

COSMOPOLITANISM, GLOBALISM AND CULTURALISM: Could Politics, Economics and Culture Be Fruitfully Integrated?

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I

By cosmopolitanism I understand the view that all human beings have equal rights and value. Globalism is the viewpoint that insists on the relevance of free global trade as a precondition of human prosperity. By culturalism I understand the view that emphasizes the importance of man's inner and spiritual development.

What do cosmopolitanism, globalism and culturalism have in common?

They are all "isms," or ideological viewpoints, which compete for a role of the leading "grand narrative." Although our postmodern age is suspicious of such grand narratives, they are always present and are moreover indispensable. They are needed to provide a frame of orientation, a way of explaining man's role and place in reality. It is thus important to consider what these competing frames of orientation are, so that they can be properly evaluated. Contra postmodernism, it does matter which of these viewpoints guide us in our orientation in reality, for they lead to different—some better and some worse—ways of life. How can those differences be captured and evaluated?

Cosmopolitanism, globalism and culturalism are all centrally concerned with our common humanity and human dignity. For all three of them the central question is: What value, if any, does a human being have as a human being? Cosmopolitanism tends to offer a *maximalist* answer to this question: all human beings have equal and absolute value. Globalism goes toward the opposite side of the spectrum and offers a *minimalist* answer: human beings as such have no special value, nor are they all equal. Quite the contrary, all human beings are different, and some of them (for instance, I myself) can have a special value that elevates them above everyone else. Culturalism avoids both extremes, but as a result does not offer a straightforward answer to the question of the value of humanity. As I understand it, culturalism tends to take into account both our similarities and differences; this makes it open-ended and somewhat context-dependent.

In our time culture is understood in terms of "mass culture" and frequently reduced to mere entertainment, even to kitsch; it comes, then, as no surprise that culturalism is not a major player on the current world-scene. Cosmopolitanism and globalism, however, are in the forefront of the power-struggle, and in the next section I will first consider their central claims and their antagonistic relationship. Globalism now emerges as victorious in their confrontation, and this outcome causes justified concerns about the future development of humanity. Many critics of globalism argue that it leads to the deconstruction of society and the nation state, which in turn brings a complete erosion of human rights and an alarmingly widening gap between the rich and the poor. Their prescription is based on a re-establishment of the leading role of politics over economics. I will, by contrast, argue that both globalism and cosmopolitanism are one-sided and insufficient to provide an authentic framework of orientation. They are both focused on external

or surface aspects of humanity and do not recognize that an authentic orientation in reality demands also a full inner and spiritual development of our human potential. In the last section, I will outline and recommend a triangular model for a possible integration of politics, economics and culture. This model is not based on any usual hierarchical subordination but on mutual support and cooperation. Only a frame of orientation that takes into account a full complexity of human nature can lead toward a development of healthy and vital civilization.

II

The heart of cosmopolitanism is contained in the idea of universal and inalienable human rights. This idea received its most powerful political expressions in the American and the French Revolutions. In *The Declaration of Independence*, of July 4, 1776, human rights are defined in terms of the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. According to its French counterpart, human rights primarily deal with equality before the law, liberty, protection of property, and national sovereignty. In the twentieth century the cosmopolitan idea found its expression and support in the form of the United Nations and *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, proclaimed by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948. All of these documents have a normative character: although human beings are not and have not been treated as equal before the law, or as equally free, they ought to be treated as if they were.

The cosmopolitan conception of universal and inalienable human rights is, without doubt, an important and noble idea created to protect and advance the cause of humanity. Yet it faces numerous and serious problems, of which I will address two: one concerns the implementation of human rights and the other the philosophical core of the idea of an intrinsic value of every human being.

