

PDE Inter-University On-line Philosophical Archives: Greetings

July 20, 2002

Founder's Words: Our new age of global dialogue calls for creating a philosophical arena where a variety of different ideas and proposals can meet each other on the basis of a free, persuasive principle of civilization. This principle of civilization has three basic categories in reference to the emerging new world of today which is in the process of becoming creatively transformed and synthezized day after day: namely, Peace, Dialogue, and Earth.

I, henceforth, name our arena PDE Inter-University On-line Philosophical Archives. I heartily welcome any valuable contribution to the Archives—in the form of a philosophical paper on the theme of Peace and Dialogue on Earth.

The general theme of The X. IPO is a ramification of this theme. Let me put it here again: Toward a Just and Dialogical Human Community: An Exploration of Sustainability, Civility, and Mutual Learning.

PDE Inter-University On-line Philosophical Archives is located in Dr. Tokiyuki Nobuhara's Office at Keiwa College; and is an academic arena for PDE Inter-University Center. As such, it aspires to serve humanity and the advancement of its wisdom, philosophy, in cooperation with the IPO and other philosophical and educational movements in the present-day world.

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With best regards,

Sincerely,

Tokiyuki Nobuhara

Ph.D. & D.Min.

Founder

PDE Inter-University Center

Keiwa College

Between Whitehead and Nishida-tetsugaku:

The Idea of a Buddhist-Christian Philosophy As This Applies Itself to Creating a Worldwide Network of Philosophical Education on Peace and Dialogue on Earth*

Tokiyuki Nobuhara
Keiwa College

*This is the text of my paper delivered at the Whitehead and China in the New Millennium Conference, June 17-20, 2002 in Beijing, China.

Introduction:

The purpose of this paper is to propose and articulate some possible guidelines of a worldwide network of philosophical education on peace and dialogue, based upon my idea of a Buddhist-Christian Philosophy as this emerges from out of an in-depth intercultural dialogue between Whiteheadian process-relational worldview and Nishida-tetsugaku or the Kyoto school of philosophy founded by Kitaro Nishida (1870-1945). I have discussed in detail the idea in question in my recent Japanese book *Between Whitehead and Nishida-tetsugaku: The Idea of a Buddhist-Christian Philosophy* (Kyoto: Hozokan, 2001).

And further, I discussed some of its major components in three of my recent articles written in English and German: namely, "Hartshorne and Nishida: Re-Envisioning the Absolute. Two Types of Panentheism vs. Spinoza's Pantheism" (<http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Cont/ContNobu.htm>); "How Can We Coordinate the Vertical Order to the Horizontal Order and vice versa in Metaphysics Cogently? Uwe Meixner, Process Thought and Nishida-tetsugaku" (*Satya Nilayam: Chennai Journal of*

Intercultural Philosophy, Vol. 1, February 2002, 106-118) whose German translation was prepared and published by Wolfgang Tomaschitz as: “Wie koennen wir in der Metaphysik die vertikale und horizontale Ordnung stimmig zueinander bringen? Uwe Meixner, Prozessdenken und Nishida-tetsugaku” (*polylog: Zeitschrift fuer interkulturelles Philosophieren*, 7, 2001, 33-41); and “God and Emptiness: Cause, Reasons, and the World’s Abyss [Forms of Panentheism in Religion and Nature]” (*Bulletin of Keiwa College*, No. 11, February 28, 2002, 1-16) which concurrently appeared in: Sybille Fritsch-Oppermann, ed., *Zufall, Notwendigkeit, Bestimmung: Der Dialog zwischen Naturwissenschaft und Religion ueber Schoeffung und Natur angesichts der Fragen von Kausalitaet und Determination* (Loccum Protokolle: Evangelische Akademie Loccum, 2002, 21-33).

The present paper is geared toward a practical application of the idea of a Buddhist-Christian philosophy with the above-mentioned three components: i.e., the issue of re-envisioning the Absolute in the two schools, process thought and Nishida-tetsugaku; the issue of how we can coordinate the vertical and the horizontal order in metaphysics cogently in Uwe Meixner and these two schools; and the issue of “God and emptiness” dealing with forms of panentheism in religion and nature. The focus of our practical concern for the application of the said idea is philosophical education as embodied in the X. International Philosophy Olympiad which was held at The United Nations University in Tokyo, May 13-15, 2002 with the general theme: “Towards a Just and Dialogical Human Community: An Exploration of Sustainability, Civility and Mutual Learning.”

