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Philosophy and Corona: A new philosophy of man and humanism

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Abstract

The main objective of human beings as absolute entities is related to our urge for survival, because in a material sense we are not self-supporting, but completely dependent on what nature offers us. In earlier times survival instincts meant that we lived as hunters, guided by our functional antennas (hunger, thirst, fatigue, sexual feelings, etc.). Today, this activity can be described as economically motivated, basically including everything that can be assumed to be serviceable, so it must therefore be construed very broadly – not merely providing in our primary needs, but everything else that is necessary for this. As our human society becomes more complex and more prosperous, secondary activities to attain the primary necessities of life become more comprehensive. In our present day and age they are even so multi-faceted that we can now expect to be occupied with such activity for perhaps the greatest part of life, possibly even without being truly aware of it on a daily basis. We might well ask ourselves whether it is a good thing for people as absolute entities to seize every opportunity to raise the level of prosperity all over the world so that a great many people benefit from it. What will be the consequences? We would do well to wonder whether some limit needs to be set. Unrestricted growth of the world population and unbridled growth of prosperity may well mean that one day there will be a price to pay. The crucial question is when the critical limit is reached and what factors affect this; resourceful management can shift this limit infinitely. However, these are forces that are currently not under our control. Perhaps new worldwide macro-organisational structures will be able to provide a solution. But once again, should human beings as absolute entities be happy with this? Or will such a development take place at the expense of other interests of absolute entities? Worse still, will it interfere to such an extent with one or more of the conditions for our existence that it must be slowed down or even stopped?

Keywords: Philosophy, anthropology, humanism, capitalism, consumerism, pandemic

All life is one

“It can all begin to seem impossibly complicated, and in some ways it is impossible complicated. But there is an underlying simplicity in all this, too, owing to an equally elemental underlying unity in the way life works. All the tiny, deft chemical processes that animate cells ... evolved just once and have stayed pretty well fixed ever since across the whole of nature.

Every living thing is an elaboration on a single original plan. As humans we are mere increments – each of us a musty archive of adjustments, adaptations, modifications and providential tinkering stretching back 3.8 billion years. Remarkably, we are even quite closely related to fruit and vegetables. About half the chemical functions that take place in a banana are fundamentally the same as the chemical functions that take place in you. It cannot be said too often: all life is one. That is, and I suspect, will ever prove to be, the most profound true statement there is.” (Bryson 2005: 1)

I. Humanism and philosophy

A new philosophy of man as the basis for a humanist ideology, with its roots in America: its origins and where it now stands (James Joseph Dagenais 1923-1981) (Tallon, Williams 1982: 3)2

“The only claim which philosophy can make to leadership in the total enterprise of understanding man is its capacity to explicate its own presuppositions ... if the necessary presuppositions of a philosophy of man can be clarified and justified, its claim to be basic can be validated..... The presuppositions of any philosophy, I maintain, involve a fundamental attitude towards myself, the other, and the world. The most fundamental evidence here is that *the universe is not a thing, nor even a system of things, not an object or a system of objects, but primordially an interpersonal world, a world of and for persons.*

Philosophy can then be defined as a reflection upon the pre-reflexive, pre-philosophical, pre-scientific experiencing of being, that is, upon experiencing before any kind of conscious thematization. If philosophy is a radical and transcendental thinking, that is, a thinking upon the a priori conditions of possibility of all thinking and all experiencing, then the experiencing which is reflected upon must be experiencing in the largest sense. It is the experiencing in my insertion of being – concretely, the experiencing of myself and the other in the world.” (James Joseph Dagenais 1923-1981) (Dagenais 1972: 4)

1. Philosophical Anthropology: a consistent overall vision of man and his world

This definition can largely be derived from a study of the basic tenets of the relationship between philosophy and the sciences, in particular the philosophy of man and the social sciences in *Models of Man, A Phenomenological Critique of Some Paradigms in the Human Sciences* by Jim Dagenais, from which, in a nutshell, the following hypotheses are borrowed:

“The thesis maintained is that the human sciences, as sciences, must attempt to reduce the meaning of man to the control of the scientific presuppositions which found each science, and that, in consequence, each scientific model can and must pretend to universal exclusiveness. Furthermore, since each science must be limited to one perspective, they cannot all be summed up under the control of another

science, such as philosophy. This amounts to saying that the sciences (positive, axiomatic, or humanistic) must be autonomous as sciences; that the only critique of them as sciences is from within the sciences themselves. Any other knowledge we have of human beings outside of these sciences is, in respect to them, unscientific.”