Frequently discussed political rights do not exhaust human rights. The UN *Declaration* lists among the most important rights the right to adequate food and to be free from hunger (Article 25). A serious difficulty concerning the implementation of this article indicates some of the deep problems of the entire cosmopolitan conception. Looking at the world as a whole, the UN based statistics indicates that every day about 24,000 people die from hunger and hunger-related causes.¹ Even in the USA, one of the richest nations in the world and despite America's more than sufficient resources, there are about 40 millions people who are hungry and live well beneath the poverty level. According to the UN *Declaration*, "to have a human right means that one has the basis of a claim in case of violation or neglect of that right. Any person or group who is a victim of violation of a right should have access to effective judicial or other appropriate remedies at both national and international levels." This sounds good in theory, but has hardly any significant consequence in practice. The countries that sign the UN *Declaration* take on themselves an obligation to do everything in their power to guarantee and implement the outlined human rights. Despite such institutional commitments, we must wonder what it practically means that "everyone has right to adequate food and a fundamental right to be free from hunger," when a country like America makes deep cuts in its welfare system while pouring hundreds of billions of dollars into a fictional National Missile Defense system? Or when the government of India ignores a hundred million starving children but takes enormous pride in its expensive nuclear arsenal? Or when the bureaucracy of the UN Security Council deliberately engages in endless procedural disputes concerning Rwanda, while hundreds of thousands of people are being cold-

bloodedly murdered there? If there is no sufficiently serious commitment at either national or international levels to eliminate starvation and protect human lives, how can we expect a significant effort to respect other less elementary human rights?

The lack of serious commitment to human rights, together with a lack of a proper authority that would implement such rights is neither accidental nor arbitrary. These problems are certainly related to questions concerning the very legitimacy of the idea of universal and inalienable human rights. The legitimacy issue is tied to the idea that any human being, as a human being, has an intrinsic value. As Kant expressed it in his famous categorical imperative, human beings are ends in themselves, and should never be treated as means only. When we distance ourselves from a dubious teleology of modernity that dogmatically proclaims that man is the ultimate goal of creation and the measure of all things, we must wonder what, if anything, could possibly bestow such value on human beings. There were two traditional ways of justifying the intrinsic value of humanity, both of which were based on shaky foundations and unpersuasive reasoning.

One line of defense relies on God as its guarantor. As Thomas Jefferson put it in the *Declaration of Independence*, “We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights.” But is this really so evident? Is it self-evident to an atheist? Moreover, could not the Creator equally well be called in to testify in favor of the side that denies that we are all equal and are all created with inalienable rights?² Perhaps even more importantly, does not the experience of the Holocaust and the Gulag show that all human rights could be alienated and violated? Do they not demonstrate, and that in a terrifyingly persuasive manner, that neither our freedom (political or moral) nor even our human dignity come with any guarantee?

The other line of defense, which we find partially expressed in Kant and more fully articulated by political theorists like Hugo Grotius, rely on the idea of natural law. In his *De jure belli et pacis (The Rights of War and Peace)*, Grotius argued that even the will of an omnipotent being cannot change the principles of morality or revoke basic human rights since they are guaranteed by natural law. This law would maintain its validity even if it should happen that there is no Creator or that he is indifferent toward human affairs.³ The problem with this line of reasoning is that the existence of such natural law is no more obvious than the existence of a Creator. Where and how does nature reveal any such law? Strictly speaking, nature and its laws seems completely indifferent toward the human cause and human affairs. As we know her, nature displays difference, multiplicity and heterogeneity, not the equality, uniformity, or homogeneity that cosmopolitanism postulates. It could plausibly be argued that cosmopolitan categories are not natural and not regulated by any natural law; they are social categories and human constructs that have been imposed upon nature.

