

A Letter to the History Makers

Yasuhiko Genku Kimura

The elements of every concept enter into logical thought at the gate of perception and make their exits at the gate of purposive action; and whatever cannot show its passports at both those two gates is to be arrested as unauthorized by reason.

— Charles Sanders Peirce

MY COMMITMENT

The moral commitment that forms the basis of my work as Chairman of VISION IN ACTION is two-fold: (1) To pursue eternal and universal truth above all else; (2) To develop wisdom consisting in the ability to sustain a dialogue with people who hold different points of view from my own.

There are a great number of educated people who hold that eternal and universal truth does not exist or that it is unattainable. However, unless one takes the position that the only eternal and universal truth is that it does not exist, which is illogical and contradictory, one cannot claim the validity of this assertion. Further, unless one knows, and therefore has already attained, eternal and universal truth, one cannot make the assertion that it is unattainable, which is again illogical and contradictory.

Therefore, I hold that the existence of eternal and universal truth is a possibility, the pursuit of which is completely rational and logically consistent. I further hold that the pursuit of eternal and universal truth bestows one with a sense of profound intellectual and spiritual fulfillment. Although one may never achieve eternal and universal truth in the sense of the ultimate truth, one finds, in the very pursuit of it, myriad manifestations of the true and the beautiful, which might otherwise have passed one by unnoticed.

The good reaches its highest when it is united with the true and the beautiful. Therefore, the pursuit of eternal and universal truth provides one with a possibility of living a genuinely moral life, in

which the good is the natural blossoming of the true in action and the spontaneous reflection of the beautiful in deed. Although traditionally morality is understood to be a discipline distinct from the disciplines of science and aesthetics, one can integrate these three domains as the three aspects of the state of consciousness that is aware of the wholeness of life—aware of the holistic trinity of the true, the beautiful, and the good.

As one relates with others in the world of social intercourse, one meets people who hold different—sometimes radically different—world-views from one's own. If one's primary commitment in life is the pursuit of eternal and universal truth, one will have two possible ways of relating to those who hold different points of view and disagree: If one is aware that one has not yet attained eternal and universal truth, then one will listen humbly and intently to those who hold different points of view in order to learn and to further develop one's own thinking and knowledge. If one is aware that one has attained some measure of eternal and universal truth, then one will listen to other points of view as aspects of or steps towards eternal and universal truth. One will have developed sufficient wisdom to be able to peacefully and productively sustain dialogues with those who disagree with one.

Thus, in the pursuit of eternal and universal truth, one can also embrace and be completely tolerant of different views, ideas, and cultures. The pursuit of eternal and universal truth engenders integrity in the sense of coherence, balance, and wholeness

within and without. The pursuit of eternal and universal truth is a core process in and through which life coheres to generate integrity within and without. As peace is a value that arises as a consequence of the attainment of such integrity, the pursuit of eternal and universal truth also creates or restores inner and outer peace.

People tend to be intolerant of those who hold different points of view from their own because they want to “believe” that they “know,” which means that deep down they are uncertain of the truth or the validity of their own beliefs, and therefore they do not want to face the possibility or reality that they may not know the truth at all. They are unwilling to face the possibility or reality that the edifice of belief that they have built to provide meaning to their lives may merely stand on shifting sand, not on the rock of truth.

A belief functions as a substitute for authentic knowledge. A belief in this sense is a vague hypothesis that is elevated to the status of a truth without a due process of rational examination and verification conducted by a community of people qualified to examine the hypothesis. There exist only two basic epistemological possibilities: that is, either you know or you do not know. A belief is a violation of epistemological integrity in which something one does not know is feigned as something one knows. Therefore, the act of believing is a form of intellectual self-deception, which leads to the suppression of doubt. This in turn leads to the phenomenon of “true believers” or “fundamentalists”—fanaticism and arrogance caused by a morbid fear of one’s own suppressed doubt—through deep-seated insecurity and lack of confidence.

However, if one’s primary commitment in life is to the pursuit of eternal and universal truth, one will naturally have a deep sense of humility without any pretense that one knows something one does not know. The pursuit of eternal and universal truth requires eternal patience and universal humility, for in the pursuit of eternal and universal

truth, upon the vast horizon of eternal and universal truth, it is quite natural that one does not know the ultimate truth. Whatever it is that one knows is only a step towards eternal and universal truth.

It is my working assumption that my two-fold commitment holds an important key to the continual development of character and knowledge, and thereby the achievement of spiritual and intellectual integrity, a *sine qua non* of peace within and in the world. VISION-IN-ACTION is in essence an invitation for people to join in this commitment to the pursuit of eternal and universal truth and to inspired action arising from this pursuit.