Dagenais then gives three possible answers to the question “... how we know human being...”, of which he explicitly chooses the second one:

“First, ... through the sciences of man..... But, again, each of these sciences is autonomous and independent ... Second, we might hypothesize that we know man through a “definition’ of man. But then the elaboration of an all-encompassing theory about human being would have to depend upon all the empirical sciences anyway. Otherwise it would have only the apodicticity of a logically necessary statement. That is, if it is to be about real human beings, such a theory would have to depend upon a host of extra-systematic assumptions which will serve only to invalidate the supposed logical consistency of the argument. Third, ... through a prestructured “metaphysical system” of the whole..... This really makes the sciences of man unnecessary and gratuitous, and explains nothing about the origin of the system in any case.”

Ultimately he comes to the conclusion that “[i]n all these inadequate hypotheses there is one recognizable constant: that all understanding of human being in the world, whether scientific or philosophical, is founded upon a pre-scientific and pre-philosophical experiencing of human beings as self-and-other-in-the-world. The only alternative, then, is a critical explicitation of this experiencing; and that is the task of philosophy. It is the task undertaken in this essay, especially in the important and basic defense of the second phase of the thesis stated above.”

2. Dagenais and Chinese philosopher Chan Fai Cheung (CUHK)

“Max Scheler, in his *Man’s Place in Nature*, maintains that there are three most fundamental ideas of man in Western history: man understood as a rational animal in the Greek philosophy of Plato and Aristotle; as a creature created by God in His image from the Jewish-Christian tradition, and finally as the recent product of animal evolution. In traditional Chinese culture, the dominant ideas of man may be limited to two: the Confucian moral man and the Daoist natural man. Taking the two traditions as a whole, we have therefore two more basic ideas of man to be added to Scheler’s list: in addition to the philosophical, the theological and the scientific, there are the moral and finally the natural (Daoist) man. These ideas cannot all be true since they are in fact incompatible with one another in their fundamental philosophical tenets. There is simply no unified idea of man. Here is where Heidegger’s critique comes in. Although his “phenomenological destruction” of the metaphysics is only directed to the Western tradition, his critique of the metaphysical basis of the very conception of human nature is, in my opinion, trans-cultural”, in the words of Dr. Cheung Chan Fai, professor of philosophy at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in his *Human Nature and Human Existence – On the Problem of the Distinction Between Man and Animal*. (5)

After he establishes what Heidegger “has written in Chapter 9 of *Being and Time*: “The “essence” (*Wesen*) of Dasein lies in its existence (*Existenz*)”, his final opinion is that “the major issue is to understand what human being is. Any

metaphysical distinction of man drawn from a comparison between man and animals does not really think of man as man in his Being. ‘Metaphysics thinks of man on the basis of *animalitas* and does not think in the direction of his *humanitas*’, citing Heidegger’s *Letter on Humanism* (6); “[t]he *essentia* (*Wesen*) of man does not point to the substantia,

the whatness, in man. ‘*Wesen*’ means the disclosing process of the understanding of Being (*Seinsverständnis*) in the human Dasein. ‘*Wesen*’- essence – in this sense refers not to the what but the how of Dasein with respect to its ‘existence’. The comparison of Aristotle with Xunzi and with Mencius is to show the similar approaches to the question of man, though the two great Confucians place the primacy of the human nature on the moral awareness and its actualization. These two ideas from Aristotle and the Confucians have been the most important for all subsequent theories of man. Heidegger’s philosophy has changed all these. The distinction of man from animals should not be sought in human nature but in the meaning of human existence in the light of Being.”