In what follows, first, let me share with the audience of this paper “Towards The X. International Philosophy Olympiad: Greetings.” Then, second, I will explicate the idea of “mutual immanence” as the organizing principle of the Olympiad of this year from a threefold perspective: namely, (1) re-envisioning the Absolute; (2) the problem of causality as it is discussed in relation to the vertical and the horizontal order in metaphysics; and (3) the problem of “envisagement” in relation to human expectation as regards the completion of values in civilization. And, third, let me discuss Whitehead’s vision of “peace” as the overarching consummation of the three preceding issues in metaphysics in relation to P. T. Forsyth’s notion of “holy” as the apex of his theodicy in *Justification of God*. Thus I hope I will be able to find some viable way of promoting a global civilization by means of philosophy education even in the wake of the attack on humanity on September 11, 2001.

I. Towards the X. International Philosophy Olympiad: Greetings

February 7, 2002

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

As president, I joyfully announce that The X. International Philosophy Olympiad will be held at The United Nations University in Tokyo, 13-15 May 2002. In what follows I present before you the official brochure as its guidepost: <http://global-dialogue.com/ipo/>

Before entering into the text of the brochure, however, it may be in order for me to say a few words concerning this year's specific concern and emphasis: our event is specifically intended in 2002 to be a philosophical forum as well as an essay competition. It is a Philosophy Olympiad/Forum, as it were. As such, it is a philosophical festival of transmitting the Love of Wisdom from generation to generation.

This expresses our innermost aspiration that we may help cherish critical thinking in the minds of young people and develop philosophical education on a global scale—and this especially in face of the September 11, 2001 attack on humanity and subsequent global incidents.

At this juncture of “universal” (and partly but importantly “human”) history on Earth, it is hoped that we celebrate life together despite everything. Let us attend to the voice resonating at the end of “The Way Forward” of *The Earth Charter*: “Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life” (see “Ms. Hironaka’s Web Site: Earth Charter”).

The IPO is an assemblage of incoming youthful adventures; and the IPO lectureships are a show of accomplishments delivered in the form of forum by outgoing officers on Earth. Thus, the flow of civilization goes on in terms of “mutual immanence” of the generations old and young, the former being causally efficacious and the latter in the mode of anticipation, as Alfred North Whitehead has imagined. Or, on a larger scale, the Earth and human civilization are constituting a larger nexus together. There has to be an occasion—let’s say, nexus—of festivity: namely, students’ Olympiad “and” distinguished thinkers’ masterly show of accomplishments. And this symbolizes the

entire universe in its dynamic advance toward an ever new future.

I sincerely hope that you will enjoy reading the brochure. Colleagues, I look forward to seeing you face to face in Tokyo in May. Friends in the global human community, your concern for and support of The X. International Philosophy Olympiad in Tokyo will be heartily appreciated.

With best wishes,

Truly yours,

Tokiyuki Nobuhara, Ph.D. & D.Min.

President, The X. International Philosophy Olympiad

II. Interpreting the Notion of “Mutual Immanence” in Terms of Process-Nishida Intercultural Dialogue

As is clear above, The X. International Philosophy Olympiad is conceived and prepared as a combination of the Olympiad as an assemblage of incoming youthful adventures and the IPO lectureships as a show of accomplishments delivered in the form of forum by outgoing officers on Earth. I wrote:

Thus, the flow of civilization goes on in terms of “mutual immanence” of the generations old and young, the former being causally efficacious and the latter in the mode of anticipation, as Alfred North Whitehead has imagined. (Greetings, above, 3)

In this sentence I am predicated upon Whitehead’s following dictum in *Adventures of Ideas*¹:

Any set of actual occasions are united by the mutual immanence of occasions, each in the other. To the extent that they are united they mutually constrain each other. Evidently, this mutual immanence and constraint of a pair of occasions is not in general a symmetric relation. For, apart from contemporaries, one occasion will be the future of the other. Thus the earlier will be immanent in the later according to the mode of

¹ Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (New York: Mentor Books, 1933).

efficient causality, and the later in the earlier according to the mode of anticipation, as explained above. Any set of occasions, conceived as thus combined into a unity, will be termed a nexus. (AI, Mentor edition, 199)

Encouraged by the connotation of the above paragraph, I continued:

Or, on a larger scale, the Earth and human civilization are constituting a larger nexus together. There has to be an occasion—let's say, nexus—of festivity: namely, students' Olympiad "and" distinguished thinkers' masterly show of accomplishments. And this symbolizes the entire universe in its dynamic advance toward an ever new future. (Greetings, above, 3)

At the core of my idea of the Olympiad/Forum combination is the spirit of festivity celebrating what Whitehead designates the "immanence of the Great Fact including this initial Eros and this final Beauty which constitutes the zest of self-forgetful transcendence belonging to Civilization at its height" (AI, Mentor, 294).

