important one: "Meanwhile we will have an increasing economic power world-wide, will we become still more cloned Europeans and Americans, and be condemned to play a secondary role in the knowledge and creativity society, or will we be able to go back to our cultural and religious roots in order to bring to the world our specific cultural richness and wisdom in the new future management of a more sustainable and just world."

There are signs that Asians could go to a rediscovery of their roots. Dr Goonnatilake indicates there is a movement in Buddhism in this direction. The founder of international Buddhism stated in 1982 that Buddhism had to come to terms with modernity and confront it. Modernity is an ethnocentric construct invented and enforced by the Europeans. It supposed the putting aside of Asian cultures' wisdom and religions and the adoption of the rational scientific approach of the West. Modernity is no longer the dominant mood.

In Asia we are currently witnessing a real kind move beyond modernity. There is a revival and at the same time a new dialogue with new concepts linked to the new technologies and the knowledge society. Every month there is somewhere in Asia a meeting of monks and laymen across denominational barriers. They all are trying to reflect on their cultural identity in front of a changing world. We are now even observing a revival of Buddhism in countries like Taiwan, which had been completely christianised and is rediscovering its Buddhist roots.

On the other side, mainly since the New Age founders, the West is beginning to be inspired by Buddhism. Philosophers like David Hume and Whitehead have flirted with Buddhism, as politicians like the ex-leader of the German Green Party, Patricia Kelly. Medicine and business are beginning to assimilate the notion of meditation and mental technologies as a mainstream technique of healing. Authors like Daniel Goldman⁵ have studied Buddhist thinking in Asia. Even post modernism is influenced by that notion of non-self.

As we face new technologies and perhaps a new civilisation. As we face the eventual implantation of chips in us, what are the methods that we will use. Buddhism, according to Goonnatilake, really has a set of *navigational techniques in knowledge* and *mental technologies* to offer. The very idea of *non-self* could be useful. "I am not, therefore I exist and I think".

⁵ Daniel GOLDMAN/ *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* Bantam Books New York 1995.

3. Islam: Prof. Ziauddin SARDAR

Professor Sardar distinguishes five types of interpretations inside Islam today.

1. *Literalists*: they interpret the Qur'an in a very narrow sense and allow no new reinterpretation. Let us take for example the concept of *idjma* meaning that every interpretation of Islam must reflect the broadest consensus. The Literalists reduce this broad consensus to a "consensus of the learned few", thus in fact to an elite of powerful people.

2. *Fundamentalists*: This concept is completely new in Muslim history. The very essence of Islam is universal and anti-nationalist. It does not recognise any geographical boundaries. People are different and should recognise and celebrate those differences. The Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet, particularly his last sermon, are explicitly against nationalism. "There are no differences between Arabs and non-Arab, black and white". And so you cannot build a politics of national identity using Islamic tradition. The very concept of Nation State has been invented by modernity and imported into Islam as something new. In this sense *modernity has shaped the very concept of fundamentalism inside Islam* in introducing this notion of national identity. This great importance of the nation State in Islam today is thus a recent distortion of Islamic tradition. Fundamentalists are political activists using modern concepts that they have introduced into Islam in order to shape the very notion of political Muslim identity.

3. *Critical traditionalists*: One of the most prominent thinkers in this field is Rait Samin, the opposition leader in Indonesia against Suharto. They base themselves on this phrase of the prophet: "In each age my followers will reinterpret religion (*mustahid*)". In every epoch Islam is there to be reinterpreted in contemporary times. This new interpretation has to compete with the interpretation of the Literalists and others. My hope is that critical traditionalists are coming to the fore in a growing number.

4. *Modernist Muslims*: Fifteen years ago, modernisation of Islam was a big issue. We have worked very hard to try to modernise Islam. We have played with modernity in every possible way, and we have lost. We were forced to accept the modern Truth, without any acceptance for our Truth. Our Truth was considered backwardness. But there was a sudden halt to this fifteen years ago. With the Rushdie affair, we felt the sacredness of our tradition being trampled on. And we decided to divorce from modernity. In fact our recent history is the "*working of modernity out of our system*", in our Muslim societies. Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia (certain examples) and Sudan are good examples of this "demodernisation". *Modernist Muslims is a category that has disappeared completely, and this is a sign of hope.*

5. *Postmodernism*: Postmodernism has further marginalized tradition and traditional cultures, creating a siege mentality in historic communities. Postmodernism is what comes after modernity; it is post in terms of time; it is a natural conclusion of modernity. This is why it is sometimes described as "the logic of late capitalism". It represents a linear trajectory that starts with colonialism, continues with modernity and ends with post-modernity, or postmodernism. It is not surprising that postmodernism and tradition are like two fuming bulls in a ring: they are inimically antagonistic to each other. Postmodernism states that all big ideas that have shaped our society, like Religion, Reason, Science, Tradition, History, Morality, Marxism, do not stand up to philosophical scrutiny. There is no such thing as Truth. Anything that claims to provide us with absolute truth is a sham. It must be abandoned. Moreover, postmodernism suggests, there is no ultimate Reality. We see what we want to see, what our position in time and place

allows us to see, what our cultural and historic perceptions focus on. Instead of reality, what we have is an ocean of images; a world where all distinction between image and material reality has been lost. Postmodernism posits the world as a video game: seduced by the allure of the spectacle, we have all become characters in the global video game, zapping our way from here to there, fighting wars in cyberspace, making love to digitised bits of information. We float on an endless sea of images and stories that shape our perception and our individual “reality”.

6. *Transmodernism*: Transmodernism is the transfer of modernity from the edge of chaos into a new order of society. As such, transmodernism and tradition are not two opposing worldviews but a new synthesis of both. Traditional societies use their ability to change and become transmodern while remaining the same! Both sides of the equation are important here: change has to be made and accommodated; but the fundamental tenets of tradition, the source of its identity and sacredness, remain the same. So we may define a transmodern future as a synthesis between life enhancing tradition – that is amenable to change and transition – and a new form of modernity that respects the values and lifestyles of traditional cultures. It is in this sense that traditional communities are not pre-modern but transmodern. Given that vast majority of the Muslim world consists of traditional communities that see their tradition as a life-enhancing force, the vast majority of Muslims world-wide are thus more transmodern than pre-modern.

Most politicians, bureaucrats and decision-makers do not appreciate this point. The reason for this that when traditions change, the change is often invisible to the outsiders. Therefore, observers can go on maintaining their modern or post-modern distaste for tradition irrespective of the counter-evidence before their very eyes. The contemporary world does provide opportunity for tradition to go on being what tradition has always been, an adaptive force. The problem is that no amount of adaptation, however much it strengthens traditional societies, actually frees them from the yoke of being marginal, misunderstood and misrepresented. It does nothing to dethrone the concept “Tradition” as an “*idee fixe*” of western society. The West has always seen Islam through the lens of modernity and concluded that it is a negative, closed system. Nothing could be further from the truth. Islam is a dynamic, open system with a very large common ground with the West. **But to appreciate this, Islam has to be seen from the perspective of transmodernism and understood with its own concepts and categories.**

Islam is intrinsically pluralistic. It considers that in essence every culture has a piece of the truth. Modernity is intolerant and has pushed us away from our part of truth.

4. Judaism: Rabbi Albert Guigui

Why is there a need for interpretation? Because the text of the Bible is sometimes mysterious, unclear, or even contradictory. Therefore, besides the “Torah”, the Bible text, we have the Jewish Tradition called “Talmud”. The Talmud is precisely a compilation of explanations and interpretations concerning the text of the Bible. Interpretations can be very divergent. Let us take one example. “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”. This text seems obviously to ask for revenge. But the very old (4th century) interpretation of the Talmud forbids applying this text directly and proposes a contradictory interpretation. According to the Talmud, this text explains the ways you should compensate for the evil you have done to your neighbour. You will have to compensate for the suffering of the victim, for the unemployment period, for medical and pharmaceutical costs, but also for psychological and spiritual damage (*boshet*).

For 2000 years, since the time of Jesus, there have already been three approaches to interpretations of Judaism: the Pharisees were for a strict interpretation of the text, the Sadduceans were more liberal and the Essenians were even stricter than the Pharisees. Today, within Judaism we have also different groups: Orthodox, Traditionalists, Liberals, Conservative.

Fanatics are not religious people. I did not count them inside the categories of interpretation, because they are not in Judaism. They are idolatric. Because the whole central idea of Judaism is respect for differences. The deepest meaning of creation is that if we are all children of the same Father, we are all fundamentally equal, we are all brothers. There is no place in Judaism for superiority of one human over another. The key word in Judaism is Peace. In our language peace is the famous word “*shalom*”, derived from the word “*le ashlim*”, which means “complement each other”. So real peace is in complementarity and mutual enrichment.

5. Christianity: Bishop William Swing

Bishop Swing draws a picture of the ferments of change in six main groupings inside Christianity.

1.-Catholicism: Through its radical opposition to communism, has been an important element in the dismantling of the iron curtain. The second element of internal change is the Vatican Council II. But the internal impact of it on the Church is debatable since there has been such an important antimodernist reaction from the central administration. The election of the next Pope could be an important issue.

2.-Orthodox Church: (300 000 000): Globally Orthodoxy is enjoying a vibrant resurgence and revival of interest. But it is confronted with two threats: structures of authority and modernisation. The Patriarch of Constantinople is confronted with terrorist threats and attacks against the headquarters in Istanbul. And now that the wall is down, Moscow is again questioning its relation with Constantinople. So far Orthodoxy has done well in maintaining its Tradition and its antique culture as the context for theology and liturgy. Will Orthodoxy allow a broader cultural base and agree to modernise?

3.-Anglican Communion (75 000 000): If Prince Charles comes to the Throne, he will become protector of all religions and no longer of the Anglican Church alone. This would change the status of the whole of the Anglican Communion. The tension between England and the rest of the world could well be played out at the Conference of the Anglican Communion this summer.

4.-Protestantism: The World Council of Churches (WCC) is experiencing a stressful time as money is no longer as easily available as before. How far will the financial slide go? Where will the Protestants be if the WCC continues its trajectory? The WCC does not represent all the Protestant Churches but only the majority, and it is as such a repository of wisdom and a critical network for global alliances and humanitarian action. There is no longer a great deal of passion behind denominational identity today. Lutherans (70 000 000) seem to be holding their own, but they are the exception.

5.-Independent Evangelical Churches. In the past Protestant Churches were primarily exports. Indigenous independent Churches are now popping up. They are neither Catholic neither Protestant. They no longer refer to Western culture but present Christianity in local cultural forms. In South Africa, in South America and in New South Wales Churches like these are popular. They are not interested in ecumenical dialogue or cooperation.

5.- Fundamentalists: This is a difficult category because people in this category do not advertise themselves as fundamentalists. They can be found among Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox, the independent Churches or in none of them. According to Professor Martin Marty, who completed a six-volume study on them, they see themselves as the absolute believers and as the custodians of pure Christian revelation, and as being alone in aligning their lives on this pure tradition. They are not interested in dialogue with non-fundamentalists. For the moment they do not constitute a political force in the same way the Muslim, Hindu and Jewish fundamentalists do.

6.- Chief issues facing Christian Traditions:

- Threats of secularism and its anti-Christian and anti-religious dimension.
- Rise of persecutions against Christian. They have perhaps never been so great.
- Availability of spirituality from other religions which lure members away from their Church.
- The impossible search for a way to cope with homosexuals in the Churches.
- The profound rise of interfaith dialogue.

In conclusion, the Christian faith is beset by internal conflicts and external threats but has a world of possibilities.

6. Confucianism: Dr Kim Tae-Chang

The first observation I would like to make is about my Name. In the list you have put my family name last. Please put my family name first. Confucianism is very serious about those “little” things. For us the name means very much, and the family name is much more important than the first name, because the family is of a crucial value. We usually also ask the participants in our Congresses to explain the correct pronunciation of their name. This is considered in Confucianist culture as the basic of basics of good manners.

If the clashes announced by Huntington would happen, which is not my wish, what kind of clash could we foresee between Christian and Confucianist cultures? One of the main conflicts, according to my experience, could be between *individualism and family values*. After having travelled and spoken with many people around the world, I came to the conclusion that *many conflicts start from the way you perceive yourself*. How do you identify yourself. This is also true in global politics: How does a group identify itself.

The *Confucian way to identify ourselves is through family*. This is the reason why the family name is very important. We do not identify ourselves primarily as individuals, but as part of a family. Family is a sanctuary where the generations meet together and pray together and look forward to the prosperity and happiness of future generations. Life is like a continuous flow. It is not a separate entity for each person. It has been transmitted from the ancestors through me to the future generations.

The Confucian concept of family consists of three main pillars. One is ancestor worship. We must be thankful for what the preceding generations have done for us, for what we are. Second, intergenerational solidarity, and third, responsibility for future generations. Family is the place of this solidarity. If people are egoistic, that is destructive. The constructive part of this culture is to extend this to the outside. If you cannot respect your parents, how will you be able to respect other people. So Confucius teaches that you should respect your parents first, and then you will be able to extend this respect to other people. This logic appears very mundane and common sense, yet it is rooted in a very deep, transcendent and spiritual vision.