In respect of Dagenais’s *Models of Man* Cheung remarks: “There are indeed many more different theories of man not only within philosophy but also in modern social sciences. Sociology, psychology and anthropology all propose different *empirical* theories of man, in contrast to the *speculative* ideas in philosophy. The modern discipline of philosophical anthropology is devoted to the synthesis of speculative and empirical theories”, only to conclude that “[t]he arguments between all these theories of human nature seem to rest on the justification of the primordially of the human essence in question.” Even after a comprehensive discussion of Max Scheler’s *Spirit and Person*, he again reaches the conclusion that “[t]here is still no unified theory of man”. This naturally also applies to the solution which he has chosen, namely “... the meaning of human existence in the light of Being” as the basis for “the distinction of man from animals”.

But if we sever the link between these two, then what we retain is “... the meaning of human existence in the light of Being”, which is precisely what Dagenais says at the end of his essay, where he cites Husserl: “The present proposal is to define human consciousness, with Husserl, not as a thing but as a giver of meaning, and to define man in a preliminary way not as a ‘rational animal’ but as essentially project and as incarnate freedom.” They thus take different paths to arrive at the same conclusion, the difference being that Dagenais adds an essential element, incarnate freedom, of which he gives a comprehensive explanation, which is the answer to the question of “what makes man properly man”, as described in his *Models of Man*.

II. Dependency and Urge for Survival (material) as the defining essential characteristic of human beings as absolute entities

Central to this is our material state of being. On the one hand, material refers to wants, needs, imperfections, death and on the other hand to their obviation by endeavouring to make provisions, to satisfy needs, bring perfection and life. It is from this antithesis that our urge for survival arises. Survival means maintaining living matter on pain of the occurrence of its opposite, dead matter. But this opposition is less absolute than we might think and has only one human

dimension. After all, here a link seems to exist to our cosmic condition for existence, of which matter is a characteristic part. And our urge for survival (our will to live) can only be explained by matter that is not merely physical, but also includes, nay bears in itself, our will to live in a form or a manner that we call energy. Matter is therefore not only substance and our visible manifestation, but also embodies energy, which is incorporeal, immaterial, invisible to us. If this energy is the basis of our urge for survival, it is related to what we call intelligence, and then the conclusion would be justified that in an absolute sense matter includes not only energy, but also intelligence. These three quantities bear in them one another's characteristics and in this way they are each other's equals, but viewed from our human dimension it is plausible that they are related hierarchically and that intelligence manifests itself in the form of energy, which appears to us as matter.

However this may be, our first task is to maintain our physical, corporeal essence, but this also leads to the biggest problems. Because we are not self-supporting in this respect, but dependent on the possibilities offered to us by nature, to which all life forms belong, we are obliged to spend a considerable portion of our lives on it. This means using scarce energy to achieve our objectives. To maintain our energy levels, we must spend an average of one-third of our life sleeping. For this, we need a place to live. On average, another one-third of our life is spent acquiring nourishment and a place to live. This leaves one-third for our private life, a considerable portion of which is needed for activities that are directly and indirectly related to our material self-preservation. This means that we are always short of time and always carry on an unrelenting struggle for existence. Not only our own inner struggle, but an external one as well in which we must compete with others, imply that means of existence are scarce. This necessity of the struggle applies not only to individuals, but to the entire world population, which is why nations wage war on one another.

The implication is that our urge for survival is inherent, that everything is permissible, that we are a law unto ourselves; it is a matter of survival of the fittest, and this consequence can manifest itself in all conceivable and inconceivable variants. This situation is recorded in the lower strata of our lives, and it seems very remote in our present day and age because human societies have been created on the basis of rules, which can be enforced, a great many situations are conceivable that can escape the effects of enforcement, and thus the fundamental principle is always applicable.

We might well ask ourselves whether it is a good thing for people as absolute entities to seize every opportunity to raise the level of prosperity all over the world so that a great many people benefit from it. What will be the consequences? We would do well to wonder whether some limit needs to be set. Unrestricted growth of the world population and unbridled growth of prosperity may well mean that one day there will be a price to pay. The crucial question is when the critical limit is reached and what factors affect this; resourceful management can shift this limit infinitely. However, these are forces that are currently not under our control. Perhaps new worldwide macro-organisational structures will be able to provide a solution (7).