If any of the “isms” we are considering here should find support in nature, it is not cosmopolitanism but globalism. According to its proponents, globalism is based not on abstract rights of ideal human beings but on real needs of individuals of flesh and blood. Driven by self-interest, globalism is focused on the material and economic aspects of human existence, and its purpose is to eliminate barriers to worldwide access of investments and products. As a modern sociological and economic phenomenon, globalization is “a multilayered process of investment, trade, and technological change in an expanding market, with continuously expanding mass communications and homogenization and standardization of production and consumption.”⁴ As

the free market expands, people all over the planet are becoming more extensively connected to each other in a world that has been gradually turned into a huge “global village.”⁵

It is important to recognize that this unprecedented modern phenomenon is actually based on an old and recognizable ideology. The ideology of the free-market preaches the absolute truth and desirability of unregulated global capitalism. As such, globalization is ideologically based on an interpretation of the classical liberal social philosophy of Adam Smith, which anticipated universal human progress through free trade.⁶ Globalism is also based on a so-called realist social philosophy that maintains that human history unfolds through the exercise of self-interest and regards human beings as isolated individuals in a state of constant competition and war against each other. Self-interest usually crystallizes together with the pursuit of happiness, whether that happiness is understood in individualistic or collective terms. The individualistic pursuit of happiness is what is called egoism. Egoism, perhaps one of man’s most natural tendencies, does not have to be understood in a narrow sense, as a blind and inconsiderate pursuit of man’s selfish interest, but in a broader sense of an individual’s desire and ability to control his own personal destiny. Both versions of egoism, however, suffer from the same problem: if the effort to control my own destiny leads me to take too much for myself, there must be many out there who are left with little or nothing and who cannot control their own destiny. A consistent and total egoism inevitably leads to a Hobbesian *homo homini lupus*, a war of all against all. When other human beings are perceived as wolves, they cannot be seen as equal or as possessing inalienable human rights; in connection with a purely market orientation, they are seen either as consumers or producers. The global economy is organized by and for the rich and privileged; its goal is profit, and just about the only thing that is global about globalization is an insatiable desire for unrestrained global exploitation.

Many sociologists and political scientists explain the emerging dominance of globalism as a result of an increasing tension between the efforts of socially oriented states to implement human rights and their inability to accomplish this goal. According to one typical account, “Globalism perceived the crisis of the western welfare state and the fall of communism as caused essentially by the same perverse outcomes of state intervention. The future of mankind was seen to be dependent on a natural alliance of markets and citizens against the state everywhere in the world.”⁷ The fall of the Berlin wall and the fall of communism have opened the possibility for “creating one borderless world of victorious market-driven capitalism in which the role of the state would be fully reduced to serving the needs of the abstract self-governing market that acted on behalf of human freedom, world economic growth, individual independence, and opportunity.”⁸

Unfortunately, freedom, growth, independence, and opportunity for a *few* means unfreedom, impoverishment, dependence, a lack of opportunity for billions of others. The global village is anything but a just village. This is why Ulrich Beck expresses the concerns of many when he asks: “How can the nightmarish spectre of globalism be *replaced by politics?*”⁹

In the world dominated and threatened by globalism, it may indeed appear to be imperative to reestablish politics if not a dominant role, then at least a corrective guardian over economics. My worry is that such concerns and initiatives cannot go deep enough. They see only one part of the evil brought about by the spreading globalization. They recognize only what globalization is depriving us of (namely, human rights), without paying enough attention to the evils that globalism stimulates. Globalization not only represents flagrant social irresponsibility but stimulates what is worst in human beings, the basest impulses that poison our humanity:

greed, selfishness, pursuit of cheapest pleasures, mistrust and animosity, and shamelessly unfair competition. Even when human beings are deprived of political freedom and other political rights, they can still live a dignified existence. But when their lives are organized around greed and selfishness, fear and animosity, when they find themselves liberated to participate in a constant war against everyone else, their humanity becomes at least temporarily suspended and sometimes even irrevocably lost.¹⁰ When the inner world is poisoned, its outer manifestations cannot bring forth much that can be appreciated or celebrated. The external world becomes either a prison of enslaving poverty or a wasteland of debilitating consumerism. If this is indeed so, what is needed is not just fair access to wealth and its just distribution, but a radical transformation of the entire system. This is why I do not believe that either the dominance of economics over politics, or of politics over economics, or even their amicable co-existence would cause the world to become a better place. In my eyes, governments as much as big corporations are stained with some kind of original sin; because of their as if innate propensity to seek unlimited power and infinite wealth above and at the expense of all other values, all institutions should be treated as guilty until proven innocent.