Is there not a danger that the family becomes like a closed and egoistic entity? But if you have no longer have a family but only individuals alone, will we not have, as Hobbs says, “*homo homini lupus*”. Family in ancient times was based only on blood relationships. But in Confucianism the concept is fluid and flexible. We can open up the concept to wider membership and envisage the global society as a big family. *This could be the contribution of Confucian culture to the global society: helping with this broad family concept to transcend the boundaries of egoism and push towards solidarity with the present and future generations, towards a more sustainable and just world.*

Whenever I speak with European friends I discover an interesting convergence between some postmodernist philosophers and what many Asian thinkers have been saying for many years. I perceive a mood of dissatisfaction among intellectuals with the modern logocentrism, the liquidation of metaphysical narrow-mindedness of the ontological approach to reality, the social constructivism in psychological, epistemological and philosophical areas. I am very interested in what Wittgenstein call “*identityless identity*” and I observe also an increase in the relational dimension in philosophy. We in Asia have been discussing those matters for many years in Confucianism, Mahayana Buddhism and the Taoist thinking, which is a philosophy of change. While you Westerners are more inclined to reflect “*sub specie aeternitatis*”, from the point of view of eternity, we Asians are more interested, like the post-modernists, in reflecting “*sub specie mutandis*”, from the point of view of change.

This convergence is for me a source of hope. Time has perhaps come for us to meet together constructively and meaningfully, and initiate a process of “*trialogical imagination*”. Trialogical means putting together past, present and future so that the future be better for everyone and not be biased by a concentration on the present or on the past.

The Ministry of Culture in Japan published recently a book on “Several Important Questions on the Definition of Religion”. They came to the conclusion that there are at least 104 definitions of what religion is about. This is the beginning of the conflict among religions. Religion can definitely divide people, but religion can also unite people. It is perhaps time to work hard together in putting our imaginations and our hearts and souls together in order to invent and offer a better common future to the human family.

7. “Unorganised Spirituality”

Mrs Avon Mattison:

“L'esprit de la paix”

Allow me to begin with a quote from young people's statement to the UN Commission on Human Rights at a preparatory meeting in 1992: *“Children are suffering from the wars of adults. All life is interconnected and what we do to one another, we do to ourselves and the Earth. We have a right to a peaceful future.”*

1. The crucial role of spiritually creative minorities in the rise of new civilisations

As the historian A. Toynbee discovered, spirituality played a significant role in the rise and fall of civilisations. The “creative minorities” that helped build new cultures and civilisations from the ashes of the old did so upon the foundation of spiritual foresight and fortitude. In contrast, civilisations which lost their spiritual core declined. One such creative minority is a group involved in what the Cleveland / Luyckx document calls unorganised spirituality. An emerging trend is the rapid increase in this constituency from all nation who desire lasting global just peace, who are disenchanted with wars, narrow dogma evidenced in the growth of “literal traditionalism”, fundamentalism in some nations and in some religions, in economic disparity in environmental pollution etc. And this constituency is searching for both meaning and identity in this complex world.

2. From a fringe factor into a global trend: unorganised spirituality

This rising number of people has changed the fringe factor into a global trend. This growing tide includes people who recognise that universal truth and principles are expressed through all of humanity's religious and spiritual traditions. They also recognise the triple need for international cooperation, religious unity amid diversity, and ethical harmless conduct. In their search for meaning and identity, these planetary citizens are dedicated to building pathways to lasting and global peace. This unorganised spirituality is made up in part with people who might be called the new group of world servers. Two quotes from a trans... scholar in the 1930s: “The new group of world servers is composed of wildly diverse men and women gathered out of all nations holding many different points of view, and following many different professions and ideologies. It is therefore more truly representative of humanity and more truly potent than ever before. It is a group that has no esoteric organisation of any kind, no headquarters, no publicity, no group name. It is a band of workers and servers obedient to their own soul and to the higher group need. Whether their line of service is cultural, political, scientific, religious, education philosophical, ecological or economic, this group gives the word spiritual a wide significance”.

3. One of their focal points is building a world of peace

One of the many focal points for this creative minority in organised spirituality is in the area of building peace through human rights and human responsibilities. In 1984 the “Declaration of the right of peoples to peace” by the UN General Assembly stated that: “the establishment of a lasting peace on earth represents the primary condition for the continuation of any human civilisation and the survival of Humanity and all species” and further declares that the right of peoples to peace and the promotion of its implementation constitutes a fundamental governance obligation.

Linked with the right to peace, and the role of governance in fostering its promotion and implementation is another very active focal point for both unorganised spirituality and all religions.

4. The advent of a new millennium: a challenge for religions and unorganised spiritualities

The year 2000 has just recently been designated as the international year for the cultures of peace. At this axial point in History, when a majority of cultures and civilisations are forming, some aspects submerging whole and new ones emerging, both organised religion and unorganised spirituality have a crucial role in determining the quality of governance and the quality of life in the XXIst century. The collective wisdom of all spiritual traditions could help give enlightened direction and order to this complex process of governance during escalating planetary change.

Spiritual growth and the triple development of intercultural cooperation, religious unity with diversity and harmless human relations are mutually reinforcing and building a just and viable series of cultures of peace, for the children of future generations.

I would like to conclude with a quote from an ancient mantra of unification: *“Let vision come and insight, let the future stand revealed, let inner union demonstrate and outer cleavages dissolve. Let love prevail, let peace prevail.”*

8. Walt Truett Anderson: Observations

1. Two observations, in response to M. Andreani's question about the specifically political dimensions of some of the religious issues we have been discussing:

(1) One of the most striking features of the transition into Postmodernity is a change in the nature of conflict. The modern era was dominated by conflict between belief systems – between political ideologies, between religion and science, between one religion and another. That sort of conflict has by no means gone away, but it has been joined and largely overshadowed by conflict within belief systems. Typically these are disputes between traditionalists who regard the basic truths as eternal, unchangeable, and emanating from some extra-human source, versus those who regard them as socially constructed realities – created by specific people in response to the needs of a specific time and place – and subject to being reconstructed. These are what James Davison Hunter⁶ calls the “culture wars”, and you can find them within every belief system – between the true believers and revisionists in the Marxist world, between fundamentalists and liberals in every major organised religion.

(2) It may be useful in some cases to make a distinction between religious belief and religious identity. The two are obviously closely related, but not necessarily the same thing.

There are, for example, people who have religious beliefs, values and experiences but who do not choose to identify themselves with any religion, organised or unorganised. I know that such people exist, because I am one of them.

There are also people – and I know several – who participate actively in the rituals and traditions of a certain religion, such as Judaism or Catholicism, and do so quite explicitly not because they believe its theological doctrines, but because it gives them a certain comfort, a sense of belonging to a tradition and of knowing who they are.

And a good portion of the political unrest we associate with religion has more to do with identity than with belief – especially when people's self-respect is threatened by conditions such as poverty and political oppression. In such cases people may strongly identify with a religious tradition that affirms their feeling of being somebody, especially when it makes a strong distinction between “them” and “us”.

2. Introduction to panel on “Dynamics in Politics and Governance”

I think it is unfortunate that Prof. Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilisations* has been so frequently cited here, both in the background paper and in the comments of various speakers, usually with a comment that his scenario should not be allowed to come about. I say this not because I think Prof. Huntington is right but rather because, as we say in America, he's not even wrong. His analysis is useless even as a point of departure, because it is built on a two-dimensional map, depicting a world in which civilisations are distinct entities, with definite geographical locations and clear boundaries separating one from another. Most of the maps that people carry in their minds – and use when they form their political opinions, make their personal decisions, plan their lives – are two-dimensional, something like the brightly-coloured world maps, with their sharp lines separating one nation from another, that we all knew as children. The world doesn't work that way any more – perhaps it never did. In order to

⁶ James Davison HUNTER : Culture Wars: the struggle to define America: Making sense of the battles over the family, art, education, law, and politics. Basic Books Harper Collins 1995.

function in the years ahead, people will need to have an image of the world as multiple and overlapping systems, all of them in a continual process of change.

The French scholar-diplomat Jean-Marie Guehenno⁷ declares that “We are entering into the age of open systems, whether at the level of states or enterprises, and the criteria of success are diametrically different from those of the institutional age and its closed systems. The value of an organisation is no longer measured by the equilibrium that it attempts to establish between its different parts, or by the clarity of its frontiers, but in the number of openings, of points of articulation that it can organise with everything external to it.” This applies to religions as well – all the major organised religions are becoming open systems, with increasing contact with one another and changing boundaries. This is distressing to traditionalists, but I think it tells us a great deal about what the religious picture will be in the early 21st century.

When religions or nations become open systems they do not lose their separate identities, but they do behave in fundamentally different ways. New connections are made, boundaries change. In terms of governance we do not have to look far for an example of this, since we are meeting in the facilities of the European Union, not far from what was once the Maginot Line.

3. Apropos of multiculturalism

The American journalist Leon Wieseltier has said that the multicultural individual is a much more significant achievement than the multicultural society, and I think his point is quite accurate and highly relevant to what we are discussing here – indeed, not only to what we are discussing, but to who we are. I look across the room and I see Mr Tae-Chang Kim, who lives in Japan, Mr Sohail Inayatullah who lives in Australia, Mr Tony Judge who lives in Belgium. These and other people here are not only multilingual but multicultural, their identities and life experiences a blend of two or more different nationalities and historical traditions. There are many such people in today's world, and there will be more in the future. Personally I welcome that development, because multiculturalism seems to produce decent, interesting people – and because it expresses the true complexity of the human mind.

4. In response to Tony Judge's comment that the culture wars may soon be supplanted by epistemological wars

Culture wars are epistemological wars, if you dig into them deeply enough. They are not just conflicts between beliefs, but between beliefs about belief.

Part of what is happening in today's globalising, post-modern world is that – because of human mobility and the enormous mobility of cultural symbols that comes with new communications technology – more and more people are being confronted with otherness. Now, in the past, there were a limited number of ways people might react to an encounter with other people who held fundamentally different beliefs. First, they generally made the calculation that the others, being different, must be wrong. Then they either killed the wrong thinkers or converted them to correct beliefs, or some combination of the two. Today, as those responses fall into some disrepute, people all over the world are being forced to do some deep rethinking, forced to make some kind of adjustment of their beliefs about belief in a way that makes it possible for different views of what is right and true to coexist. This has to do, of course, with epistemology, although probably only about .001 percent of the people who are struggling with such matters today have ever heard of such a concept.

Some time ago, in a small meeting dealing with issues such as this, I made some critical comments about “absolutism”. A woman who was present there became quite threatened by this, and said that her religion was one of absolute faith. I asked her if she would expect me to believe the same thing and she immediately replied: “Of course not. I only meant that those things are absolutely true for me.”

⁷ Jean GEHENNO : *La fin de la démocratie* Paris Flammarion 1993. English version : *The end of the nation State* (Translator Victoria Pesce Elliott) hardcover, 1995.

What is particularly significant about this is that she had no particular awareness of having made a complex and highly sophisticated adjustment of her beliefs about belief. Not all people make this kind of an adjustment, of course, but many people are in their own ways working through such issues, and it is a tremendously important part of what is happening in our time.

9. Robert Cooper: “The post modern State”

Adam To Eve : “We are entering into a transitional phase ...

Let us try in a few minutes to draw a picture of the changes in the history of the State.

The pre-modern State: Here God is in power above the emperor. Religion is the ultimate meaning and the intellectual basis. The churches share legitimate force with the emperor who has an authoritarian and weak power, control may often break down. The structure is feudal and imperial. But progressively free cities emerge. Defence will aim at increasing territory even by war, in order to secure and increase the empire. The aim is defeating completely the enemy. Intellectual basis: religion.

The modern State: Modernity has invented the State, giving it the monopoly of legitimate force. Legitimacy no longer comes from God but from the people. Power is centralised and may be democratic or authoritarian. The State cares for social, industrial and military questions. There is a contrast between internal order and external disorder. Nobody now cares about the global order. Morality stops at the borders of the State. Defence will be exclusively aimed at national interests and based on secrecy. Mass armies increase the danger of total wars. Commerce can become a “casus belli” (reason of war). Foreign policy is aiming at the balance of power and is strictly reduced to national(istic) interests. There is a clear separation between internal and external policies. Influential intellectuals are Hume, Voltaire, Kant, Machiavelli and Clausewitz.

We are moving towards post modern forms of State. The European Union could be one of the first post-modern entities as, for Western Europe, the real post-modern age began in 1989. Here power is more diffused both domestically (growing influence of the media) and internationally. Industrial functions are reduced, while post-industrial information economy is growing. War is much less attractive. There are some characteristics of the post-modern State:

1. breaking down of the distinction between Domestic and Foreign Affairs
2. mutual interference in (traditional) domestic affairs and mutual surveillance,
3. the rejection of force in resolving disputes and the consequent codification of rules of behaviour,
4. growing irrelevance of borders, when missiles can reach everywhere,
5. security is based on transparency, mutual openness, interdependence and mutual vulnerability. The CFE Treaty on conventional forces in Europe is an excellent example. There is a complete reversal of the logic. The logical, normal behaviour of armed forces is to conceal their strength. Treaties to regulate and mutually observe the enemy’s army are an absurdity in “modern” strategic logic.

We can also observe a growing trend towards pooling of sovereignties in order to secure peace and stability through interdependence. Denationalisation (British Airways). Raising importance of the individual, of local concerns and cultures, even while economies are going global. Influence of internal policy, media and public opinion on external policy. Common Good concerns (ecology, social, ...) may emerge in foreign policy. Impossible to change borders by force.

Concerning religions I would say that less spiritual societies are more peaceful, because many causes of war can be linked to religion. If people are more individualistic and materialistic, they are in my opinion less inclined to wage war.