But once again, should human beings as absolute entities be happy with this? Or will such a development take place at the expense of other interests of absolute entities? Worse still, will it interfere to such an extent with one or more of the conditions for our existence that it must be slowed down or even stopped?

III. Capitalism (consumerism), government and human beings as absolute entities

All these terms are very closely interrelated. The principle of free enterprise production (capitalism in a broad sense), by now widespread around the world (globalisation), requires a government that sets limits to this freedom. Human beings as absolute entities are part of that system and they can acquire a wide range of products that ensure not only their survival but, certainly in the Western world, a life of luxury. The standard of living in the Western world has since reached unprecedented heights, in contrast to other parts of the world, where people still live in abject poverty. Generally speaking, people do not impose any limitations on themselves in this respect, which only encourages manufacturers to produce more, so that consumers now find themselves in a Walhalla where they can buy without limits (consumerism) (8). This cycle has since infested the rest of the world, which has a great many consequences. All we can do is wait for the time when things will have run their course, but there will be a price to pay, because it seems as good as certain that terrible things will happen, at least if it is not possible to mobilise a powerful enough countermovement that can bring present-day developments to a standstill.

Our recent history has seen repeated attempts to devise solutions for the detrimental consequences of the capitalist system (freedom). Communism (central management, lack of freedom) proved not to be a good alternative; as always, the solution will have to be a happy medium between the extremes of human greed and lack of freedom. The very nature of the capitalist system (without limits) seems to mean that it will not lead to a solution. Nor will the state under the rule of democratic law offer a solution because in fact it can only carry out the will of its citizens, which forms the basis. This means that the only place a solution can be sought is in the citizens themselves (9), but they do not seem sufficiently equipped to deal with it. They have managed to observe that there is a serious problem (10), but are at a loss to find a solution, something outside the box.

The heart of the problem is in fact formed by a type of human behaviour that we refer to as consumerism, the unlimited purchase of all products offered on the markets at all costs and at the expense of all else. These are consumers who have lost their bearings, who are no longer able to impose any restrictions on themselves, not even when they know the serious consequences of their behaviour. In fact they cannot be blamed for such behaviour; after all, they simply allow themselves to be guided by their urge for survival, which means that everything is permitted and that there are no boundaries. And history has shown that people have only allowed restrictions to be imposed on them when they were associated with a religion that imposed certain rules to live by, and obedience could be coerced. But Westerners have lost their faith, so no solution can be expected in that direction. And it is a fact that religions gave their subjects carte

blanche when capitalism made its appearance, or at least they ignored the system. As long as their subjects complied with their churchly obligations, they could do as they pleased, and the churches profited greatly from all the benefits that capitalism brought for them as well. In any case this applies to states where a clear separation between church and state has been elevated to the norm, and it immediately explains why poverty is still widespread in theocratic states, and Western states are now confronted with the consequences.

1. The law of supply and demand

Capitalism is subject to an iron law, the law of supply and demand. Products for which there is no need don't stand a chance on the market. Supply and demand must therefore connect seamlessly, and if not, the price mechanism will ensure that they do. This can even go so far that a product prices itself out of the market, because the costs are no longer offset by the benefits. In an endless response to the unlimited needs of people in all respects, products can be put on the market and kept there and consumers can be stimulated to satisfy their relative needs. If we were to make a scale of products corresponding to a certain level of need, running from the primary needs of life to the highly luxurious products (which are not really necessary), it would clearly show how things stand with the fulfilment of people's needs in an absolute sense. The further that boundary is crossed, the more evident it will be that purchase of such a product is no longer justified in relation to the price that must be paid for it in the form of damage to certain interests. In this connection we might ask how far people ought to go, or be allowed to go, in their unrestricted fulfilment of needs and the corresponding production that causes damage to certain interests. In other words, where is the boundary between the necessary fulfilment of the primary needs of life and all the other forms of need fulfilment? Human beings as absolute entities have it in their power to set limits and to conduct themselves in accordance with them. To do so, they must make a deliberate choice and act accordingly. But if we are to take responsibility, we must start by investigating this problem and going through the stages so that we can bear the responsibility.