This is not to say that there is no difference between politics and economics, or that all efforts to cleanse these processes are equally futile and inconsequential. On this point I tend to agree with Aldous Huxley's view that of all kinds of revolutions, political revolutions are the easiest to accomplish and the most superficial. Economic revolutions are more complex and go deeper in their reforms, but still tend to transform only surface matters. Huxley believed that a "real revolutionary revolution is to be achieved, not in the external world, but in the souls and flesh of human beings."¹¹ How may this profound transformation be realized?

III

Before we can apprehend a viable alternative to a world dominated by either politics or economics, it is important to realize what cosmopolitanism and globalism have in common. Their common assumptions can be listed as follows:¹²

1. Cosmopolitanism and globalism emerge as products of modernity, which was itself a reaction to the medieval world dominated by the clerical-theological point of view. In opposition to this viewpoint, modernity desacralized and despiritualized the world.
2. But if modernity turned its back to God and the other world, it does not mean that it embraced this world. Quite the contrary, modernity can be properly characterized by what Max Weber called "world-alienation" and, perhaps even stronger, by *contemptus mundi*.
3. Both cosmopolitanism and globalism see human beings as isolated individuals with no real bonds to each other, living in an essentially meaningless, value-neutral mechanistic universe. In the case of cosmopolitanism, man is turned into an abstract rational subject; in the case of globalism, man is treated as an impoverished, naked individual.
4. To survive in this hostile world, human beings need to rely mostly on their reason. In the case of cosmopolitanism, reason is understood as having autonomous prerogatives (Kantianism), and in the case of globalism, reason is treated as instrumental, a tool serving goals dictated by self-interest (Egoism, Utilitarianism).

5. In this valueless world, everything that is valuable needs to be fabricated by man. Indeed, truth itself needs to be fabricated. *Verum est factum*.
6. The modern world gradually tends to eliminate the distinction between public and private. Everything becomes public; everything becomes commercialized, interchangeable and marketable. Every aspect of life becomes publicly organized and institutionalized. Yet—conversely and perversely—everything is also privatized, in the sense of being objectivized and alienated from the common world of shared human experience.
7. Both cosmopolitanism and globalism flatten our perspective on humanity insofar as they focus predominantly on its external aspects. Their true concerns are not with the quality of individual or communal life. Human rights are about regulations that make our individual existence and co-existence with other people bearable and fair. Globalization regulates the activities of producers and consumers in the market. They do not have much to do with either stimulating a true personality or a true community. Indeed, they seem to protect markets and corporate entities from human intrusions.
8. In this standardized, all-regulated, organized, and routinized world, the proper functioning of things seems to depend on being regulated by a proper institutional authority and on creating ever more perfect institutions. However, every authority is more or less arbitrary and there are many fundamental problems in life that cannot properly be resolved in an institutional way. Imposing an authority or an institutionalized solution seem in such cases only to strain, or even cripple, human relations.

It is in contrast to these assumptions that I would like to defend the concept of culture, and reaffirm the importance of culturalism for our orientation in reality. By culture I do not refer to so-called mass culture, for in many ways this is anti-culture rather than culture. Nor do I understand the concept of culture loosely, in the way frequently used in sociological and anthropological studies to refer to common habits of any arbitrarily chosen group. Rather, I refer to what Germans understand by *Bildung*, and furthermore take very seriously the original Latin meaning of the word. In this context, *culture* comes from *colere*, which literally means “to cultivate,” “to dwell,” “to take care,” “to tend and preserve.” In its original meaning, culture did not stand in opposition to nature, but referred precisely to the interaction of man with nature in the sense of its cultivating and tending it until it becomes fit for human habitation. The verb “to cultivate” refers to an attitude of loving care and stands in sharp contrast to all modern efforts to subject nature to the absolute domination of man.¹³