10. Arthur J. Cordell:

The social challenge in a changing governance

This panel being about crisis of governance, I would like to draw attention to another kind of “religious” danger: the kind of “religious belief” in deregulation, competitiveness and quantitative approach.

Information technologies as a major revolutionary force

Winston Churchill is reported to have said, “First we shape our buildings, then they shape us”. It is possible to say in a similar vein, First we shape our technologies, then they shape us. This century has seen communications technologies link the economic centres of the world as never before. Wiring up the world has brought integration or globalisation. Globalisation rests on an infrastructure of inexpensive, reliable and accessible digital networks. These networks carry sound, pictures, text or numbers, as a stream of digitised “bits” of information. A series of 1s and 0s. If a revolution can be defined as a very large change in a very short time, then information technology emerges as a major revolutionary force. It is being developed and implemented at ever faster rates. The policies of most western governments are aimed at innovation and rapid diffusion of Information Technology. There is hardly an OECD country around that hasn't been subsidising its computer sector, trying to build a software industry, or involved in building an information highway or an electronic superhighway.

Governmental structures refer to an earlier age

We have moved from an economy of tangibles to an economy of intangibles. From an economy of tangible commodities to an economy of intangible ideas, knowledge and information. Governmental structures refer to an earlier age. An age of hardware. An age of smokestacks, freightcars, manufacturing. A time when things could be measured. Policies could be based on more of this or that. Most government departments are in place to deal with yesterday's issues. The issues posed by information technologies are rarely the responsibility of any one department. Usually they are seen to be important, but important to the other department ... not to ours. So most of the policy issues posed by information technologies fall between departmental responsibilities. Governments call for more competitiveness, but in a world of intangibles it becomes increasingly difficult to know what to do, how much to spend to achieve this or that program, and how to measure the effectiveness of government expenditures. We are moving from an era of price competition to an era of competition in technology and quality. The developed world finds itself in a peculiar dilemma. With powerful global networks of communications and distribution it finds itself competing with the formerly separate markets of Asia and Latin America. Jobs in the auto factories, steel mills – in factories everywhere – have moved offshore. Firms using information technologies can issue orders, manage inventories, buy resources, design products, do research just about anywhere in the world. Firms can bring together all factors of production to produce goods and services anywhere on earth: global information and communication technologies mean that corporations can have a virtual presence anywhere. With global brand names the final product is produced anywhere; the final product is sold anywhere. The themes of the day continue to be competitiveness, productivity, efficiency, re-engineering. Helped by the powerful tools of information technologies we are re-inventing government and re-inventing just about all institutions. A paradox has caught the attention of developed nations. It has to do with the dramatic growth of the globalized, information-based New Economy.

A widening gap between the poor and the rich

While highly productive, the rewards are not widely distributed. Rewarding few, it downsizes many. Oozing wealth at the high end, the New Economy seems unable to distribute prosperity to those in the middle or at the low end. In nations with falling tax dollars, the physical, educational and social infrastructure declines. Universality in health, education, libraries – even access to clean water – is questioned as government tax revenues decline, as the budget deficit takes centre stage. The widening gap between rich and poor and the problems of governments struggling to provide citizens with basic services have been exacerbated by tax systems that haven't kept up with globalisation and the new economy. Managing the new economy using old tools threatens to lead to an outcome of more losers than winners. With the wealth from new technology flowing to the few, more and more people, in rich and poor countries, worry about jobs and run faster and faster to keep up. In the past 15 to 20 years, beginning with the airlines, we have witnessed a profound move to deregulation just about everywhere. Pundits tell us that we achieve a more efficient allocation of resources if prices are brought into line with costs. An added incentive to deregulate is that it will allow business to be more competitive in the new global business arena. And the arguments for deregulation are correct, from an economic point of view. But there are other values involved, as well as a view of community to be considered. As we privatise public functions, as we deregulate to cut costs and be competitive, we are undermining a way of life for many communities as well as a way of life for many who consider themselves to be middle class. Universality is another way of saying economic development. It means reasonable access to a host of services: potable water, education, libraries, access to a social and physical infrastructure. Where payment for services has been required, regulations were put in place to ensure that the high cost areas (the small communities, the out of the way areas, etc.) could still be served, could still be included – they were subsidised by payments from the low cost areas where prices were substantially above costs. Cross-subsidisation underpins the transportation system in North America. Creation of a transportation infrastructure was a nation-building exercise: canals, railroads, highways and an airline system. A way of denoting a jurisdiction, a way of defining community. Cross-subsidisation and regulation were harnessed to create a system where the strongest takes care of the weakest; the wealthier subsidise the poorer.

Deregulation as moving away from solidarity and inclusion

With deregulation we are moving away cross-subsidisation. We are moving away from universality. Our society is backing away from universality in a number of areas. The market agenda driven by the mantra of the need to “be competitive in a globalized world” is leading to an outcome that takes us back in time. To a time of class distinction. To a time of the rich and the poor. To a time before the broad middle class was created. The middle class upon which so much of the mythology of America and Democracy is based. The net effect is more than damage and hardship to communities and individuals. We are also giving up many of the hard-won gains of economic development. If we are not careful, we may find ourselves with many of the features we now ascribe to the third world: a two-tier society, lack of universality, upward mobility blocked, etc. Regulation and associated pricing schemes all too often seem to be illogical. But the intent is one where cross-subsidisation is created and endured because it serves a broader social purpose: that of inclusion. Deregulation and the quest for ever more efficient market solutions pose, for me, the greater cost (agreed one that cannot easily be measured): the risk of exclusion. If economics is about trade-offs, then I think we should take a closer look at what we are trading off in the name of economic rationality.

“Acting globally and thinking locally”?

I am sure that most can recall the mantra of “thinking globally but acting locally”, an idea that came from the environmental movement. It may be that globalisation is leading to a reversal of the mantra: it may be that the new reality is one where acting globally and thinking locally is all that nation-states can effectively manage. While the economy has gone global, the nation state is the place where citizens turn for a host of services: from education to medical care to income support when jobs are lost. The nation state provides the social and physical infrastructure in which individuals come into the world, are educated, raise families, find meaningful work, and finally leave the world. With more and more financial

activity moving to the global arena, it is at the local level where the real economy continues to exist. The economy of people, your neighbours, your community. Maintaining institutions and ways of living at the local level will be a challenge now and in the future. Paradoxically, it is at the local level where globalisation will be found to be a success or a failure. This panel is about crisis and change in governance. The rise of globalisation poses challenges to all our institutions. There are threats to social cohesion and thus to governance that are implicit in the quickening pace of globalisation. If the correct answers are not found by this conference, it is my hope that at least we have been able to determine the correct questions.

11. Jim Dator:

In US citizens and society has never been modern ...

A “wall of separation” between religion and State ?

In the US situation, the fact that the US Supreme Court has interpreted the US Constitution in very interesting and by no means obvious ways led to the doctrine of the “Wall of Separation of Church and State”.

Yet in US, official religion was, and somewhat still is, “Protestant/Catholic/Jewish” as Will Herberg wrote 40 years ago. There has never been a real wall of separation. Americans, officially and popularly, have always been vaguely spiritual. Belief in God is extraordinarily high, though utterly without form and void. And while almost all Americans equate religious belief with morality and correct behaviour – assuming that if a person does not believe in God that she is then an immoral and unethical person – it is in fact impossible to correlate virtually any religious belief in the US with any specific set of behaviours. In 1952 the USA put “In God we trust” on the dollar bill in order to fight atheistic communism. Also in the US, structural necessity of two party system means that there is no important ideological difference between two parties; but rather a general mushy blending of all of the major issues of the day. When religion is salient, both parties are vaguely religious; when religion is not a major public issue, then the parties and the governments, are vaguely secular.

The “modern” view was that of increasing secularisation, of decreased salience of religion, and of the inevitable rise of rationality. Post modernity – or rather transmodernity – has ended all that – but it was always more of a dogma, or faith, in reason, rather than reality. There has always been a struggle between popular religious beliefs and the alleged neutrality of the state towards all religions, and to none, in US history.

Seen many discussions of “religion in an age of science, or an age of reason”. There has NEVER been an age of science or of reason in the US. Always been an age of popular belief and superstition. Study after study shows a huge gap between what scientists believe, and what the public believes. Public does not believe the most basic scientific facts, such as the fact that the Earth rotates around the sun, rather than vice versa (“National Science Foundation” Study). Similarly, study after study shows that, in spite of the high regard in which “democracy” is held abstractly, most Americans would vote against the Bill of Rights, if it were placed on a ballot without identification as such. (Though even “democracy” is becoming unpopular, as more and more people do not trust elites of any kind, often for opposite reasons). But study after study WOULD show (if anyone were ever to study it) that there is a similar, if not larger, gap between what theologians believe and what lay people believe. Virtually everything ordinary people believe (if you ask them to state their religions beliefs) is heresy from the point of view of the theologians of their faith. It is surprising to me that we fret so much about scientific ignorance, but not at all about theological ignorance, which is at least as great.

What is happening now in the US is the general end of authority in all areas, and the rise of individual beliefs and fantasies.

This has always been a characteristic of the US experience (where a kind of popularised Baptist theology and polity is really the most widespread belief, regardless of Prot/Cath/Jew – the “priesthood of all believers”, the sanctity of each individual's belief against that of any authority. But this underlying orientation is being greatly exacerbated by the Internet. All the old experts of modernity are coming to the end of their expertise: librarians, journalists, scholars, doctors, lawyers, politicians – and priests and ministers too.

The Future?

And the possibility of a national Constitutional Convention which could re-write all current rights and duties and would almost certainly try to turn the US into a kind of theocracy. Also collapse *a la* USSR, especially given the social and environmental unsustainability of contemporary global capitalism. So, while one future of Church-State relations in US is the continuation of Prot/Cath/Jew, another, more likely, one is towards popular theocracy of the New Church, New Age and Promise Keepers variety. Another future is towards a Hobbesian war of all against all. Of course, this is also Toffler's 3rd Wave, which is the future seen, in their different ways, by Al Gore and Newt Gingrich – and by my students, who, unlike Harlan and myself, will be living in the 21st Century. To them, it is delightful anarchy and creative chaos, and they plan to make the best of it.

12. Lincoln Bloomfield:

“The social causes of tomorrow’s conflicts...”

I would like to change the focus here, shifting to a more strategic approach in order to analyse some principal sources of future conflicts.

1. The “invisible foot” of globalisation as main cause of hostility to the West

Historian Arnold Toynbee suggested that a historical “time of trouble” is usually followed by the coming of a “Universal Religion”. The irony of our times is that, rather than a universal religion, what follows the turbulent last half of this century is a thoroughly secular universal force which we call economic and financial globalisation. Despite its material benefits, in spiritual terms it seems to be the converse of the golden rule found in all religions. Instead, it is “Darwinian” – an a-moral force that makes Adam Smith’s invisible hand look rather like an “invisible foot”.

Prof. Samuel Huntington sees the “organised hostility to the West” as based on conflicts of religions and cultures. But in my view, growing economic and social alienation in some places is a more important cause of the hostility to the West than anything else. To explain radical behaviour, particularly among youth, in such places as Algeria, Cairo, Gaza (and Jakarta), unemployment, corrupt governments supported by the West, and lack of social services other than those provided by the fundamentalist Islamists, seem to me much more relevant. Theological differences seem of far less importance than these huge social and economic malfunctions. Ironically, globalisation of economics and information makes the cultural issue most visible in the mass export of Western, particularly American, “pop culture” through television and films emphasising violence, materialism and sex, successfully offending every religion around the world.

This all suggests the importance of some policy shifts both in the EU and in the US, although how to deal with this and still preserve freedom of information I confess I do not see clearly.

2. Another crucial struggle is between “truthists” and democrats

Looking into the next century, perhaps the key battle will be between what I call the “Truthists” versus the “tolerant democrats”. I put it that way because Truthists by definition do not tolerate any other truth than their own. The logic of their monopoly of truth leads them to preach intolerance. Truthists are of course famously to be found among Islamic fundamentalists in the heritage of Ayatollah Khomeini. But they also are found among ultra-orthodox Israeli Jews refusing peace; the clean-living – and brutally sexist – Taliban in Afghanistan; and some Christian fundamentalists in the US.

These all can be regarded as belonging (to add another category) to an “anti-modern” coalition that deserves to be opposed with the tools of Democracy. Democracies do not go to war between each other. Democracies provide institutions and space for freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and are by definition tolerant, with differences of opinion expressed peacefully under a fair rule of law. Policies that explicitly foster democracy thus deserve the highest priority, and both the EU and the US urgently need a workable, proactive program to accelerate the process of fostering democracy and civil society. Directly sustaining moderates and building civil society in another country is almost impossible for an outside government to implement. More feasible is action through NGOs supported by generous funding, private

or other. One can point to successes in Eastern Europe, and we can hope that one day this strategy will help Iran move into a more tolerant Shi'ite Islamic future.

Religions, we have repeated, may foster fundamentalism and intolerance. But they have also often been crucial in the modernising/civilising process, for example the Catholic Church in Poland in helping end political tyranny, or theologians employing the “just war” doctrines formulated by 16th century Spanish Jesuits that have helped keep military actions proportionate.

3. Another major battle is between “transmodern” and traditional

If I have understood the concept, transmodern seems to be a “package” of trends created by ecological, humanitarian, arms control and feminist sensibilities. As a political and social force it is engaged in a slow-motion race, in the US, Europe, India and other major countries, against their traditionally dominant political-military communities whose agenda may be seen as “early modern” in the sense of balance of power strategies, concepts of national hegemony, deterrence and containment strategies, and so forth. The future is unknowable. But contemporary reality is shared by both camps, and not monopolised by either one. My recommendation to the “transmodernists” is that while looking ahead they also remember to look in their rear-view mirror in order not to forget the other point of view. The Realpolitikers for their part need a good pair of binoculars in order to see both halves of reality.