In a general sense, there is no escaping capitalism in this world, but you can limit its detrimental consequences. The ensuing problems are so serious that adequate measures will have to be quite drastic, without damaging the system in the core. They must avoid only the very worst detrimental consequences, the consequences that can threaten our existence, our very survival. There are two ways in which to approach this: individually and collectively.

We can call human beings to account individually, but we can never be certain of achieving the desired result. You can never force people individually, as absolute entities, to exhibit certain behaviour, but you can try to convince them that you are right, so that they will want to change their behaviour; this is a long and difficult road, but is one that has to be taken. And you can indeed convince people when you can demonstrate that their behaviour forms an obstacle to their primary objective (survival) and their ultimate goal of self-fulfilment through development and the search for meaning. The damage, especially that to the environment in the broadest sense of the word, is a very serious threat to our

progeny (10). It is something people can no longer afford to disagree about. Our planet earth and nature, on which we are dependent in our urge for survival, are in danger of being defeated, of losing out, and as we have seen, this would mean the end of human beings as absolute entities because an important link in their origin and evolution, which is also a condition for their existence, is in danger of disappearing. In this field too, people as individuals can band together to make this subject a political item: they can put it on the political agenda with a view to making it a government responsibility through elections, thus calling on the collective to render an accounting and harnessing the power of the state to help solve these problems.

But the very nature of the problems means that only individuals, acting en masse, can make a direct and substantial contribution, and the state can only contribute indirectly, but nonetheless essentially, to possible solutions; individuals can exhibit simple discipline by means of detachment, by letting go of their material state of being, and restricting their urge for survival to a minimum, to only what is strictly necessary (individually determined). This will create considerable scope for any number of developments that can make life worthwhile and lead to ultimate self-fulfilment, so that human beings as absolute entities can make their own contribution to solving this world-encompassing problem. If all people all around the world do this simultaneously by making a deliberate choice, then this altered demand will make it possible to break through the iron law of supply and demand, leading to a snowball effect. In fact this is the only way to bring the problems to a conclusive solution, so at all events we must employ all means and the greatest possible perseverance. Nonetheless, it will be a long-term affair, one involving uncertainty, because we are dealing with a house divided, one to which the use of force is foreign, so that participation must be voluntary. Even so, the flesh is weak. The contribution of the state (the collective) can be supportive in various ways, two of which, from an unexpected angle, will be discussed here.

2. A general prohibition of advertising via the media (radio and television) and Setting radical limits to every form of mobility that causes CO2 emissions

At this point we might well ask how effective the measures proposed by the climate conferences have been. It's quite simple: such measures cannot remove the causes of the problems and can only be seen as ways of alleviating the pain.

First of all it is important to establish that the most immediate cause of the problem is the continually increasing world population: now at seven billion, within the foreseeable future (2050) it will be ten billion (calculation of the United Nations Population Council). Since any measures will have to be voluntary, an effective population policy, such as in China, would not seem to be among the possibilities. In this context, human beings as absolute entities are subjected to forces to which they can offer little or no resistance, namely the urge to reproduce, it is part of our origin and evolution and cannot be regarded as an essential characteristic, as is the urge for survival. Although a population policy will presumably not be able to contribute to a worldwide solution to the problems, it

will make mankind aware of their seriousness and so contribute indirectly. No means should be shunned; action must be undertaken on all fronts. However, the growing world population and an adequate population policy are beyond the scope of this essay.

A general prohibition of advertising via the media (radio and television)

The object is not to combat capitalism, but to remove its detrimental effects. A general prohibition of advertising in the media will considerably reduce the influence of capitalism. Businesses can manifest themselves via their own channels, for example via the internet, so that they no longer present themselves to consumers, but consumers can seek them out if need be. Advertising in the media has psychological consequences: people are manipulated, are subjected to forms of mental coercion to buy certain products at the expense of other companies that make those same products; as such, it is a weapon in the competition between companies. Advertising has grown into a worldwide billion-dollar industry in which the costs are ultimately paid by consumers.