Understood in this way, culture is not what separates but what connects. It brings man in touch with his own inner needs and aspirations. It connects man with other human beings, the natural world and reality as a whole. A man of culture would be bothered and disturbed by others being, say, hungry and homeless, not because of their alleged rights to be fed and have a shelter, but because of his respect and concern for their humanity. He would help those less fortunate not because of some political declarations or some externally imposed duty, but because of his cultivated ability to feel sympathy and compassion for others. For a man of culture, another human being is not a bearer of abstract rights but a living and suffering human being, an individual in need of help and protection. A model of such a human being of culture is not Kant, and even less Hobbes, but someone like Albert Schweitzer.

As a caring, respecting, trusting and loving attitude, culture is not focused on reason and reasoning, but rather on something that can be called spirit. Spirit and spirituality, of which

modernity is so suspicious, are too frequently associated with religion; they indeed have deep ties, but spirituality is not reducible to religion. Nor are culture and spirituality opposed to reason; they have to cultivate not only good taste but independent judgment, the two faculties that may well be the best remedies of tasteless consumerism and politically correct thinking.¹⁴

Although we are frequently (mis)led to believe otherwise, culture is not about fabrication and the latest human inventions. True culture is not about buying and absorbing the artificial but about the internal development and growth of an individual into a mature, spontaneous, and authentic human being. Cultural development and growth is a life-long process that is centered on the cultivation of the whole personality. This is a process for which there are no recipes and rigidly prescribed formulas. One reason for this is that culture always deals with the multiplicity of human beings who find themselves situated in several specific natural, social and political contexts. We are not isolated individuals involved only in calculated means-ends relationships, but beings always integrated into larger wholes. Although culture represents a sustained effort toward the fully realized individual, these individual humans can never be isolated or alienated from each other. As Roger Gottlieb puts it, “what is most precious about our lives is bound up with the fate of others.”¹⁵

Another reason for the impossibility of formulating simple prescriptions regarding cultural development is that we are internally complex and deeply divided beings. To treat humanity in terms of abstract bearers of human rights, or as essentially self-interested creatures, is to grossly oversimplify the picture. To be human means to be internally torn and pulled in different directions. Human life is a never-ending struggle between different forces, drives, impulses, desires, ideals, dreams, and aspirations. It is a struggle between the natural, the rational, and the spiritual; the external and the internal; the selfish and the altruistic; the subjective and the objective, the real and the ideal. Cultural development is an attempt to accomplish their synthesis and their integration, by mediating between real circumstances and ideal aspirations.

How is this understanding of culture, and culturalism as a way of orienting ourselves in reality, related to cosmopolitanism and globalism? How can this process of internal growth, or as Huxley called it, “the real revolutionary revolution,” turn this world into a better place? Before we offer an adequate answer to this question, we must recall the general deficiencies of cosmopolitanism and globalism or, more generally, the general problems of modern western civilization. Perhaps the most important of these is the overemphasis and overdevelopment of the external, public, material sides and institutionalized aspects of life at the expense of its cultural and spiritual side. As a result, we have lost faith in what Albert Schweitzer called “the spiritual community of mankind and its spiritual development.”¹⁶ We have lost our reverence for truth; the dominance of politics and economics has brought not merely the loss of truth but the denial of the possibility of truth. Our civilization is unbalanced, like a boat leaning too heavily on one side and threatening to flip over. Adding more of the same to the side that is already barely above the water may easily lead to a catastrophe for the world as a whole.