A. Re-Envisioning the Absolute: The Personal Deity and absolute Nothingness

One of the major questions lingering between process thought and Nishida-tetsugaku is, I perceive, one which concerns itself with the way in which we can re-envision the Absolute. As I tried to elucidate in the first of three articles mentioned earlier, "Hartshorne and Nishida: Re-Envisioning the Absolute. Two Types of Panentheism vs. Spinoza's Pantheism," Hartshorne transcends the traditional notion of the Absolute by way of containing it in the Surrelativistic/Panentheistic reality of the all-embracing love of God which is at once the Personal Deity and the Universe, whereas Nishida goes above and beyond the notion of the Absolute per se by showing that the Absolute cannot be absolute unless it includes in itself its absolute self-negation. Nishida represents a philosophical discursive case of reinterpreting the Mahayana Buddhist logic of emptiness emptying itself.

This being so, it appears that Hartshorne's and Nishida's cases of re-envisioning the Absolute just fit in with what Whitehead calls above "the immanence of the Great Fact including this initial Eros and this final Beauty" except the fact that Hartshorne's idea of all-embracing love of God is, as an actual whole, the concrete nature of God containing the abstract nature of God (i.e., Whitehead's Eros) in itself. From my own perspective, we have to discuss how this initial Eros comes about—against the

background of the entirety of the Deity which requires going beyond and above the Divine persons and enters into the realm of what Meister Eckhart designates Gottheit “as” Nichts. This state of affairs I propose to explicate in terms of the vision of God as the principle of loyalty in the universe, in the sense that God is loyal to Nothingness as Buddhist Emptiness or Nichts as the intra-Trinitarian Godhead, thus, and only thus, paradoxically turning to us (ad extra) calling forth loyalty/faith in us; and this is because Nothingness negates itself, as is articulated so brilliantly by Nishida.

B. Coordinating the Vertical and the Horizontal Order in Metaphysics: the Whence And the Whether of Causality

Although all experiences in the universe are to be contained in the bosom of the Deity as the entirety of the universe, there should be the push into this advance in it. As argued in the second paper mentioned earlier, “How Can We Coordinate the Vertical Order to the Horizontal Order and vice versa in Metaphysics Cogently? Uwe Meixner, Process Thought and Nishida-tetsugaku,” I cannot find any more convincing rationale of explaining this push (or the divine Eros) than Nishida’s following dictum in his second work, *Intuition and Reflection in Self-Consciousness*.²

When absolute free will turns and views itself, or, in Boeme’s terms, when the objectless will looks back on itself, the infinite creative development of this world is set up. (IRS, 143)

This grasp of the creative advance of the universe corresponds marvelously to Uwe Meixner’s metaphysics the core of which is designated as follows:

The law of nature, the regularities that make up the order of the world, totally penetrating it, come from his choice (which must for this reason be a completely *forseeing* one). Hence the nomologically constraining character of the laws of nature is not objective *in itself* (as naturalists think); it is, however, objectively given by God. The necessity that they carry with them (the *ananke* of ancient metaphysics) does not exist in itself without relation to an *agent*, but is rooted in God’s causality and gains its constraining character and its character of partly pre-determining the future from his *omnipotence* and *omniscience*.³

² Trans. Valso H. Viglielmo, Yoshinori Takeuchi, and Joseph S. O’Leary (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987; hereafter cited as IRS).

³ Uwe Meixner, “The Metaphysics of Event and Substance,” *Satya Nilayam*, Vol. 1,

However, in the case of Nishida, God as agent ad extra is not presupposed without reservation, but is once negated by Godself in God's self-introspection into the Godhead as Nothingness negating itself, thus, and only thus, giving rise to the advance of the universe. Nishida looks upon this side of the Deity as implying omnipotence and omniscience, as developed more clearly later in his last work "Logic of the Place of Nothingness and the Religious Worldview."⁴ So deep is the Whence of causality. Keeping this reservation in mind, yet we can concur with Meixner that God's omnipotence/omniscience precedes God's causality. Then, what about our creaturely self-creation, *causa sui*? This is the matter of what Whitehead calls "conrescence" or self-creative activity which can partly achieve "the total situation" while at the same time partly pre-determined by the Deity. What is important now is the Pull of the universe from the future, the Whither, or the Ideal.