Since our pursuit of eternal and universal truth is a commitment, it is entirely open-ended, with no dogma, no belief, no creed. Eternal and universal truth is vast enough to embrace everyone’s unique path, vision, and expression. In practice, this means that there is no need for agreement but simply for alignment and wisdom consisting in the ability to sustain peaceful dialogues with one another, irrespective of agreement or disagreement. United in this commitment, we will become co-explorers of eternal and universal truth and co-creators of a new civilization. We will become history makers.

YOU, THE HISTORY MAKERS

The evolutionary process of the universe is characterized by what is termed synergy: the principle that the behavioral characteristics of the whole system in evolution cannot be predicted from the most complete knowledge of the components taken separately or in partial combinations.¹ Many analysts argue that the Western world has entered a revolutionary phase in history comparable only to the Industrial Revolution, that the prime mover of this radical, transformative phase-transition is computer-information technology, and that the speed of transformation at which this revolution unfolds

will be incomparably greater than that of the Industrial Revolution. Yet, in accordance with the principle of synergy, even with much greater knowledge and predictive ability than any that was available in the past, not a single expert can predict, with certainty, what the world as a whole will be like in the future. Many people around the world are feeling that the future is becoming increasingly uncertain and increasingly fraught with possible dangers.

Fortunately, however, human beings are not only mere observers of the world but are also conscious participants and co-creators. What we call the world comprises a synergetic network of conversations amongst people that is continuously forming, reforming, and transforming. The substance of the world is *idea*, which forms, reforms, and transforms itself *via* the conversations of humankind, synergetically organizing itself as an evolutionary, multidimensional network. Our most immediate, essential, and significant environment is not the biosphere or the physiosphere but the *ideosphere*, the metaphysical sphere of ideas, which is the very substance of the conversations of humankind, of the evolutionary network of conversations.

The prime mover of the world is not technology but idea. Science is an expression and technology is an artifact of *idea*, the prime mover, but never the prime mover itself. It is thus the ideospheric transformation that manifested as the Renaissance and the Enlightenment that brought forth science and technology, effecting the Industrial Revolution, eventuating in the Information Revolution now underway, and culminating in the Singularity Revolution² soon to come. On the other hand, essentially because it lacked idea fundamental to the evolution of modern science, the Chinese civilization, which developed rudimentary airplane and submarine technologies when Europe was still in the Dark Ages, was not able to evolve the kind of science that Europe subsequently developed.

Idea, and only idea, moves the world. This means that we can move the world with our own thinking through the *generation* of ideas. The problem, however, is that the majority of humanity remains and is content to remain not the producer but the consumer of ideas. The dominant mode in which people partake in the conversation of humankind is by being consumers of ideas that are propagated throughout the network of conversations. Therefore, they often become easy prey to professional marketers and distributors of ideas, such as the media or educational institutions, whose ideas may be detrimental pollutants to the ideospheric environment, and thus to individuals mentally breathing in that environment.

Today, we see a proliferation of ecological movements and environmental activists, yet very few, if any, are aware of and discuss the most critical environment of all: the ideosphere. As a matter of fact, the environmental movement is an ideological movement fought inside the ideosphere. Therefore, without an ideospheric transformation in respect of the physiospheric and biospheric environments, there will be no transformation in the physiosphere or biosphere. What we need more than anything else is an *ideospheric environmental movement*. The environmental movement we need the most is an environmental movement of the ideosphere itself to deal with the ecology of ideas.

If this movement were ever to be successful, it should be conducted primarily within each individual who chooses to participate in it. For the locus of the ideosphere is the individual; fundamentally, it is not the collective but the individual constituting the collective that alone thinks and generates ideas. The ideospheric transformation is an emergent phenomenon, resulting from individuals in sufficient numbers being authentic and creative thinkers, that is, generators of original ideas, producers of new dialogues, and contributors to the conversations of humankind.

No central authority should ever dictate the course of ideospheric development, for dependency upon external authority in the matter of ideas is fundamentally antithetical to the singular nature of ideospheric development. Intellectual and spiritual dependency upon external authority is the very antithesis of true, independent thinking, which is the engine of the ideospheric transformation. The dependency upon external authority results in the deceleration, truncation, reversion, atrophy, or dissolution of ideospheric evolution.