Another major obstacle to the recovery of our civilization and a fruitful integration of politics, economics, and culture is that continuous competition and hierarchical thinking have become so deeply ingrained in every aspects of our lives. In our concern about the continuing hegemony of globalism, we typically seek a reversal of the situation so that politics gets the upper hand. But instead of competition and hierarchies, we should think of cooperation and mutual help. The boat of our civilization is not only tipped over to one side, it is also going in a

wrong direction. It needs both a good navigator and an accurate map. This is where both politics and economics have proved themselves to be short-sighted and frequently even blind. Our predicament provides a fine opportunity for culture to make a major contribution to our civilization. Culture is not a force that can stand entirely on its own; it is at least partially dependent on politics and economics. However good and profound they may be, taken by themselves, ideas do not change anything in the world. Culture and spirit cannot generate the instinctual impulses and vital energy needed to change the world; those material powers are connected to politics and even more to economics. Yet culture and spirit can cultivate, transform and guide that force toward the realization of genuine human interests, concerns, and aspirations. Only culture could realize the best possibilities of both globalism and cosmopolitanism while protecting the world from their baser effects.

What I am proposing is nothing like the enthronement of Plato's philosophers-kings, perfect humans or supermen who would take over the world and straighten it up. Philosophers should stay away from the crown itself, but they may serve as good advisers to kings. More importantly, kings themselves would enormously benefit from a genuine cultural education. The model I am recommending can be presented in the following way. Imagine a triangle with culture at its apex, and politics and economics making its base. Let us not think, however, of culture as having a superior or controlling role. Think of it as having a different role to play, of being a navigator (not a captain!) through the ever complicated and challenging currents of life. Why would politics and economics accept the guidance of culture? Because their strengths and proper functions lie somewhere else, and because they themselves have sufficiently demonstrated that they are incompetent in the role of a navigator; by usurping this position they endanger not only human rights and human dignity, but even the very existence of the entire civilization.

Would the implementation of this triangular model guarantee a recovery of our wounded civilization? As with everything else concerning culture and culturalism, there are no guarantees of any kind. Perhaps the only thing we could reasonably expect is that politics and economics would regain a human face and be performed in a human spirit.

That will be something we have not seen in a long, long time.

Notes

1. For this and related statistics, see Gary Gardner and Brian Halweil's article "The Global Epidemics of Malnutrition," *Peace and Policy* 5:2000, pp. 3-10. For more useful statistics, see Charles Derber, *Corporation Nation* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1998), and Morris Berman, *The Twilight of American Culture* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000).
2. As Vaclav Havel argued, "the very principle of inalienable human rights, conferred on man by the Creator, grew out of the typically modern notion that man—as a being capable of knowing nature and the world—was the pinnacle of creation and lord of the world. This modern anthropocentrism inevitably meant that He who allegedly endowed man with his inalienable rights began to disappear from the world: He was so far beyond the grasp of modern science that he was gradually pushed into a sphere of privacy of sorts, if not directly into a sphere of private fancy—that is, to a place where public