C. The Problem of "Envisagement"

The Whence of the universe (identifiable with God as the initial Eros who, however, to my mind, is loyal to the Godhead as Nichts or Holy Nothingness, thus, and only thus, giving rise to the creative advance of the universe) is related to the Whither of the universe only in terms of the "envisagement by the underlying activity." In this context there is a striking passage in *Science and the Modern World* ⁵:

Finally, to sum up this train of thought, the underlying activity [coterminous with Whitehead's mature notion of creativity], as conceived apart from the fact of realization, has three types of envisagement. These are: first, the envisagement of eternal objects; secondly, the envisagement of possibilities of value in respect to the synthesis of eternal objects; and lastly, the envisagement of the actual matter of fact which must enter into the total situation which is achievable by the addition of the future. (SMW, 105)

What I most keenly attend to is the fact that although the Divine envisages the actual matter of fact compassionately (even prior to our conscious acknowledgment), it is only by the addition of the future (identifiable with our creaturely self-creativity in the next

February 2002, 57.

⁴ See Tokiyuki Nobuhara, "How Can Pure Experience Give Rise to Religious Self-Awareness and Then to the Topological Argument for the Existence of God Cogently? Nishida, Whitehead and Pannenberg," *Process Thought*, No. 6, September 1995, 130.

⁵ Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: Free Press, 1967).

nascent phase, as compared with the presence of the Deity in our midst under the primitive dative phase of the concrescence) that the total situation comes about in actuality. Here lies the indispensable importance of the future. Here also lies the never-to-be forgettable importance of our creaturely self-creativity. But in what sense? In the sense of our actual acknowledgment of the Divine envisagement, that is satori, and also in the sense of our dynamic participation in the immanence of the initial Eros, that is faith in action.

III. Peace As the Solution To Theodicy: Whitehead and P. T. Forsyth

Given the above-mentioned threefold articulation of my recent metaphysical concern, it may be in order for me to say a few words about the problem of Peace in its metaphysical significance. Metaphysically, Peace has more than a strategic importance as it applies to any social unit, such as a nation, an ethnic group, or a company. In a word, Peace is a spiritual state of affairs involving in itself physical, mental, and social aspects of human wellbeing. Then, what is it?

I can refer to three thinkers whose insights into the heart of Peace are memorable: theologian P. T. Forsyth, philosopher Whitehead, and poet Basho Matsuo. In what follows let me pay a tribute to their thought in my own way.

First, let me dwell on P. T. Forsyth's idea of Peace. In 1916 when World War I was still perilously at work in Europe, P. T. Forsyth wrote one of his famous volumes, *Justification of God*. His foremost concern was with the problem of theodicy whose object is, according to him:

To vindicate Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to man.

And he continued:

That is a theodicy, the attempt to adjust the ways of God to conscience. But to His own conscience above all.⁶

⁶ P. T. Forsyth, *Justification of God: Lectures for War-Time on a Christian Theodicy* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1916), p. v. (Hereafter cited as JG.).

What he saw in the war was “the soul of schism” which takes effect in the wars of churches, classes, and nations in the following sense:

War, with a national competition for God as ally, instead of a national obedience to Him as Sovereign, war with its eagerness to have Him on our side instead of having His side for ours, such war is but the debacle of a religion which is but sequentially, instead of essentially, moral, whose ethic is but a by-product. It is the fruit of the union of a civilization which is fundamentally egoist, and a religion also egoist and propositional, sentimental, or what you will, only not holy. (JG, 96-97)

We can see above that the element of “holy” was lacking in one sort of religion which stages a national competition for God as ally. By contrast, by being nationally obedient to God as Sovereign, in other sort of religion we might be eager to have God’s side for ours solely because we hallow and trust the holiness of God. But who can be loyal to the holiness of God in such a sincere manner? Forsyth answers: Christ could and actually did hallow and trust “even when He spared Him not” (JG, 127). And he writes:

He was and *is* the holiness of God. Therefore God in Christ, crucified and risen, under and over the world’s worst sin, is His own theodicy. He is doing entire justice to His holy name. Christ stills all challenge since He made none, but, in an utter darkness beyond all our eclipse, perfectly glorified the Holy Father. If He, the great one conscience of the world, who had the best right and the most occasion in all the world to complain of God for the world’s treatment of Him—if He hallowed and glorified God’s name with joy instead (Matt. xi. 15-7; Luke xxiii. 46), there is no moral anomaly that cannot be turned, and is not by long orbits being turned, to the honour of God’s holy love, and the joy of His crushed and common millions. His wisdom is justified of His children. (JG, 127-128)

Here the sense of “holiness,” to the mind of Forsyth, seems to be commensurate with the personhood of the Deity, namely, the intra-Trinitarian integrity, which Christ manifests in his obedience to the point of death, even the death on the cross (Phil. ii. 8).

Now, second, noticeably enough, in the case of Whitehead, this sense of holiness is contained, if my understanding is correct, in his vision of Peace which carries with it a “surpassing of personality” (AI, Mentor, 283). It is not a hope for the future, nor is it an

interest in present details. This is because some subtle sense of intimacy of the present and the future has visited here-now. This is an intuitional moment which quite uniquely inheres in what Whitehead writes: “It is the immancence of the Great Fact including this initial Eros and this final Beauty which constitutes the zest of *self-forgetful transcendence* belonging to Civilization at its height” (AI, Mentor, 294; italics added).

Third, let me emphasize that that sense, as far as I can see, was brought into expression magnificently by Basho in his haiku:

Furuike ya
Kawazu tobokomu
Mizu no oto

The old pond, ah!
A frog jumps in:
The water's sound!

The “old” pond, if interpreted in relation to Whitehead’s afore-cited dictum about “envisagement,” is the “timelessness of the Unconscious”⁷ prevailing the actual matter of fact, which, however, is taken into account benevolently by the Divine. Under the primitive dative phase of our existence we are envisaged quietly as we actually are. Then, what about the “total” [i.e., divine-creaturely] situation into which this envisaged state of affairs must enter expressly? How can it be brought about? Whitehead answers: by the addition of the future.

This is the case in which Basho’s poetical words make sense most fittingly: a frog jumps in. Thus, and only thus, the water’s sound is heard definitely. The water’s sound cannot be heard by the old pond alone; nor by a frog alone, either. It is heard as the *combined reality* of the Transpersonal and the personal, which Whitehead designates as Peace in the following sense:

At the heart of the nature of things, there are always the dream of youth and the harvest of tragedy. The Adventure of the Universe starts with the dream and reaps

⁷ See D. T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 241; hereafter cited as ZJC.

tragic Beauty. This is the secret of the union of Zest with Peace:—That the suffering attains its end in a Harmony of Harmonies. The immediate experience of this Final Fact, with its union of Youth and Tragedy, is the sense of Peace. In this way the World receives its persuasion towards such perfections as are possible for its diverse individual occasions. (AI, Mentor, 294-295)

We can compare and supplement this passage of Whitehead's with the following profoundly penetrating exegesis of Basho's above-mentioned haiku by D. T. Suzuki:

It is by intuition alone that this timelessness of the Unconscious is truly taken hold of. And this intuitive grasp of Reality never takes place when a world of Emptiness is assumed outside our everyday world of the senses; for these two worlds, sensual and supersensual, are not separate but one. Therefore, the poet sees into his Unconscious not through the stillness of the old pond but through the sound stirred up by the jumping frog. Without the sound there is no seeing on the part of Basho into the Unconscious, in which lies the source of creative activities and upon which all true artists draw for their inspiration. (ZJC, 241-243)

At any rate, Peace in the sense of surpassing personality visits our hearts and minds by this sort of intuition into the unity of the Transpersonal and the personal at the present moment.

Concluding Remarks:

The celebration of the festivity of the X. International Philosophy Olympiad/Forum, with its union of an assemblage of incoming youthful adventures and a show of accomplishments delivered in the form of forum by outgoing officers on Earth, is, I might say, a symbolic moment of this Universal Peace. Then, let me finally make some concluding remarks as follows:

First, dwelling in this Peace, probably we should envision creating something like a Transnational IPO-Affiliated Inter-University Network (TIIN) based upon the web-linkage between Keiwa College, Global Dialogue Institute and The United Nations University in order to promote philosophy education by way of student exchange cum faculty exchange projects of various kinds and joint seminars/workshops/lectureships on a global scale. Within this context we should learn from Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's idea of L' Esprit de la Terre and dialogically reinterpret it against the background of

Leonard Swidler's vision of "the Age of Global Dialogue."⁸

Second, I am particularly interested in a further development of the general theme of the X. IPO: Towards a Just and Dialogical Human Community: An Exploration of Sustainability, Civility and Mutual Learning. This can serve as a guiding principle of TIIN.