Much of human history can be seen as the story of the struggle of human beings against and their emancipation from all kinds of external authority, with varying degrees of success and failure. From the mythic gods of the bicameral mind, described by Julian Jaynes,³ to all variations of gods propounded by their earthly representatives and their organizations, to the intellectuals or intelligentsia of a more secular origin, the ideosphere has been, to a significant degree, dominated and dictated by various external authorities. The ideospheric transformation called for in the 21st century will be of a nature qualitatively different.

The ideospheric changes of the past usually tended to be concentric, having common centers working as external authority, reflecting the concentric nature of the ideospheric configurations of preceding ages. The ideospheric structure called for in the 21st century will be *omnicentric*, having independent yet interconnected centers in the spiritually sovereign individuals working as inner self-authorities for thinking and for generation of original ideas, which will co-evolve in and with the new omnicentric configuration of the evolving ideosphere. The Information Revolution underway is the manifestation of and the apparatus for this omnicentric configuration of the new ideosphere of the future.

Thus, to be a history maker—a generator of ideas and a productive contributor to the conversation of humankind—is to be a sovereign center of this omnicentric configuration. To be a history maker is

to be a committed thinker and to be a powerful actor, for thinking is the provenance of authentic action, which alone has the power to transform the world. Therefore, in being a history maker, you will not only be the creator of your own destiny but also a co-creator of the destiny of the world. Through being a history maker, you will bestow upon yourself the power to create a future as a varicolored tapestry interwoven by the threads of your thinking and action, synergetically combined with those of other world-weavers and history-makers.

We human beings are at our best not when we are engaged in abstract solitary reflection or in our individual transformation for its own sake, but when we are engaged in the act of transforming the world, in the act of history making. The pursuit of eternal and universal truth, the act of generating ideas through creative thinking, and the sustained, contributive engagement in the conversation of humankind, lead to powerful moral action, the action that creates a New World. To engage in such action and to become a co-creator of a New World is to be a world-weaver in the very act of weaving the world and a history-maker in the very act of making a New World.

In truth, there is no real individual transformation apart from world transformation; there is only co-transformation of the individual and the world. For the individual *is* the world. The individual *is* the whole of humanity. Therefore, you are the world and you are humanity. As your ideas and thinking are woven into the fabric of the world, so is the world holographically woven into the fabric of your being. To know that you are the world, that you are humanity, is to have true compassion. To act from the knowledge of the identity of the self and the world, of the self and humanity, is to be moral in the deepest sense of the word.

Within such deeply moral consciousness, individuality is integrated into universality and universality is crystallized into individuality. To engender an ideosphere wherein such moral

consciousness, such a dynamic and complementary unity of individuality and universality, becomes a global reality is the paramount moral challenge confronting the history makers of today. The comprehensive success of humanity depends on how we meet this challenge as individuals, as the primary loci of thinking and action and as the prime movers of human and world transformation.

The challenge of history making essentially lies with you—in whether you dare to meet this challenge or whether you succumb to the conspiracy for mediocrity and be resigned. To act on the commitment to history making, the transformation of the world, and the creation of a New World is a hallmark of integrity as a human being, possible only for an intellect with real maturity and for a spirit with true wisdom. Resignation, on the other hand, is a servant of the conspiracy for mediocrity; resignation does not demand any great intellectual or spiritual strength or integrity, for it is the tacit acceptance of defeat before a challenge.

The great spiritual master-artist Walter Russell said, “Defeat I shall not know. It shall not touch me. I will meet it with true thinking. Resisting it will be my strengthening. But if, perchance, the day will give me the bitter cup, it will sweeten in the drinking.” For a spirit and intellect such as Walter Russell, resignation, and in fact defeat or failure as such, is utterly impossible. One who can sweeten a bitter cup of so-called defeat or failure in the act of drinking is invincible. The triumphant life consists not in the cup but in the drinking; not in the circumstance but in the choice to meet the challenges of life with courage, fortitude, and magnanimity.

The conspiracy for mediocrity cannot touch you if you choose not to conspire with mediocrity, and instead choose to aspire to and inspire with true greatness. The choice is between being history by conspiring with mediocrity or making history by aspiring to and inspiring with greatness. In your choosing to participate in VISION-IN-ACTION, you have chosen the latter—the path of greatness, the path of world-weaving, the path of history-making. Welcome.

NOTES:

1. R. Buckminster Fuller, *Synergetics*, Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1975.
2. The Singularity Revolution is the designation given to the near-future ninety degree acceleration in the rate of exponential societal change predicted to be caused by the powerful, real-time convergence of many technological revolutions, including the computer-information technology, biotechnology, nanotechnology, and new energy technology revolutions.
3. Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976.