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- obligations no longer apply. The existence of a higher authority than man himself simply began to get in a way of human aspirations. The idea of human rights and freedoms must be an integral part of any meaningful world order. Yet I think it must be anchored in a different place, and in a different way than has been the case so far. If it is to be more than just a slogan mocked by half of the world, it cannot be expressed in the language of a departing era, and it must not be mere froth floating on the subsiding waters of faith in a purely scientific relationship to the world; “The Search for Meaning in a Global Civilization,” in *The Truth About The Truth*, ed. W. T. Anderson (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1995), p. 236.
3. See especially book I, chapter I, section X. For further discussion of Grotius, see Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946), pp. 165-72, and “Hugo Grotius” by Richard H. Cox, in *History of Political Philosophy*, eds. Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973; 2nd ed.), pp. 360-69.
 4. Asbjørn Eide, “Globalization, Universalization, and Food Rights,” *Peace and Policy* 5:2000, p. 11. For further discussion of globalization, see, for instance, Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998); Ulrich Beck, *What is Globalization?*, trans. P. Camiller (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2000); Ankie Hoogvelt, *Globalization and the Postcolonial World* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); *The Ends of Globalization: Bringing Society Back In*, eds. Don Kalb *et al* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).
 5. About the “global village” and its discontents, see Naomi Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* (New York: Picador, 1999). According to Klein’s vivid description (xvii), “This is a village where some multinationals, far from leveling the global playing field with jobs and technology for all, are in the process of mining the planet’s poorest back country for unimaginable profits. This is the village where Bill Gates lives, amassing a fortune of \$55 billion while a third of his workforce is classified as temporary workers, and where competitors are either incorporated into the Microsoft monolith or made obsolete by the latest feat in software bundling. This is the village where we are indeed connected to one another through a web of brands, but the underside of that web reveals designer slums like the one I visited outside Jakarta. IBM claims that its technology spans the globe, and so it does, but often its international presence takes the form of cheap Third World labor producing the computer chips and power sources that drive our machines. On the outskirts of Manila, for instance, I met a seventeen-year-old girl who assembles CD-ROM drives for IBM. ‘We make computers,’ she told me, ‘but we don’t know how to operate computers’. Ours, it would seem, is not such a small planet after all.”
 6. On this point, see *The End of Globalization*, Introduction by Don Kolb, p. 10.
 7. *Ibid.*
 8. *Ibid.*, p. 9
 9. Beck, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
 10. The forces of the market enslave man in more insidious and subtle ways, without fear and threat, through a manipulated sense of freedom and prosperity. These forces draw us into an endless whirlpool of always relative means and ends. In this vortex everything, even human life and human dignity, as well as justice and happiness, has a price and an

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- exchange value. Arrested in the market economy, man himself becomes a commodity. Man thus finds himself in a tragi-comic situation. He thinks in terms of self-interest and believes that his self-interest consists in becoming as successful and marketable as possible; he thus invests his time, his energy, his dreams, his entire life, to accomplish the needed success. At the same time, he does not recognize that he lives in self-denial. Modern man gets involved in the wrong game, the game he should not be playing, for in that game neither he nor anyone or anything else can have any intrinsic value or stand beyond the endless mechanical chain of means and ends. For further discussion of this issue, see, for instance, Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1992).
11. See Huxley's Preface for the *Brave New World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968). Similar views are defended by Albert Schweitzer in *The Philosophy of Civilization*, and by Vaclav Havel in "The Power of the Powerless," *Open Letters: Selected Writings 1965-1990*, ed. P. Wilson (New York: Random House, 1992).
 12. I develop these points in my book *Between Truth and Illusion: Kant at the Crossroads of Modernity* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002). See also Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*.
 13. For further discussion of the original meaning of culture, see Arendt's essay "The Crisis of Culture: Its Social and its Political Significance," in *Between Past and Future: Six Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Penguin, 1985, enlarged edition). For the concept of *Bildung*, see Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. J. Weinsheimer and D. G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 1993; 2nd revised edition).
 14. As Hannah Arendt frequently argued, good taste and independent judgments need not be so different, but may, after all, turn out to be the two sides of the same coin. See, for instance, Arendt's essay, "The Crisis of Culture: Its Social and its Political Significance," *op. cit.*, pp. 220-24.
 15. Roger Gottlieb, *A Spirituality of Resistance: Finding a Peaceful Heart and Protecting the Earth* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999), ix.
 16. Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, p. 40. In *The Twilight of American Culture*, ch. 1, Berman identifies the following factors present when a civilization collapses: (a) accelerating social and economic inequality; (b) declining marginal returns with regard to investment in organizational solutions to socioeconomic problems; (c) rapidly dropping levels of literacy, critical understanding, and general intellectual awareness; and (d) spiritual death, that is, Spengler's "classicism": the emptying out of cultural content and the freezing (or repackaging) of it in formulas; in other words, kitsch.