Third, I like to envisage the idea of a Global Inter-University Network whose various centers across the world can organize seminars/workshops/lectureships on "Peace and Dialogue on Earth," for instance. Personally, I don't like what Whitehead critically calls "simple location" and "misplaced concreteness." Any location, whether Eastern or Western, if it is locked in a watertight compartment, will not do. A location should be an inter-location; a university should be an inter-university. And this "inter" means the topos of absolute Nothingness, in the words of Kitaro Nishida, to which any persons, the Divine persons included, should be loyal, according to my philosophical theology of loyalty. When we are faithful to the Interconnectedness in our own unique ways (Christians as Christians, Buddhists as Buddhists, an/d Muslims as Muslims), we will surely be mutually immanent joyfully!

In this spirit I now would like to propose to initiate a PDE Inter-University Center (located in my office at Keiwa College) which serves as a free agency for promoting philosophy education on Peace and Dialogue on Earth in cooperation with the above-mentioned global network, TIIN.

Shibata, Japan : March 24, 2002; revised July 20, 2002

Appendix:

⁸ See Leonard Swidler et alii, *Death or Dialogue. From the Age of Monologue to the Age of Global Dialogue* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990).

X. International Philosophy Olympiad

13-15 May 2002

Tokyo, Japan

(The Official Brochure)

Since 1993, International Philosophy Olympiad (IPO) has been held each year for high school students, bringing together the winners of similar national contests, to engage in philosophical discourse. The aims of the IPO are

- to promote philosophical education at secondary school level and increase the interest of high-school pupils in philosophy;
- to contribute to the development of critical, inquisitive and creative thinking;
- to promote philosophical reflection on science, art and social life;
- to cultivate the capacity for ethical reflection on the problems of the modern world; and
- by encouraging intellectual exchanges and securing opportunities for personal contacts between young people from different countries, to promote the culture of peace.

Following International Philosophy Olympiads in Bulgaria, Turkey, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Germany, and the United States, the X. International Philosophy Olympiad will be held at the United Nations University in Tokyo, Japan, from 13 to 15 May 2002. The theme for the X. IPO will be:

“Towards a Just and Dialogical Human Community – An Exploration of Sustainability, Civility and Mutual Learning”

Students from ca. 15 countries are expected to attend the event, which will comprise of an essay contest, lectures and cultural activities. Participants from abroad will bear their own travel cost, while the Japanese organizations will provide accommodation and

meals and cover the cost for cultural activities and the general organization of the event.

Programme

12 May (Sunday)

morning/afternoon

Arrival of participants, accompanying teachers, guest lecturers, and members of the organizing and steering committees of the IPO

evening **Orientation, Welcome dinner**

13 May (Monday)

morning Essay contest

afternoon Cultural activity

Lectures by Prof. Ioanna KUCURADI, President of the
International Federation of Philosophical Societies
Prof. Tomonobu IMAMICHI, Director of the
International Centre of Philosophical Study

14 May (Tuesday)

morning Public lectures by Prof Hans van GINKEL, Rector of the United Nations
University

Prof. Hisashi OWADA, President of the Japan Institute of
International Affairs

Prof. John B. COBB, Claremont Graduate University

afternoon Cultural activity

evening Relocation to host families

15 May (Wednesday)

morning Workshop on peace and dialogue

Facilitated by Prof. Karim BENAMMAR, Kobe University
Prof. Noriko HASHIMOTO, Aoyama Gakuin
Women's Junior College
Prof. Eiko HANAOKA, Osaka Prefectural
University

Kick-off lectures by Prof. Ioanna KUCURADI, President of the
International Federation of Philosophical Societies
Prof. Ingrid SHAFER, University of Science and
Arts of Oklahoma

afternoon Award and closing ceremony

evening Reception

16 May (Thursday)

Departure

Accommodation

Participants, accompanying teachers, and members of the organizing and steering committees will stay at the

Korean YMCA Asia Youth Center
2-5-5 Sarugaku-cho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0064
Tel: (81)3-3233-0611
Fax: (81)3-3233-0633
Email: ayc@ymcajapan.org

For guest lecturers, reservations have been made at the

International House of Japan
5-11-16 Roppongi
Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032
Tel: (81)3-3470-4611
Fax: (81)3-3479-1738
URL: <http://www.i-house.or.jp>

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Theme

“Towards a Just and Dialogical Human Community – An Exploration of Sustainability, Civility and Mutual Learning”

From its inception, the general themes of the IPOs have been a reflection of the major issues confronting society at the times that they were held. As such, the themes both

reflect obvious change and remarkable continuity. This year's theme tries to link two major concerns of our time: the need for a dialogue among civilizations, and the necessity to achieve a sustainable form of development.