13. Patrick Viveret:

“A crucial turn in Humanity’s History”

1. A crucial turn in humanity’s history

We are indeed arrived at a crucial point in Human history where we have reached the technical ability to feed the whole world. The “fight for survival and production” period is vanishing. The only little problem being repartition and distribution of food and wealth. And so the more we are anticipating the future the more we are like confronted with the need of wisdom contained in the Great Traditions and Religions. Why?

As we are seeing in this Seminar, this crucial moment we are in is also confronting us with a set of systemic changes interacting and reinforcing each other. Let me mention only the Globalisation – localisation, the information and knowledge revolution, the biotechnological revolution, the financial revolution which is a systemic combination of globalisation and information changes. But I would add also other deep changes that we no longer mention, like contraception and introduction of the concept of love marriage (second half of XXst century!). Those last two elements have had an enormous influence of the deep transformation of the role of women world-wide, consequently also the role of men.

When we take into account all those changes together and look to the future, it is evident that Humanity has already the capacity to feed itself with facility. We have the possibility to go beyond the fight for survival and food. What is lacking is the will to share in an equitable way. But this would presuppose a qualitative step in consciousness, a moral leap forward.

2. Future thinking is pushing us beyond production logic towards wisdom and contemplation.

And so, the more we reflect and analyse the changes, the more we are pushed to reflect beyond production and survival, the more we feel invited to go beyond a material quest. The more Humanity is invited and called to turn to the contemplative dimension of life, as Anna Ahrendt rightly said. What impresses me most in this debate is the tension between anticipation and tradition.

3. But we see just the opposite around us: Action, war, competition, deterrence...

But what are we seeing around us? Just the opposite. We are surrounded by a world immersed in action instead of contemplation. A world fully concerned with production, instead of reflecting on a post productive society. A world dominated by competition and logic of war, when there are no more reasons to fight for food and survival.

Keynes in 1930 wrote a prophetic text. When societies, he said, will be ready to go beyond the “economic era”, when they will have the technical capacity to feed everyone and will be confronted with abundance, at that precise moment, they will enter into a collective depression and nervous breakdown.

That is the mood we are in. We are navigating between depression and excitement. As the headlines of Wall Street Journal was saying during the financial crisis in 1987: we switch between excitement and depression. Those are the two only possible behaviours of the financial world. I am tempted to draw a parallel between the financial economy and the drug economy, where drugs are used to go from depression to excitement and then back to depression.

4. Our material progress beyond subsistence economy is requiring from us a spiritual development which we have not reached

My thesis is the following: In this time of change, we should go beyond a logic of survival, war and competition. We need to shift towards wisdom and contemplation in order to prepare the transition towards a completely new society. The reason why we are taking the opposite direction is our **spiritual under-development**. This change requires from us a spiritual quality that we have not reached.

The “a contrario” proof of this spiritual vacuum is the “**depression-excitement**” syndrome which is pervading our finances and our societies on one side and the “**puritan warrior model**”. Most globalisation discourse is invaded by the warrior model of transatlantic trade war, and competition. Why did they invent this war? Because it is easier than reflecting wisely about the future. The puritan warrior does not allow himself to enjoy life. Life’s meaning is to make sacrifices, to abstain from pleasure, to be ethically correct and to fight an “economic war” without reason against invented enemies. The only available model proposed is a “winners-losers model” dating from the struggle for survival period, and thus outdated.

It is much easier to fight an invented economic war than to become wise and go inside ourselves and reflect on the meaning of life and death. Confronting our own death collectively and individually seems one of the most difficult tasks for our civilisation. We seem to be blocked, and less developed spiritually than other cultures.

5. Organised religions are more part of the problem than of the solution

Strangely enough the great western religions – Jim Dator’s eloquently presented “Catholic-Protestant-Jewish mix” – are **part of the problem** rather than part of the solution. Organised religions are so “organised” that they leave no place for the contemplation of the central mystery of life and death, no place for silent contemplation of the divine in our lives and the cosmos. We are flooded by an invasion of definitions of God. Clerics are controlling everything. Churches are so full of words on God that there is the there is room left for mystery and silence.

6. Let us prepare the future in changing our lives...

The only healthy reaction is the appearance in Europe and in the US, and elsewhere of “cultural creatives”⁸ who dare to rediscover the meaning of life and death. Reinvent human relations and spirituality in a ludic and cooperative way, which is just the opposite of the puritan warrior model. They are playing new positive sum games (instead of win-lose) between humans and with nature, preparing a decent future for future generations. In changing their life, in rediscovering their depth and a spiritual dimension, in rediscovering their connectedness, they are preparing the future.

⁸ This expression has been launched by Paul H. RAY. See : Paul H. RAY *“The Integral Culture survey: a study of the emergence of transformational values in America”* edit._ Fetzer Institute and Institute of Noetic Sciences Sausalito CA fax : 415. 331-5673.

14. Harlan Cleveland: Rounding up the discussion ...

1. Contradictory definitions of "human rights" are good to keep in our minds

There is in this Seminar a balancing between two concepts of Human Rights. The first is more centred on individual rights and is referring to the Universal Declaration. The second is more centred on "collective Human Rights". This last definition long had a bad name in the West because of the communists' insistence on them. But there is a long tradition in Asia and elsewhere which insists on the rights of people as members of a group. It is important in my opinion to keep these contradictory definitions in our minds.

2. Next conflicts will be more inside the systems of beliefs than between them.

As Walt Truett Anderson and Lincoln Bloomfield have explained, the next conflicts will be more frequent inside every belief system, between interpretations, rather than between the religions themselves. In every religion you will have "truthists" who are intolerant and own the Truth, and others more inclined to think that their belief systems are socially constructed and are not immutable.

3. "Unorganised spirituality"

I am grateful for the criticisms of this concept that I had suggested; they help us to clarify it. Weiderud asks for a more collective dimension, Adamakis find this concept too isolated, Mme Voyé understands this phenomenon as a reaction against institutions. All those criticisms are well founded. I am interested by the French concept proposed by Mme Voyé of "*pluralisme moral*". But I don't find a good English translation.

4. Is there an Asian perspective?

Mr Kim's definition of transmodernity as "liberation from the West" is a nice twist on the original concept. Anyhow, the Asian economic crisis is more and more raising the question whether there a distinctively Asian perspective on economic development. The Academy will be exploring this subject in Asia next year.

5. The separation between Religions and secular State

Susantha Goonatilake's definition of this separation as a "small game of the last 300 years" is setting the tone. Rabbi Guigui is observing that this gap seems to be widening. In my opinion the actual trend is going in the direction of a continuous blurring of this distinction between religion and State, which we have all grown up with.

6. The concepts of "premodern" and "transmodern" are just tools of reflection...

As Tony Judge has observed, these concepts we are proposing are just tools to foster discussion. They are not, and should not be treated as, absolute categories. I agree with Tony; let us blur the lines between these concepts.

15. Bishop Swing: “Can Religions cooperate?”

Three ideas at the start...

When in 1996, we created “United Religions”, here are the ideas we had in mind.

First Hans Kung’s idea that there will be no peace among nations without peace among religions. Second that it is time for religions to cease to defend their territories and rather get together in order to “capitalise” their treasures of spirituality and share them with the world. Citizens are ready and waiting for it. Many think tanks, at the “World Economic Forum” in Davos, for example, observe that they are beginning to discover the spiritual bankruptcy at the bottom of capitalism. In the next 25 years we will see an increasing number of “spiritual refugees” looking where to invest their souls. Third, it is also time for religions to unite together and to stand up for the real big issues of our common future rather than to be co-opted and infantilised by strong governments. Fourth as Archbishop Runcie said, Christians do not have a monopoly of the Truth.

A people-centred new concept ...

Our idea in launching this Initiative was to do something different from one huge meeting every two years. We decided (1) to push immediately for gender equality, (2) to start at the grass roots level and (3) to focus on the spiritual dimension instead of the religious one. We started events initiatives and are for the moment working on a Charter, to be ready in 1999 and to be signed by 60 million grassroots people before 2000.

Our organisational structures are as flexible as possible. Dee Hock, founder of “Visa”, helped us to imagine a “chaordic” design. Our aim is to help people to meet together not only once every two years, but on a day by day basis to foster from the bottom up, dialogue and spiritual enrichment.

16. Marc Luyckx: “Transmodernity and tolerance”

Making a mesh of things...further.

Allow me, after Harlan, to continue to make a mesh of things as was announced in the Agenda. We have seen the first day that in Asia and in Islam the period where everybody was trying to become Modern is over. Modernity is no longer the aim. In those cultures some are aggressive and try to return to the past, to the fundamentals of their faith (premoderns) and others are looking to the future. They try to reinterpret their religious and cultural roots in order to prepare for tomorrow. They want to bring a specific contribution of their culture to the globalized world. For this important (majority?) group, which is usually ignored by the West, the concept of “transmodernity” looks positive. There are thus important changes going across cultures and religions world-wide.

In politics we could also be confronted with deep changes. The symptoms are evident: neither the ecological neither the social dimensions are OK. We could be at a crucial turn of Humanity’s History, because we have reached the technical ability to feed the world. This is a really new situation. But our political structures and our ways of thinking are slow to adapt. We are spiritually and ethically underdeveloped, unprepared for the new job, as it were.

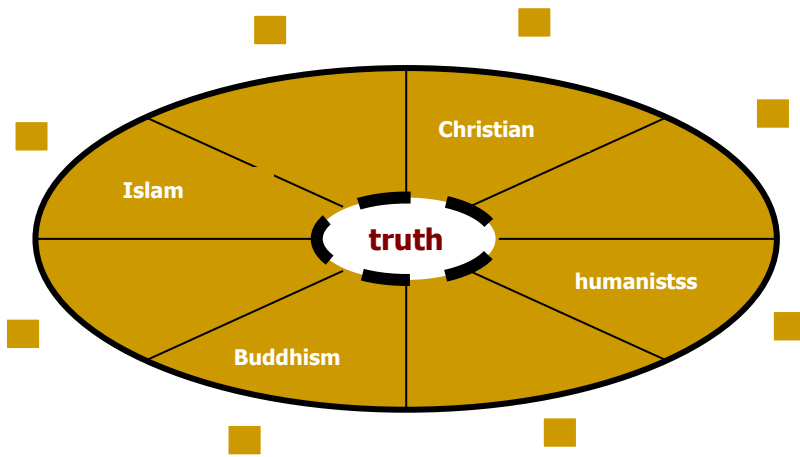
Today we are confronted with premodern, modern but also transmodern political structures although few people are aware of it. And we could be globally moving towards a transmodern type of political structures. We are also in need of a new economic and financial framework if we do not want the social and ecological gap to widen even more.

In a time of “political pregnancy”

So we could be in a time of transition, of “political pregnancy”. But the awareness of those changes is rather implicit. People feel something is changing, but they cannot say what it is. The consciousness of political changes is rather low in the West at least.

1. A tolerant definition of truth?

I am impressed by the reaction of the non-Western participants to our proposals. Their reaction points to the political impact of epistemology, of the definition of Truth. Or in simpler words: have we Western Modern civilised people not had an exclusive vision of the Truth. Did we not say too often, like our missionaries: “Outside modernity, no salvation”. What place have we left for non-western Truths? Have we not ignored them totally? Is it not normal that in a globalized World they suddenly ask to be recognised and accepted? Is it not time to abandon our superiority complexes? But how can we then represent the truth?



What is important to understand is that Truth exists. It is in the centre. Yet the centre is empty. My Japanese friends insisted on this point. God, if he/she exists, is to be found in the emptiness. In the emptying of the ego and in the difficult trip towards the self. At the beginning I did not understand. But now I think that their vision was really deep and rich. It is also a rich key for the future. This vision corresponds also to what the Western mystics report about their spiritual experiences. The more they have the impression of being in a presence, the more this presence is absent and the less they are able to grasp the truth.

Politically this means that in this vision/paradigm, no one is allowed to say: “the truth is mine and not yours”. No one can own the truth. But everyone is able to reach it from the cultural background where he/she is born. This model is essentially **tolerant**.

Around the circle there are little seats representing the citizens and the cultures of the world, sitting around the same table, women and men, all **on equal footing**. They sit and meet in order to invent a new way to manage our endangered world (economy in Greek means management of the house). Every form of creativity, every idea, every intuition will be needed in order to invent those new ways.

2. Political examples of examples of a transmodern approach

The majority of our political analysts have a bipolar vision of the world. They consider the existence of only two visions of the world, a good one and a bad one. The good one is the “modern” one. To be modern is to accept the rule of (Western) law and the superiority of rational and linear thinking over intuition, poetry or spirituality. Time is framed by the concept of linear progress. Law is framed by the Western “universal human rights” definition. The paradigm is best translated in the concepts of “progress” and “development through economic growth and free trade”. Those key concepts are the supreme values to be accepted world-wide if one wants to be “modern”. Naturally, it is not just anybody who is able to accept those truths. An important group of humans are not able to live up to such high standards of civilisation They are considered underdeveloped. They are “backward”. They are in the other paradigm, the bad one: underdevelopment or backwardness.

If one accepts this clear distinction, the aim of politics world-wide is rather clear and does not need much discussion. We all agree that we should use every means of encouraging a maximum of people to abandon the bad vision and embark on the good one. This is what the industrial paradigm calls progress.

The transmodern point of view is different. It is accepted that there is a third paradigm, a third vision. This simple fact means that we are no longer in a period of stability. We are in a rather unusual period of historical change. Such periods are not frequent in history. It is thus normal that politicians are reluctant to embark on such a hypothesis. Politicians are not accustomed to managing change. Nobody is. And it is frightening.

Turkey

In a modern vision, it is evident that Western Governments must defend the secular concept of government and help the forces which strive in that direction (e.g. the army). They must oppose a return to any kind of religious State.

But in a transmodern vision, we should ask ourselves if we really are certain that the fate of Turkey is to follow the path of a secular State which Attaturk imposed on the Turks at the beginning of the century? Why not listen to the growing new interpretation of Islam in Turkey and to the growing group of transmodern Turkish women? Perhaps we could help them to revive the tradition of tolerance of Ottoman Muslim history. Perhaps Turkey could then shift to the side of the tolerant "Asian" Muslim block, which constitutes a majority of the Muslim world.

Israel

The peace advocates in Israel, on both sides, are strictly "modern". They must limit themselves to explaining that peace is a reasonable choice, a "rational" one. This position is logical and understandable. In no way the peace advocates have to be activating any kind of religious war.

In fact, religious motivations are left to the opponents of both sides, because modernity has not and should not have anything to do with those religious arguments.

In the new vision, there is a distinction but not a separation between religion and politics. This means that political leaders could use religious arguments if they really believe in them. They could for example say publicly that: *"if there is only One God, He is certainly not so cruel as to give the same land to two different nations at the same time, in exclusivity. If God exists, He certainly wants the people to live in peace on the same land."*

In a transmodern view religious, even theological, arguments are eventually usable arguments in politics. The taboo on religions (separation) is over. Is it not important to counter the exclusivists on their own battlefield?

Human rights in Asia

Madeleine Albright (US Secretary of State) is totally right in opposing any discussion of United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Human rights are universal and the core of modern vision of politics. *"She does not think that countries have the right to reconsider the UN Human Rights Declaration"*⁹. She is, like us all, in a modern view.

In a transmodern view, we could say: Yes, human rights have been a creation of Western culture. Yes, Western culture and more precisely Christianity have invented the concept of "person". And this is definitely a positive contribution to the world. But why not to listen to other (Asian) cultures who insist on other crucial aspects of life like the "community" aspect? Would it not be wise to get rid of our superiority complex? And if we are going towards a new tolerant paradigm open to a transcendental dimension, why not agree to sit down with the other cultures on an equal footing around a table? Why not trust and value the different cultures of the world? If we then really dialogue on human rights with the other cultures, we will be probably confronted with real differences and oppositions. We will probably have to use non-linear logic. But is there another way out?

⁹ See INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE : July 29.1997. p. 1. "Albright warns Malaysia US. will fight for rights".

17. Avon Mattison:

“A rise of the consciousness in humanity?”

A rise of the consciousness in humanity?

The main idea I would like to propose here is that we are in a transition not only in political, economic and social structures, but that we are confronted with a rise of the consciousness in humanity as a whole. When the astronauts brought us the first pictures of our blue planet it was like a threshold for humanity. There is like a quantum leap, a positive shift in consciousness and in the awareness of human beings. I feel that we need the broadest possible awareness of what is calling us forward.

I have also the impression that this change is not easy to accept and disturbing for many of us. And in this assembly, as in many fora, many accusations under the form of labels like sex, race, nationality or culture got in the way of the perception of this change. Labels are barriers to true understanding. This transition is not easy as we are all easily pulled back by our shadow sides.

An example of unorganised spiritual experience of governance

I would like to share with you one example of a unorganised spiritual experience in governance, with the creative minority of people preparing to serve humanity as a whole. I attended a meeting of creative minorities of young boys and girls meeting in the UN in preparation for the World Summit on Human Rights in Vienna. No fights for leadership, precedence, speaking time. They wanted something else. They asked to go elsewhere to prepare for a “counter-evolution” process. A common purpose was at the centre, not the egos. They were able to synthesise the aspects of human rights which were relevant to their cultures. Those were the most interesting political, cultural and spiritual conversations I ever attended. Many of those children had been in prison and suffered from the absence of those rights. Many were not sure they would still be alive in a year’s time. But the quality of truth of “soul-centred conversation” was exceptional. They were beyond any “isms”. In five days, every of those young participants had made peace with all other participants, some of them representing their worst and most dangerous enemies.

When we made the final presentation in Geneva, their substantive proposals were voted to be incorporated in the final document by a large majority, and there was considerable emotion from the side of the adults, who felt that their human rights ideals had been revitalised.

In my opinion this is a positive image of the Future. *“If we want we can make a difference”*.

18. Paul Claret:

“Introducing subsidiarity into universality”

Allow me in those concluding remarks to point to some of the important questions which in my opinion are coming to the fore at this interesting Seminar.

1. Warning: this concept of transmodernity should not be the new “Trojan horse” of globalisation

What our non-Western friends have told us throughout this Seminar is that they could no longer accept that the West should define the universal truth for everybody. And in a world dominated by this economic globalisation, this danger of an homogenised westernization is really felt by many around the globe. We have to make sure that this new idea of transmodernity is not becoming the new gospel of a global westernised world.

2. How to conceive “universality”?

This is the crucial question. Because in a global world we need a certain common ground, we need a universal platform in order to manage the global world together. How to conceive this in a way which is not imposed on anybody? How to arrive at a common framework of analysis, in which everybody and every culture feels at home? Should we relativize this universality?

3. Introducing subsidiarity into universality

The principle of “subsidiarity” which has the same philosophical origin as federalism,¹⁰ requires that every decision should be taken at the lowest possible level, but that the upper levels should be used for decisions with global concerns. Abandoning our superiority complexes; with modesty let us look and build together a shared societal model, which can be acceptable for everyone. This means that we should distinguish between common principles on which we could eventually agree and beliefs which could be irreducibly different. We could have more centres (polycentrism) but with common rules.

4. learning to manage the conflicts of epistemologies

The aim of this approach would be to learn collectively to master and manage the conflicts of interpretations that will occur and are already occurring. What we want to avoid is (1) artificial multiculturalism, (2) any artificial type of unity, from the top down... and (3) any old or new arrogance in pretending to possess the truth.

¹⁰Their common origin is in one of the first books on the State by ALTHUSIUS (VON ALTHAUS) *Politica Methodice digesta* University of Nassau, (NL) 1603- 1614.

19. Sohail Inayatullah: “Civilisation, spirituality and future generations”

First, the European Commission's Forward Studies Unit is to be congratulated on its foresight in investigating the relationship between culture/civilisation and governance, particularly in terms of finding other models to be used in inquiring into the nature of the future of civilisation.

Being the think-tank which is the nearest to actual power in the world, it has a tremendous opportunity to raise the level of the debate. Many participants said they were positively surprised by the freedom of expression and creativity allowed in this Seminar financed by such an important official Institution.

Transmodernity is helping us to create a shared meaningful vision of the future

Moving beyond Postmodernity by arguing for transmodernity is helpful, and a valuable first step. While Postmodernity has given us a language in which to critique the hegemony of the dominant, it has not helped us face the challenge of creating a shared and “universal” ethics. Nothing can be more important than creating a shared future and nothing can be more dangerous than using the language of geo-politics, of neorealism, to discuss civilizational futures. Huntington's language equates great civilisations with nations writ large. However, civilisations are much grander and deeper, and have within them not only the language of strategy and states but the language of deep inclusion, of myths and stories of transcendence, of cooperation, of not just states and markets but communities moving together. Indeed, civilisation in one sense is the opposite of nation and the interstate system. According to Spengler, it includes art, creation, the sublime. In order to flourish civilisations, also, to use Sarkar's language, must have a founder, a text, a theory of distributive justice, an ethics of inclusion, and shared cultural practices that touch the face of the transcendental.

Recovering from the crisis of modernity, but also of Postmodernity

Our task then is to recover this civilizational language and use it as a way to offer fresh alternatives to the crisis of modernity and Postmodernity. One of the challenges is to encourage those dimensions of religions that are pluralistic, that are inclusive, that use the stories of the past to create new futures.

In the Indian context, it means not adhering to syndicated Hinduism but encouraging the pluralism of “Hinduism”, of many spiritual perspectives. Syndicated or modernised Hinduism is merely the myth of Ramaraja, of the kingdom of Rama writ on the body of the nation. It is exclusionary and does not capture the rich Tantric mystical past. Moreover, it does not contest the dimensions of Hinduism that must be transformed – caste, class, women's position and other dogmas. The solution, however, as Muslims have discovered in their own recent journey, is not to throw out religion and accept the secular but instead to revitalise the ancient tradition by recovering the radical projects of mahagurus like Shiva and Krishna. They stood for inclusion, for eliminating oppression and for disciplined spiritual practices. Thus it is not to modernise simply in the image of the West, but to create an alternative modernity or to critically reinvest in tradition.

Spirituality beyond “New Age” please...

It is this latter dimension of spiritual practices that is crucial. While New Age spiritual proponents have attempted to speak to the future in terms of a global spiritual revival, they have often fallen into the trap

of the post-modern salad bar – that is, you can pick and choose components of another religion. However, as native American Indians argue, you cannot take our rituals, our symbols, without living our suffering, without speaking to our tragedy as a people dispossessed by modernity. This does not mean that all New Age spirituality is vacuous, without substance, but rather that we need a criteria in which to judge it.

My own criteria are the following. (1) Are there disciplined practices, daily meditation or prayer as opposed to things done just when one feels like it. Thus, this is going beyond immediate feelings and committing to the spiritual. (2) Is there a commitment to social service? That is, social service helps removes the ego of the intellectual, of the revolutionary, since it involves some level of sacrifice. Social service could be service in many ways but it is definitely other-oriented. (3) Is there a focus on distributive justice and not just on fatalistic karma – that is, does the spiritual call on one to transform wretched conditions. (4) Is there inclusion or is the path just for the chosen few. The spiritual path must be open to all. Of course, while anyone can enter, the path must have spiritual practices as in the first criterion. (5) Does the path have a devotional or grace dimension. That is, it must be more than intellectual passion or belief, it must be about an intimate relationship with the transcendental, with that which is unknowable by mind. (6) Does it accept many ways of knowing, or does it, for example, belittle the rational. I argue for a post-rational that includes the rational but moves toward the intuitive.

These criteria are a beginning and not end point; others can be added. My sense is that most religions would accept them and thus spiritual transformation is essentially touching the deepest of what it means to be religious and what it means to be civilised, to be part of a civilisation, ideally a planetary civilisation.

The spiritual has grown at this time partly because mainstream religions have lost some of these points, losing touch with spiritual practice or with distributive justice or with pluralistic ways of knowing or bowing too readily to market or state forces, not being willing to dissent.

A Challenge for the Forward Studies Unit

Let me conclude with some comments again on the Forward Studies Unit. It is difficult to maintain a focus on the long term future when there are so many pressing problems, but the long term must be held sight of, for it impacts on our images of self and of what we believe is possible. Often, while the most obvious trends are researched, the more dramatic and less likely (but usually more likely to have a transformative impact) receive less attention. It is these emerging issues that must become part our public discourse. While science fiction movies touch on the technological dimension they do not touch on the social, on issues of governance, of designing new social inventions. For example, among the most important as we move to a real multicultural world are peace forces and cultures of peace as well as a real world court. A Forward Studies Unit could suggest new social institutions and hopefully find ways to create them. It could also place emerging issues – such as genetics, the end of sexual reproduction – as part of a transparent public discourse instead of a state- or market-led science. By including the public, the social could reenter the scientific and the technological, and thus allow the return of civilisation into our futures. Many forward studies units have embarked on this, and most have failed. A change in government, routinization, failure of imagination are some of the reasons. But most often it is because the future, and future generations in particular, have no stakeholders, have no vested interests. But unless we care for our children's children they will not have a future. Unless we consciously begin to analyse the impact of our decisions on future generations – and create institutions that are responsible to them – we will be guilty of closing off the future, ours and theirs.

This Unit could promote a new qualitative debate on a new type of transparent science, on new complex solutions in politics, innovations in world economic justice, on an inclusive model for tomorrow, on anew ethic of intimacy with God and our fellow humans, on a new concept of social service of humanity.

20. Harlan Cleveland: Concluding Remarks

1998 was a big year for the World Academy's "Religion and Governance" theme.

In the Spring (May 14-16) the World Academy collaborated with the European Commission in a Brussels Seminar to explore alternatives to the predicted "clash of civilisations."

During the rest of the year the World Academy and the European Commission generated joint policy seminars on this issue – at the World Future Society in Chicago, the State of the World Forum in San Francisco, and the World Academy's own Vancouver Assembly.

The "Transmodern" Mindset

Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, wrote in his welcome message (14 May 1998) to the Brussels Seminar that "the very origin and the fundamental purpose of European integration is rooted in the belief that it is possible for different countries to convene as equals, in order to consolidate peace.

"Perhaps the contribution of the European Union to this debate [about Civilisations and Governance] could be to show that it is indeed possible not only for nations but for civilisations to sit together in order to face the common challenges of humanity in a changing world. This presupposes that we dare to trust the others, and consider them as equals. This behaviour in return allows others to trust us. It is not easy. The obstacles are many. But it is possible. Our history bears witness to that fact."