In its 53rd session in the fall of 1998, the General Assembly of the United Nations, on the initiative of President Khatami of Iran, discussed for the first time the need for a sincere and worldwide dialogue between people coming from very different cultural (and religious), social, economic and political backgrounds to find solutions for the pressing problems facing humankind today. The horrendous events of 11 September 2001 and the actions that followed, as well as an analysis of the causes underlying them, have shown the need for sincere and true dialogue all the more clearly. At the same time, these events demonstrated the urgency of discussing more broadly the concepts of what is just and what is right.

The complexity and interdependence of our present-day world is also increasingly understood and accepted. The core problems of globalization, poverty, development and environment can only be solved by well-coordinated actions based on a sound understanding of their relatedness. The sustainability of our society, the future of humankind is directly at stake here – and will be at the centre of the discussions at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in August/September 2002.

The following paragraphs will elaborate further on the main concepts relevant to the general theme, drawing on insights of scholars involved in the preparation of the IPO and external experts. This outline will be helpful to identify the specific topics for the essays to be written during the X. IPO.

Just

Justice is about rights. It is about ensuring that rights, among them individual rights, are respected and fulfilled to the extent possible. This applies to all levels of justice, including the national, international or global. Ensuring the respect and fulfillment of justice, or rights, at the global level is a far more complex task than it is at the national level. The reasons for this are the following: *First*, no general agreement has been reached so far at the international level as to the exact scope and contents of the rights of individuals and collective actors. In spite of much progress made over the past fifty

years in terms of identifying core values forming a common ground on which to build a sense of common purpose and community, the differences remain significant. This is exemplified by the discussions still surrounding the universal validity of the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights.” *Second*, the mechanisms to enforce rights at the international level remain weak. The lack of agreement on what is right and on rights themselves renders it all the more difficult to allocate proper resources – institutional, financial and others– to ensure compliance. *Third*, global justice remains rather elusive and secondary to national interests as long as the international political arena is still largely defined by nation-state structures. A global constituency, for which the concept of global justice would be imperative, has not evolved yet.

Yet, during the past ten years, a number of events and tendencies have occurred that are favorable to the development of a sense of global justice. These events, often tragic ones, have also made the evolution of global justice more urgent. They have led, for instance, to the establishment of the ad hoc international criminal courts for Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, and the permanent International Criminal Court at The Hague. In addition, globalization and its ambiguous social and economic effects on societies have given rise to calls for a global perspective on justice. The internationalization of national societies under the effects of globalization and the diffusion of international norms on the one hand, and the shift in focus in the international realm towards social and ethical issues centered on the notion of universal human rights on the other hand have brought global justice to the forefront of the contemporary agenda. (Hans van Ginkel, Rector, United Nations University)

Dialogical

Dialogue is conversation between two or more persons with differing views, the primary purpose of which is for each participant to learn from the other so that he or she can change and grow—of course, in addition both partners will also want to share their understanding with their partners. We enter into dialogue primarily so that we can learn, change and grow, not so that we can force change on the other. In the past, when we encountered those who differed from us in the religious and ideological sphere, we did so usually either to defeat them as opponents, or to learn about them so as to deal with them more effectively. In other words, we usually faced those who differed with us in a confrontation—sometimes more openly polemically, sometimes more subtly so, but usually with the ultimate goal of overcoming the other because we were convinced

that we alone had the truth. But that is not what dialogue is. Dialogue is not debate. In dialogue each partner must listen to the other as openly and sympathetically as possible in an attempt to understand the other's position as precisely and, as it were, as much from within, as possible. Such an attitude automatically assumes that at any point we might find the partner's position so persuasive that, if we were to act with integrity, we ourselves would have to change.