In preparing for the Brussels Seminar, Marc Luyckx of the European Commission's Forward Studies Unit and I had written a joint paper titled "Civilisations and Governance." Published by the European Commission, it described a "transmodern" mindset emerging in the nations of the Atlantic Community.

"It features," we wrote, "a creative mix of rational and intuitive brainwork; an enthusiastic embrace of new information technologies; a tolerance, even celebration, of diversity; a conviction that protecting the physical environment has to be a central concern for every human being; a dawning realisation that scientific discovery and technological innovation have made human beings the dominant actors in their own future evolution; a new openness to spiritual guidance as a basis for 'private' behaviour and 'public' policy; and a move away from vertical authority toward 'flatter,' more 'horizontal,' organisations, away from 'recommendations-up-orders-down' management and toward more consensual decision-making."

This mind-shift, we suggested, "has implications for religions and their impact on governance in the early part of the 21st century." One is that "organised religions will be sharing their turf with 'unorganised spirituality.'" Another is that "their leadership, traditionally monopolised by men, will increasingly be shared by women." Yet another is that "the acceptance of variety, the protection of diversity, and doctrines of tolerance seem more and more essential to security and survival." A fourth trend is an increasingly global perspective, "a growing *acceptance* of globalisation."

The Brussels Seminar

To work with the European Commission, the organisers assembled in Brussels an outstanding group of Fellows: Susantha Goonatilake, Ziauddin Sardar, Kim Tae-Chang, Walter Truett Anderson, Arthur Cordell, James Dator, Lincoln Bloomfield, Magda McHale, Tony Judge, Sohail Inayatullah,

Carl-Goran Heden, and Horacio Menano, together with Associate Fellows Patrick Mendis, Nancy Palmer, and Keith Vargo.

They also arranged for the participation of the Rt. Rev. William Swing, Episcopal Bishop of San Francisco, and Avon Mattison of Pathways for Peace.

These visitors, sponsored by the World Academy, joined with 31 participants from Europe; they included officials of the European Commission and policy planners from a number of Ministries of Foreign Affairs in the European Union.

Testing the Hypothesis

The working hypothesis, about an emerging “transmodern” mindset, elicited a very positive response from the non-western scholars – who saw in modernism a threat both to tradition and to progress.

Susantha Goonatilake saw the centre of economic gravity moving toward Asia in the 21st century. But, reacting from a Buddhist perspective, he asked, “will we become still more cloned Europeans and Americans, and be condemned to play a secondary role in the knowledge and creativity society, or will we be able to go back to our cultural and religious roots in order to bring to the world our specific cultural richness and wisdom in the future management of a more sustainable and just world?”

Asked to analyse Muslim reactions, Ziauddin Sardar said that Islam is “working modernity out of our system.

. . . Change has to be made and accommodated, but the fundamental tenets of tradition, the source of [Islam’s] identity and sacredness, remain the same. So we may define a transmodern future as a synthesis between life-enhancing tradition – that is amenable to change and transition – and a new form of modernity that respects the values and lifestyles of traditional cultures.”

“The West has always seen Islam through the lens of modernity,” he added, “and concluded that it is a negative, closed system. Nothing could be further from the truth. Islam is a dynamic, open system with a very large common ground with the West. Islam is intrinsically pluralistic. It considers that in essence every culture has a piece of the truth.”

The implication was clear: Islam is rejecting, not the West, but “modernity.” The transmodern way of thinking might open a door to a new dialogue with Islam.

KIM Tae-Chang invited to add a Confucian angle of vision. “The Confucian way to identify ourselves is through family,” he said. “This could be the contribution of Confucian culture to the global society: helping with this broad family concept to transcend the boundaries of egoism and push toward solidarity with the actual and future generations, towards a more sustainable and just world.” The time has come, he thought, for us to come together in a process of “trialogical imagination.” (“Trialogical means putting together past, present, and future so that the future will be better for everyone and not be biased by a concentration on the present or on the past.”)

Resonance and Reservations

Other testimony about current trends in religion also showed some resonance with the “transmodern” way of thinking.

The Grand Rabbi of Brussels, Albert Guigui, spoke of respect for differences as the “central idea of Judaism.”

Bishop Swing spoke of Christianity’s internal conflicts as occurring in “a world of possibilities.” Later he described recent efforts to develop support for “United Religions,” an attempt to reverse “the squandering of the treasure chest of spirituality which religions could offer the world if they could grow beyond mutual hatred to a place of mutual respect.”

“In the next 25 years,” said Bishop Swing, “we will see an increasing number of ‘spiritual refugees’ looking where to invest their souls.” Avon Mattison elaborated on that theme in her remarks on “Unorganised Spirituality.” She spoke of the growing numbers of “world servers” whose search for peace

and justice, in myriad individual and group styles, express their spirituality in ways that can't be called "organised religion."

The Brussels Seminar also featured a number of lively thinkers about related political and social trends.

Robert Cooper of the U.K. argued that "less spiritual societies are more peaceful, because many causes of war can be linked to religion." He also contributed the Seminar's best epigraph. "Adam to Eve: We are entering into a transitional phase"

Arthur Cordell questioned the "religious belief" in deregulation, which carries "the greater cost: the risk of exclusion."

James Dator contributed his normal ration of abnormal comments. A relevant example, among many: "Virtually everything ordinary people believe (if you ask them to state their religious beliefs) is heresy from the point of view of theologians of their faith. It is surprising to me that we fret so much about scientific ignorance, but not at all about theological ignorance, which is at least as great."

Lincoln Bloomfield: "I would characterise transmodern as a "package" of ecological-humanitarian-feminist-arms-control sensibility. This new current is in a race in the US, the EU, but also in India, with the traditional political-military communities. My recommendation to the transmodernists is that they keep looking to their rear-view mirror, not forgetting the other point of view."

Patrick Viveret (*"Transversales Sciences Cultures"* & *Centre International Pierre Mendès-France, Paris*) sees the great Western religions as "part of the problem They leave no place for silent contemplation of the divine in our lives and the cosmos. We are flooded by an invasion of definitions of God Churches are so full of words on God that there is no place anymore for mystery and silence."

A New Dialogue

"Our working together," says Marc Luyckx, "seems to have opened the door to a new kind of East-West dialogue." The new argument goes like this:

Modernity is no longer attractive as a central source of Truth. Tradition is seen as the enemy. With secularism as "the world's most powerful religion," no room is left for "a dynamic concept of tradition." The modern way of thought is also too individualistic to make room for ways of thinking that give special value to family and other group rights and responsibilities.

Truth is at the centre of things. But every culture has a part of the Truth. Every person converges toward it through his/her own culture, along his/her own path. But none gets to say, "The search for Truth is over, for I have found it."

The transmodern hypothesis emerges as a rich tool of analysis. It seems useful both for analysing conflicts within religions, and for recognising conflicts that arise from beliefs about other people's beliefs. Resolution of such conflicts becomes, as Tony Judge put it, an exercise in complex, non-linear, non-exclusive logic. That isn't easy, but it's not as difficult – or as dangerous and damaging – as wars brought on by differences that cannot be resolved by thinking and talking together.

Toward the end of the Brussels Seminar, Walter Anderson illustrated with a story how seemingly irreconcilable beliefs may turn out to be reconcilable: "In a small meeting, I made some critical comments about 'absolutism.' A woman present was quite threatened by this, and said that her religion was one of absolute faith. I asked her if she would expect me to believe the same things. She immediately replied: 'Of course not. I only meant that these things are absolutely true for me.'

"What is significant about this," he added, "is that she had no particular awareness of having made a complex and highly sophisticated adjustment of beliefs about belief."

SECOND PART :

REPORT ON THE DEBATES

Marc LUYCKX

We propose to articulate this debate around four topics. The first surprise was the attack against modernity pushed mainly by the non-western participants

TOPIC 1 : CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY

Surprisingly, our working hypothesis seems to have opened the door to a new kind of East-West dialogue with the Seminar. Here are the main points coming out of this first topic.

1. modernity does not seem anymore to be attractive to a majority of people in Asia and Islam.

“Modernity is NO LONGER providing a common platform of dialogue between the West and other cultures anymore. The western strategy consisting of trying to “modernise the World” has to be abandoned. This is in our opinion really not the common impression in Western political circles and it seem to us very important to take into consideration.”

Here are some extracts of the main critics to modernity. “Modernity is an ethnocentric construct invented and enforced by Europeans.... It is no longer the dominant mood” ... “Fifteen years ago, modernisation of Islam was a big issue. We have worked very hard to try to modernise Islam. We played with modernity in every possible way, and we have lost. We were forced to accept the Modern Truth, without any acceptance for our Truth. Our Truth was considered backwardness. But suddenly there has been a stop. With the Rushdie affair, we have felt the sacredness of our tradition being trampled on. And we decided to divorce from modernity. In fact our recent history is the “working of modernity out of our system”, in our Muslim societies. Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia (certain examples) and Sudan are good examples of this “demodernization”. Modernist Islam is a category that has disappeared completely and this is a sign of hope”....

2. Modernity as a danger

But modernity is also a danger to religions and to our humanity. It has a lethal dimension: “Modernity has demonised religions. Modernity has attributed often unjustly many conflicts and wars to religion. Modernity has like a religious hostility to the religions. Modernity has also killed millions of people and animals. I see a link between modernity and the holocaust. Holocaust would have not been possible without the dehumanisation produces by modernity. Modernity has a kind of totalitarian dimension which is frightening.”

3. Postmodernity is not better:

“Postmodernism has further marginalized tradition and traditional cultures, creating a siege mentality in historic communities. Postmodernism is what comes after modernity; it is post in terms of time; it is a natural conclusion of modernity. This is why it is sometimes described as ‘the logic of late capitalism’. It represents a linear trajectory that starts with colonialism, continues with modernity and ends with post-odernity, or postmodernism. It is not surprising than that postmodernism and tradition are like two fuming bulls in a ring: they are inimically antagonistic to each other. Postmodernism states that all big ideas that have shaped our society, like Religion, Reason, Science, Tradition, History, Morality, Marxism, do not stand up to philosophical scrutiny. There is no such thing as Truth. Anything that claims to provide us with absolute truth is a sham. It must be abandoned. Moreover, postmodernism suggests, there is no ultimate Reality.”

4. Modernity as too individualistic

Besides its refusal to accept any transcendental reference, modern western thinking is seen as too individualistic and having lost the family and community values not only at the individual level but also at the social and political levels. Here is what Dr Tae-Chang Kim says: “The Confucian concept of family consists of three main pillars. One is ancestor worship. You have to be thankful for what the former generation have done for us, for what we are. Second intergenerational solidarity and third responsibility for the future generations. Family is the place of this solidarity. If people are egoistic it is destructive. The constructive part of this culture is to extend this solidarity to the outside. If you cannot respect your parents, how will you be able to respect other people. So Confucius says that you should respect your parents first, and then you will be able to extend this respect to other people. This logic appears very mundane and common sense yet it is rooted in a very deep, transcendent and spiritual vision. Is there not a danger that the family becomes like a closed and egoistic entity? But if you have no family anymore and only individuals alone, will we not have, as Hobbes says, “homo homini lupus”. Family in ancient times was based only on blood relationships. But in Confucianism this concept is fluid and flexible. We can open up the concept to further membership and envisage the global society as a family, as a sanctuary. This could be the contribution of Confucian Culture to the global society: helping with this broad family concept to transcend the boundaries of egoism and push towards solidarity with the actual and future generations, towards a more sustainable and just world.”

As we see, it is not only the whole of the Modern secular and rational intellectual framework of reflection but also the individualistic culture of the West, which is put into question in a more or less subtle way, by the non-western participants.

5. Political conclusion: Nobody is rejecting the West, but the general tendency is to reject Modernity

And thus a brand new type of dialogue could be possible if the West accepts to relativise its attachment to “Modernity” and its superiority complex linked to it. This seems to us a very important political statement. “Do politicians appreciate this crucial point?”, asks one author.

6. The rediscovery of the roots, “dynamic tradition”, and cultural identity

Everyone in a transmodern world has to go back to his or her own roots and rediscover his/her own cultural identity. But at the same time dialogue, mutual enrichment and cross fertilisation are absolutely necessary for the survival of humanity. Let us also underline the importance of the ***dynamic concept of “tradition”***, which has to be conceived as life enhancing, as flexible and in constant change and adaptation. This definition is much richer and life enhancing than the modern concept of tradition.

7. Cross fertilisation

There is a real dialogue and cross-fertilisation already going on between Asian cultures and the Western culture. The same is true for the historic role of Islam.

TOPIC 2 :

“TRANSMODERNITY”: PROS AND CONS

1. Non-western approaches to transmodernity.

1. There is also a real encouragement to the concept of transmodernity

The majority of the non-Western participants were interested and rather positive, but critical. Most speakers focused on their tiredness and aggressivity towards the superiority complex of the West trying to impose its concepts and visions upon them. “The most powerful religion in the World is secularism”... “I always felt that many Westerners try to convince us that they are right and we wrong, in economy, diplomacy and democracy etc... Let us come back to zero point, where can learn from the other in a period of change...”. In fact they all converged in the observation that in the change, Western concepts are relativised. “The very debate about modernisation is a local game restricted to a local place.” The fact that a minority of Western thinkers were beginning to relativize the Western dominance was opening to them new doors for fruitful dialogue.

This concept could be the starting point for a new type of dialogue with the other main cultures. There is a real request that the West should accept to change lenses and begin to look at the rest of the world with transmodern glasses. In a certain sense the categories of "critical traditionalists" and transmodernists coincide if this flexible concept of tradition is accepted. “Unorganised spirituality” in the West could be one of the symptoms of the change towards transmodernity.

2. The definition of Truth

In a transmodern world, there is no longer anyone who can claim to own the Truth as there is in modernity. The West is politely invited to abandon its superiority complex and the other cultures their possible inferiority complexes. There is a request that we should abandon the intolerant and exclusive modern definition of truth: “outside modernisation, backwardness”. As we say in our introduction: “The Truth is at the centre of things; each person converges toward it with his/her own culture, along his/her own path. Nobody has a monopoly of the Truth any more – yet it does exist.” This corresponds to the definition proposed by Prof. Sardar: in essence every culture has a part of the Truth. When our Japanese colleague says that “many conflicts start form the way you perceive yourself and how you identify yourself”, it is perhaps a discrete invitation to the West to rethink its own image as the only dominant, modern and developed culture. But this is all done through understatements, in a very respectful and polite way.

3. The majority of the Muslim world consists of transmodern communities

If we define transmodern as a new type of synthesis between life enhancing tradition and a new form of modernity that respects the lifestyle and the sacredness of traditional cultures, we can really say that the majority of the Muslims world-wide are more transmodern than premodern. This a very important political statement. Are foreign policy advisors aware of this fact?

4. For us going beyond modernity is essentially an effort to find ourselves again

Contrary to Harlan Cleveland’s understanding, our first aim is not to aggress or to criticise the West. It is important for you to be clear about this. We are really in a deep and important effort to find ourselves. If

we are in reaction against this “modernisation” which has taken the form of “Europeanisation” first and “Amercanisation” after, it is because we now understand how deeply this modernisation has alienated us from ourselves. We are interested in this new concept of post-modernisation or transmodernisation, because those concepts, in our understanding, allow us to rediscover our roots and identity in a global world. Transmodernisation, for us, means finding ourselves. Our aims today are really first of all to find our roots again, not to fight against the West. We want to create a globally-oriented yet indigenously-rooted future. Some of us are really backward looking, right wing, wanting to return to the roots, nothing more. Others really want to be open to the future. They try to return to the roots but with a future-oriented view. Those who are future-oriented correspond to your concept of transmodern.

5. Debate on Asian Values

“I believe that this debate is one of the major future-oriented discourse of our time. Naturally many people use this topic for its own political interest. The majority of Westerners usually speak of this debate in a contemptuous mode. “We are fed up of three years of being lectured by Maharathir.” But how bad should we non-Westerners feel since we have been lectured for three hundred years by you! Please look at what is hiding behind the Asian values debate. What is the meaning of justice, distribution? I see really salvation in the Asian values debate.”

6. This framework is still too Western

This image is too simple for me. Why only one centre? It is too western. Why not many circles, many centres, possibly convergent?

2. Western approaches to transmodernity

2.1. Negative reactions

1. Dissatisfaction with the transmodern hypothesis

Some participants, mainly western, were not satisfied with the hypothesis proposed in the paper. They did not believe in the possible emergence of a new transmodern logic and found the vision of a potential positive role for religions too optimistic or overstated. Perhaps too North American. They feared that our approach could be too simple, a kind of “wishful thinking” and ultimately not very helpful in solving the political problems linked with Religions and Governance. They observed that the political conflicts between religions were far from disappearing, quite the contrary, and if the conflicts between “secular” and “religious” were perhaps softening in Europe, it was not the case elsewhere. On the whole they rejected this working hypothesis. It is perhaps intellectually interesting but politically not very relevant.

2. A growing disenchantment instead...

Yes, there is an aspiration towards more justice, sustainability and human values, but is this aspiration “spiritual”? Has this aspiration a link with religions? Instead of reenchantment, are we not observing a further disenchantment under the form of an ethical relativism, a kind of “post-modern” self-service mentality, where everyone constructs his own ethic and his own truth?

3. Why are religions weaker than boy scouts?

Another critical observation was the regret that this Seminar did not address the gradual marginalisation of religions in society. Religions should feed our lives with meaning and give meaning to our death, setting aims and purposes to our societies. Why are religions no longer able to create civilisations and

cultures? Why are they marginalised, only able to foster a kind of moral sentimentalism? Why are they so powerless in the world society that they could be compared to a boy scouts organisation? Is it not because the dominant religion today is the “religion of profit”. Are Europeans not associating the construction of Europe with this pagan, materialistic and egoistic vision of life, which seem to gain ground every day?

2.2. Positive reactions

Some western participants found the working paper and the interventions rich and backed this research politically. Here are some reactions and suggestions for improvements.

1. Transmodern is a good tool of analysis

This new idea or tool of analysis expresses my intuitions. It provides a way of going beyond a kind of “tolerance” which falls short of accepting the other’s truth. In this epistemology, this definition of truth, there is a real possibility for me to believe in my truth and at the same time accept deeply other paths towards the truth. It allows **real and deep tolerance**.

2. The transmodern concept is inspiring me more than the postmodern

This new concept gives me a framework in which I can integrate the suffering of the oppressed majority, the evolution of relations between women and men, the intense search for a spiritual path. It is opening an area of common and creative research.

3. A new tolerant secularity?

The concept of a “new secularity” was suggested as a new way for the State to relate to religions. Remaining neutral but accepting the positive role religions can play in solving conflicts and building social consensus and identity, the State could slowly evolve towards a relation of dialogue and collaboration. But this could have wide-ranging legal consequences that should be studied carefully.

4. Sweden: a post-secular society

One participant said this analysis was shedding light on the situation of his country, which is considered as one of the most highly secularised in the World. In his view, Sweden is changing and is becoming “post-secular”. There is a new growing interest in spirituality and ethical issues, but also growing appearance of “unorganised spirituality”. This change is a great challenge and opportunity for the Churches. It is also transforming the whole vision of foreign policy. What is a “post-secular” foreign policy?

5. Italy: In the foreign policy of some European countries, this research for a third way or paradigm is beginning to emerge

In a country like Italy there is an emerging desire to go beyond the clash between premodern-sacred-intolerance and the modern-rational-dominant. There are some openings in that new direction. But this forces us to study much more accurately the other cultures and their internal struggles, which could be similar to ours.

6. Some trends of the young generation’s evolution in Europe could be going in a transmodern direction

Sociology of Religion is showing that the new generation is searching for meaning. They want to find some solid foundations for the meaning of their lives. Religions are equivalent. They will be considered

positive if they can help in this research of a “*sens*” (meaning), but they are disregarded if they fight each other. The depth of this research is clearly beyond any structure.

TOPIC 3 : RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

1. Positive appreciation

Many Western reactions were globally positive. The idea of a kind of United Nations of the World Religions has been considered as a brilliant idea. One participant felt that Bishop Swing was in some way called to do this. It was a “mission” in the proper sense. There was a higher purpose in this call. This initiative is really timely. Many participants were really very enthusiastic. But they did not voice more comments. The critical comments were more vocal.

2. Critical Comments

1. Dialogue between religions is floating in the air but it should come from a neutral body like the United Nations

Otherwise it will be difficult for us in Asia to accept. The idea is of dialogue between the religions is there in Asia too. It was in the air before the UN asked Bishop Swing. But I am sorry to say; it should not come from the US, for the moment. We perceive in this US initiative a kind of sense of mission. We Asians no longer wish to feel that we are the targets of a mission of conversion. Enough. We want to be recognised as we are. Why not to listen to some other “weaker” initiative of religious dialogue in the world, meaning coming from marginalised parts of the World?

2. Religions are part of the problem also

As P. Viveret and C. Yannaras rightly said, religions are also part of the problem. In becoming too modern they have lost the sense of humanity. They have lost the contemplative dimension of the divine in us. They have lost the sense of life and death. Modernity has dehumanised religions. Are those problems not more urgent than any unification of the religions? And has the initiative for eventual unification to come from the most secularised part of the world religions?

3. Muslim proposal to redefine mission in a time of change

One example. Being an admirer of Mother Theresa I visited her Centre and was shocked by the way they were trying to convert the dying people. This missionary zeal is in this case a loss of humanity. In the Muslim religion we have the same problems with mission. The name is different: “Dawa”. It is time for Islam and Christianity to reflect in depth on a redefinition of mission.

For the moment in Cambodia, religious dialogue is considered a dirty thing because of so much Western targeting and “mission” in the worst sense. I saw lately an obnoxious website where all of Cambodia was considered as a battlefield for the missionaries. Every district was analysed with target groups, number of bibles distributed, amounts of population, resources etc... This is unacceptable. The worst is that those people come to us as apostles of dialogue and ecumenism. It is therefore that dialogue is such a dirty word in Cambodia. We cannot stand this anymore.

We are the most moderate people you can find in our region. (I have been studying Christian theology for years). Others are much more aggressive and violent. But we still suffer from the Western missionaries who told us to quit our most precious and deep tradition of ancestor-worship, because it was idolatry.

4. Asian proposals for a new method of dialogue

... Now we are rediscovering our cultural traditions and values. And we are urging the West to change, and to engage in a real dialogue. Here are our proposals for such a dialogue. First, we meet on an equal footing, abandoning any superiority complex; second, we listen in depth; third, self-denial; fourth, we start from zero a new type of relationship on an equal footing. Like Christ who emptied himself until death before His resurrection. This is also coherent with the Buddhist tradition of non-self and service as self-denial, and with the Confucianist tradition of the need to overcome selfishness.

6. How to reach really the believers?

The first type of criticism is that the real difficulty with these initiatives is to gain a real following among believers. To get the people behind your initiative. And since the UN is more and more seen as a failure, is it really the model to adopt? Is it not necessary to get out of the ecclesiastical model and build new solidarities between believers on new visions of society, shared values etc. How to relate to the “unorganised spiritualities”? The idea of a charter also was questioned. Why not to invent a poetic-sacred charter with a series of religious metaphors of unity and hope, which people could sing and memorise?

7. The role of State authority

Are the forward-looking political authorities really encouraging religions to work for reconciliation. Are they no longer approaching religions for religions' sake? And if we really wish to promote unity among religions, is it not absolutely necessary that no State in the world would have an official religion. But what about Islam in that case? It must also be borne in mind that Catholicism is the only religion represented by a fully-fledged State. All the others have NGO status. Who will sign the Charter: Hans Kung or the Vatican?

TOPIC 4 :

“EPISTEMOLOGICAL WARS, WARS OF TRUTHS”

As we have seen, the proposed hypothesis was double. First we are going towards transmodernity. Second, the main conflicts will be between interpretation within every religion and culture. They will be similar.

1. A new kind of conflicts after modernity

Many observed that it is the very nature of the religious conflicts which has changed. In modernity many conflicts were between belief systems, between religions and science, between religion and Marxism, between ideologies, between religions. But today, all over the world, we are witnessing a new kind of conflicts within each religion, within Marxism, within science. And many of us are thus teased apart in our religious beliefs. Many find themselves with a deep spiritual dimension, but without defined religious affiliation, and slowly become part of this “unorganised spirituality” group.

2. The rising importance of epistemological wars (wars about the truth)

This idea crystallised slowly during the Seminar and came up several times during this concluding session: we could indeed be increasingly confronted with cultural wars about the definition of truth. “Epistemological wars are wars between beliefs about beliefs”. The problem lies indeed in the belief I have about the other person’s belief or vision. People feel besieged by other’s truths. They do not know how to react. Many people are using epistemology without realising it.

The central question is to allow the other humans to exist without forcing them to follow your own truth. But ordinary people commonly have common sense. As an example one old lady pretended to hold firmly to her absolute truth. Are you wanting to impose it to the other humans, she was asked. “Of course not, this is absolute truth for me but not for you!” This is an excellent example of what is looked for: active tolerance.

3. How to solve epistemological wars?

Tony gave us some interesting insights.

- (a) We must definitely abandon the simplistic linear frameworks of thinking and adopt a complex approach.
- (b) We have to look for a common base but framed in a complex, non-linear, non-exclusive logic. Where there is room for other options between the Yes and the No, as in the Asian cultures, for example.
- (c) We have to learn to manage disagreement. There is no way that we can work to linear unanimity.
- (d) Our process of discussion should bring us to empower difference within a common framework.

CONCLUSIONS

The “transmodernity” hypothesis appears to be an interesting – even if disputable – tool of analysis.

1. Our hypothesis improves conflict analysis

It allows us to analyse, forecast and perhaps resolve some “religious” conflicts in a better way. We can more easily and more quickly identify tolerant and intolerant citizens. We can gain an awareness of the new type of conflicts: conflicts of interpretation, conflicts of definitions of truth.

2. It uncovers the invisible Muslim transmodern majority

Our hypothesis has allowed us to discover the existence of an unknown majority inside Islam: the moderate, tolerant believers who are working on a synthesis between the best of their tradition and the best of modernity. This group has been too often identified with the premoderns, or “fundamentalists”. It makes a huge difference for Western foreign policies to discover their existence.

3. Transmodernity is under way everywhere

The unexpected acceptance of our working hypothesis by many western and non-western alike seems to indicate that transmodernity could be under way in every culture. We were thus wrong to present this shift towards transmodernity as a western phenomenon. It seems that the shift is a world-wide phenomenon. This should be taken into account by politicians. It changes the whole of the political landscape.

4. “Aggressivity is not against the West but against modernity”

“Aggressivity is not against the West but against modernity.” This message from the non-western participants is also a very powerful political message. But can we really grasp it? Do we accept the need to rethink our modern mentality? A difficult but important task.