(quoted from Leonard Swidler, "The Age of Global Dialogue," 5-6)

Human Community

The integration of the international community has generated the need to deal with global issues that affect all nations. That obviously includes addressing macroeconomic management of the world economy. In the economic sphere in particular, it has become impossible for any one nation to operate alone, detached from the overall perspectives of global economic management. However, the list of global issues goes much further than that. It includes in addition such major issues as environmental problems, combating AIDS and other lethal diseases, and coping with transnational crimes like international terrorism and drug smuggling. In all these sectors, interdependence among the nations of the world is growing stronger and deeper. In this new environment, an attempt to replace the old bipolar order with a unipolar order, as claimed by some people, cannot solve the problems. Nor can a multipolar world based on traditional balance-of-power relations. The problems can be dealt with adequately only through a mechanism of management based on shared responsibility among the major players in the system that have the will and the capacity to play such roles. This order, based on what might be called *pax consortis*, might look ideal on paper, but in practice it will be the most difficult order to maintain.

(quoted from Hisashi Owada, "The Shaping of World Public Order and the Role of Japan," *Japan Review of International Affairs*, 14/1, Spring 2000, 14)

Sustainability

There is general agreement that we want a sustainable society, but there is much less agreement as to what that means. At one end of the spectrum, there are those who want to keep our natural context as close to its present form as possible or to restore it to an earlier, better form. For them, global warming indicates that our society is already unsustainable. At the other extreme are those who believe that technology

and capital investment will enable us to live well even when much of the nature with which we are familiar has disappeared as a result of human activity. For them, global warming is to be taken in stride as the cost of the needed economic growth, while we adapt human life to new weather conditions. Those of us who are closer to the first extreme believe that our generation should undertake to leave our descendants as many options as we have enjoyed, and that continuing to substitute artificial for natural systems reduces these options. We also believe that human beings have a deep need for the presence of biodiversity in their environments and for the experience of wilderness. Survival may be possible without these, but it would be an impoverished survival. We want to sustain a possibility for healthy and enjoyable human life in rich interaction with the natural world rather than sheer human existence.

(John B. Cobb, Jr., Claremont Graduate University)

Civility

When we stand back from any one cultural perspective and rise to a global perspective between worlds, we can see deeper patterns in the evolution of cultures. Here we find that through the ages diverse teachers across cultures have sought to advance a deep and painful awakening process in human evolution. From this perspective, we can see that humans are in the midst of an evolution from an egocentric way of life to a more deeply civilized dialogical being. The world teachers have all seen that egocentric culture produces diverse forms of pathologies—alienation, the breakdown of relations and communication, fragmentation, and violence—in all aspects of life. These profound teachers have sought to promote the awakening of life to the dialogical culture which fosters common ground, rational enlightenment, moral awareness and compassion, and more successful human relations across and between diverse worlds. This dialogical awakening requires specific skills and patterns in opening our minds and our lives to very different perspectives and worlds.

(Quoted from Ashok Gangadean, address on “The Global Dialogue Institute”)

Mutual Learning

This is not a perfect society, but it is one that is stumbling in the right direction. When you strip everything I said today down to one sentence, it basically comes down to this. Ever since civilization began, people have fought with their own inner demons over whether what we have in common is the most important thing about life, or whether our

differences are the most important thing about life. That's what all this comes down to. I'm glad America is a lot more different than it was when I was your age. This is a much, much more interesting country. But what gives us the freedom to celebrate our differences is the certainty of our common humanity.

(Quoted from William Jefferson Clinton, "Remarks as delivered by President William Jefferson Clinton: Georgetown University, November 7, 2001" <http://ecumene.org/clinton.htm>)

Today there is an emphasis on difference among individuals and among communities. We are to appreciate difference and to avoid making others over into persons or communities like ourselves. Instead of emphasizing how we are all alike, we emphasize our differences and the great contribution that this diversity makes to the whole. Too often, however, it seems that the whole is enriched without much contribution to the individual, diverse, people who make it up. A better approach is to recognize how living in a diverse world enriches each of us. A highly diverse environment offers all the stimulus to broaden the range of /personal experience and to achieve higher integrations. The experience and understanding of each one can include new features and new ideas. In this way each includes elements of what others have achieved. This can apply not only to individuals but also to religious traditions and cultures. Christianity can be transformed as it includes some of the great achievements of Buddhism, and Buddhists can learn from, and be transformed by, including achievements of the Christian tradition. The effect of mutual inclusion is not homogeneity but new forms of difference. The whole that includes these mutually transforming individuals and communities is ever richer.

(John B. Cobb, Jr., Claremont Graduate University)