5. There is a world-wide search for meaning and synthesis between tradition and modernity

This Seminar also gave us the opportunity to understand that our hypothesis of a transition of the West towards transmodernity might have to be broadened. We discovered that the underlying currents in the West and elsewhere are similar, even if there is a degree aggressivity in the air. A great number of women and men all around the world seem to be looking for a new synthesis between their roots, faiths and traditions and the positive aspects of modernity. Many in both the East and in the West seem to have a similar quest for meaning and a new spiritual dimension in life. The old ones seem difficult to transmit to our children. We seem to be compelled to look for a new synthesis. There is a real hunger for some meaning beyond consumerism.

As P. Viveret and Avon Mattison said, this quest is timely. Humanity needs to sit down and think about its future. It needs to find, and put into practice, a new, wise management of our planet.

6. Looking together to a creative future?

One Asian participant in Brussels asked why we were always speaking of the “Asians”. Why are you not saying: we? He was right. Although we have used those distinctions (western/non-western) for the clarity

of the text, it is more and more evident that there is a striking similarity in the aspirations of transmodern citizens in the West and elsewhere. Their search is very similar. Why not connect more, instead of perpetuating enemy images? This new type of dialogue between transmoderns world-wide could be a very rich and promising pathway to peace in the XXIst century.

Marc Luyckx.

April 1,1999.

ANNEX 1

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT SANTER

President of the European Commission

To the Seminar on

CIVILISATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

Brussels, 14-16 May 1998

I really regret not to be able to welcome you all for this Seminar on “Civilisations and Governance“, organised jointly by the World Academy of Arts and Science and Forward Studies Unit. I especially greet Harlan Cleveland, the President of the World Academy and all of the Academy members some of whom have travelled a long way to be here with us.

I am also very glad to welcome several participants from the Foreign Ministries of the Member States of the Union and distinguished scholars interested in the matter. It is important that thinkers from all over the Union reflect together informally in order to understand what is going on and investigate new ways of governing in a changing World.

The Forward Studies Unit has the task of trying to push the reflection ahead. This time the subject is a difficult one, but it corresponds to a basic intuition shared by many in Europe and world-wide: a clash of civilisations is not the scenario we would prefer for the future.

We believe on the contrary that it is possible for civilisations to meet to dialogue and to reflect together on the values and the visions which they can share in building a common future.

Indeed the very origin and the fundamental purpose of European integration is rooted in the belief that it is possible for different countries to convene as equals, in order to consolidate peace. France and Germany had for so long been enemies. Fifty years ago, their Governments accepted to sit around the same table with four other European Governments in order to solve together the problems they all shared. This was new

because they were used to defend national interest *against* the others. A *common* approach to common issues was an innovation.

Perhaps the contribution of the European Union to this debate could be to show that it is indeed possible not only for nations but also for civilisations to sit together in order to face the common challenges of humanity in a changing world.

This presupposes that we dare to trust the others, and consider them as equals. This behaviour in return allows others to trust us. It is not easy. The obstacles are many. But it is possible. Our history bears witness to that fact.

I wish this Seminar a fruitful discussion and look forward for a continuation of this informal transatlantic and world-wide dialogue on the future of governance in the XXIst century.

Jacques SANTER

President of the European Commission

ANNEX 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

- Emmanuel **ADAMAKIS**, Bureau de l'Eglise Orthodoxe, Belgium
- Denise **ALBRECHT**, World Academy of Art and Science, Canada
- Walter Truett **ANDERSON**, President, American Division of the World Academy of Art and Science, USA
- Gilles **ANDREANI**, Director, “Centre d’Analyse et de Prévision”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France
- Ragnar **ONGEBY**, Policy Planning Group, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden
- Teodor **BACONSKI**, Ambassador of Romania to the Holy See, Romania
- Lincoln P. **BLOOMFIELD**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA
- Iri **COATES BLOOMFIELD**, USA
- Paul **CLAIRET**, Analysis and Coordination Unit, Council of the European Union
- Harlan **CLEVELAND**, President, World Academy of Art and Science, USA
- Lois **CLEVELAND**, USA
- Robert **COOPER**, Minister, British Embassy, Bonn, Germany
- Arthur J. **CORDELL**, Special Advisor, Info. Technology Policy, Government of Canada
- James A. **DATOR**, Professor, University of Hawaii, USA
- Virgilio **DASTOLI**, General Secretary, European Movement, Belgium
- Pierre **DE CHARENTENAY**, OCIPE, Belgium
- Patrick **DONDELINGER**, Institut Catholique de Paris, France
- Mario **GIRO**, Community of San Egidio, Italy
- Susantha **GOONNATILAKE**, Buddhist Institute in Pnom Penh, Cambodia
- Albert **GUIGUI**, Grand Rabbin de Bruxelles, Porte-Parole des Rabbins européens, Belgium
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- Georg **HELLINGHAUSEN**, Séminaire de Luxembourg
- Sohail **INAYATULLAH**, Queensland University of Technology, Australia
- Tony **JUDGE**, Director, Communication and Research, Union of International Associations, Belgium
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- Edwin **KOOLS**, Assistant, European Parliament, Belgium
- Marc **LENDERS**, European Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society, Belgium
- Francesco **MARGIOTTA BROGLIO**, Professor Florence University, Italy
- Avon **MATTISON**, President, Pathways to Peace, USA
- Magda Cordell **MCHALE**, State University of NY at Buffalo, Center for Integrative Studies, USA
- Patrick **MENDIS**, Professor, University of Maryland USA (in Spain)
- Kostas **MIGDALIS**, Association of Orthodox Parliamentarians, Greece
- Jean-Louis **MIGNOT**, Belgian Consul in Barcelona, Belgium
- Graça **MIRA-GOMES**, Chief of Cabinet, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Portugal

- Arnaldo **NESTI**, Professor University of Florence, Italy
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- Liz **SPENCER**, European Public Policy Adviser, United Kingdom
- William **E. SWING**, President, United Religions 2000 Initiative, USA
- Mrs **SWING**, USA
- Heidrun **TEMPEL**, Büro der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland, Belgium
- Michel **THEYS**, Deputy Director, Agence Europe, Brussels , Belgium
- Noel **TREANOR**, COMECE, Belgium
- Willem **VAN HASSELT**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands
- Patrick **VIVERET**, Director “*Transversales Sciences Cultures*”, France
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- Claude **WACHTELAER**, Fédération Humaniste Européenne, Belgium
- Peter **WEIDERUD**, Political Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden
- Christos **YANNARAS**, Professor, University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece

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- Julie **BOLLE**, Forward Studies Unit
- Agnès **HUBERT**, Forward Studies Unit
- Thomas **JANSEN**, Forward Studies Unit
- Notis **LEBESSIS**, Forward Studies Unit
- René **LERAY**, General Directorate I,(Foreign Policy)
- Marc **LUYCKX**, Forward Studies Unit
- Wolfgang **PAPE**, Forward Studies Unit
- Guy **WILMES**, Forward Studies Unit

Xenophon **YATAGANAS**, Cabinet of President SANTER

ANNEX 3

AGENDA OF THE SEMINAR

THURSDAY 14 MAY 1998

- 18.30** Departure from Hotel Dorint to Breydel building (approx. 10 minutes walking)
- 19.00** Dinner - Welcome speech by Xenophon YATAGANAS, Member of the Cabinet of the President of the European Commission ("Breydel" Building, 45 avenue d'Auderghem, 12th Floor)

FRIDAY 15 MAY 1998

CHANGING DYNAMICS INSIDE THE GLOBAL RELIGIONS

- 08.30** Departure from Hotel Dorint to Borschette Building (approx. 15 minutes walking)
Chairman: Thomas JANSEN
- 09.00** Introduction: **Marc LUYCKX**
- 09.30** Keynote speech: *Changing dynamics inside the religions*: **Harlan CLEVELAND**, President World Academy of Arts and Science.
- 9.45** Introductory remarks on different religions
- ***Buddhism*: Susantha GOONATILAKE**
 - ***Islam*: Ziauddin SARDAR**
 - ***Judaism*: Grand Rabbi GUIGUI**
- 10.30** Coffee Break

- **Christianity: Bishop William E. SWING**
- **Confucianism: Tae-Chang KIM**
- **Unorganised spirituality: Avon MATTISON**

11.30 Discussion Lead-off comment

13.00 Lunch at the Borschette Building, 5th floor

CHANGING DYNAMICS IN POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE. NEW CONFLICTS ? NEW SOLUTIONS ?

Chairman : Walt Truett ANDERSON

15.00 Panel “Dynamics in Politics and Governance”: **Robert COOPER, Arthur CORDELL, James DATOR**

15.30 Discussion

16.30 Coffee Break

16.45 Dialogue and comments by : **Patrick VIVERET, Lincoln BLOOMFIELD**

17.15 Discussion

19.00 Departure of the bus from the Hotel to Brussels Centre

19.30 Dinner at the Grand Place of Brussels (“Maison du Cygne”) followed by a free-wheeling discussion introduced by **James DATOR** : *“Impact of the Information Revolution on Civilisations and Governance”*

SATURDAY MAY 16, 1998

MAKING A MESH OF THINGS

08.30 Departure from Hotel Dorint to Borschette Building (+/- 15 minutes walking)

Chairman: Harlan CLEVELAND

- 09.00 *Can Religions cooperate?* Lead-off comment by Bishop **William SWING**
- 09.30 Discussion
- 10.00 *Spirituality in a time of change?:* Lead-off comment by Avon **MATTISON**
- 10.30 Coffee Break
- 10.45 *Conflicts between religions or conflicts between paradigms. How to solve them? Some Political consequences?:* Lead-off comment: **Marc LUYCKX**
- 11.30 Discussion
- 13.00 Lunch at the Borschette, 5th floor

CONCLUSIONS AND FOLLOW UP

Chairman : Paul CLAIRET, Council of Ministers of the European Union.

- 15.00 Free Discussion : *What we have learned and what needs to be the subject of further research and analysis ?*
- 16.30 Coffee Break
- 17.00 Continuation of the Discussion:
- 17.30 “Envoi” by **Harlan CLEVELAND**
- 17.45 Concluding remarks by the Chairman
- 18.00 **End**

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Place of the seminar: Centre Borschette (Room 3C)
rue Froissart 36
Bruxelles.

Languages: English and French

ANNEX 4

POLITICAL STATEMENTS

SWEDEN

STATEMENT BY THE SWEDISH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MRS LENA HJELM-WALHEM, IN WORKING SESSION III – DIALOGUE BETWEEN CULTURES AND CIVILISATIONS – AT THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE, PALERMO 4.6.98.

“ ... The nation-State will continue to be the most important political and democratic entity in the foreseeable future. But global interdependence makes it increasingly difficult for the nation-state to deliver what people expect for a good life. This is the case in both the northern and the southern hemispheres.

A consequence of this development is that people will look for supplementary communities with which they can identify. But people might also turn inwards. Cultural factors – such as ethnicity and religion – will become more important in people’s search for foundations on which to build their hopes for the future. Socially and politically marginalised young people, who 30 years ago turned to Marxism in their search for a better future, might today turn to religion. Religious factors will therefore become increasingly important in the context of democracy, security, foreign policy, trade etc.

Religious-political conflict is not a new phenomenon.

1. Historically, the role of religion in political conflicts has been to increase tension – even cause clashes – between civilisations. This can only happen if religion is used by political leaders to emphasise the exclusiveness and primacy of one particular group on the expense of others – be it Christian, Jewish, Muslim or some other faith. A major task for Euro-Mediterranean co-operation is – with the help of close collaboration, dialogue and genuinely free trade – to counteract all such monocultural political tendencies and prove that the theory of an inevitable clash between civilisations is part of an outmoded way of thinking.

2. *In modern societies (italics supplied) religious/political friction has mainly occurred between clerical and secular authorities. Basically this is a healthy conflict which was helped – and continues to support – the development of universal social values in modern society, for example, pluralism, democracy and human rights.*

3. *As a consequence of the transformation taking place in our societies, a third kind of religious/political clash has become more evident in recent years both in domestic and in international politics. This is the split within religions and cultures. A split between “fundamentalists”, who see their traditional scriptures and teachings as so absolute as to divide humanity into irreconcilable believers and infidels, and others, who see their ancient traditions or spiritual insights as a raw material for wider human reconciliation, as the basis for an intensified search for community among people of differing races, creeds and national origins.*

The clash between cultural provincialism and openness is evident in all of our cultures – Christian, Jewish and Muslim – both from history and contemporary experience that religious influence on politics can be both beneficial and detrimental.

By emphasising fundamental ethics and humanity and the responsibility of the individual, and highlighting the importance of the meeting of cultures and openness, religion could and should make a much-needed and constructive contribution to our increasingly complex societies.

But if religious influence on politics is used as an instrument to gain political power and promote ethnocentricity, it becomes a breeding ground for a bad politics. The political idea of the “otherness” fuels conflicts. Conflict prevention is a political, humanitarian and moral imperative. Prevention starts with understanding, respect and tolerance.

UNITED KINGDOM

SPEECH BY FOREIGN SECRETARY MR ROBIN COOK, THURSDAY 8 OCTOBER 1998

“Some have said that the West needs an enemy, and that with the cold war over, Islam will take the place of the old Soviet Union. They say that there will be a ‘clash of the civilisations’. They say it is inevitable. I say they are wrong – profoundly wrong. Far from needing Islam as an enemy, we cannot afford to have Islam as anything but a friend. We may have different cultures and different religions, but that does not mean we can never get along. So we need to work to make sure that this prophecy does not become self fulfilling.”

ANNEX 5: Addresses

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