It is not just the advertising that is objectionable, but also the fact that it takes place in the media. In particular, radio and television are means of communication that are outstandingly suited for people to manifest themselves to one another in the broadest sense of the word. Advertising on such media greatly interferes with this. It gives businesses a forum that is not only manipulative, but which has also turned the entire field of broadcasting topsy-turvy: it has taken on a domineering role in this respect not simply determining what people listen to or watch, but becoming a financial determinant as well. As so many things in society are now solely dictated commercial interests, the interests of viewers and listeners are violated, trampled and subordinated to them. The result is a string of commercial channels that place their own interests (money) first and foremost; channels, furthermore, which show such little difference in the level of their programmes and their advertising that they can be abolished completely. Thanks to the internet, the importance of daily newspapers has declined, and so has the need of involving them in this discussion.

As a result of a general prohibition of advertising in the media, the influence of business (capitalism) on daily life will be drastically reduced, which will not only give people much more peace and quiet, but will also lead to a marked fall in the demand for products, thus affecting supply and leading to considerably less economic activity, which will have favourable consequences for the environment. The demand for luxury articles will collapse, and so the supply of luxury articles will decrease to the same extent. Because of its very nature, the demand for products that satisfy the primary needs of life will remain, with a corresponding level of supply. The companies that make these products can continue to compete as of old, only now without the spurious means of advertising, at least in the media. Companies can certainly present themselves to their potential clients in all other permitted manners. But for consumers, the pressure will be off and consumerism will have been crushed.

Setting radical limits to every form of mobility that causes CO2 emissions

Here lies the actual core of our problem; it is the cause of all forms of pollution (10). Let me simply sidestep the matter of the hole in the ozone layer, worldwide climate change, the rising sea level and the need for higher dikes, because we can continue along those lines for an hour without getting one step further. But what is striking about this is that all over the world people are perfect willing to fight the last consequences in the chain; they rack their brains and hold conferences and write lengthy reports announcing measures that are referred to as huge challenges for the future, but none of them have the wits or the courage simply to look into the deeper causes, to take those as the starting point and to find solutions that will ask greater discipline and self-restraint of people.

One such solution is setting radical limits to every form of mobility that causes CO2 emissions. Obviously, I realise that you cannot simply abolish these forms of mobility from one day to the next. But you can set limits to their use, and the problems are serious enough to fully justify setting limits that may be perceived as radical. It is of the utmost importance to seek alternatives that do not involve CO2 emissions and until we have such alternatives, this issue must be viewed very pragmatically; but wherever at all possible, we must set limits. To start with, all cars must be barred from the centres of towns, cars for private use and all related products must be made prohibitively expensive, and permits must be required for all business and industrial activities that cause CO2 emissions. The expected increase in the number of cars in the near future (in the Netherlands: from seven million in 2007 to ten million in 2050; calculation of Statistics Netherlands) means it is absolutely necessary to intervene now and not wait any longer. Those cars must not materialise. We must find alternatives. All this is in order to create a better world for our children to live in. Be honest: would you want to live in the world as we can expect it to be if we do not take steps now to alter its present condition, and in which it is foreseeable that disasters are waiting to happen? It is five minutes to twelve, so there is no time for half-hearted measures or procrastination. And then people will discover that they are closer to nature when they walk, cycle and take public transport (which must be expanded and improved) than with one car per family, and equilibrium will have been restored.

Humanism in contemporary philosophy

In contemporary philosophy, humanism tends more to make itself a subject of debate rather than a defined school of thought with a fixed programme. Humanists want to openly relate to the critics of the classical humanist picture of man, which consists in autonomy, self-determination and atheism, and to seek a more qualified definition of humanism. This attitude often acts as a bridge between humanism on the one hand and religious feelings and spirituality on the other, and the significance of humanism is then not so much a clearly delineated life philosophy as it is a creative, practical social-political movement to search for meaning, to humanise society and culture and to discover new forms of the art of living.

Organised humanism maintains its position in the Netherlands as an academic and social addition to the traditional social pillars, coming to expression in the Humanist Alliance, founded in 2001.

Attempts are also being made in Islamic philosophy to develop a humanism that builds on the age-old humanist traditions in Islam and is strongly anti-fundamentalist. Arkoun was an important spokesperson for this, as was Nas'r Abu Zayd (1943-), a humanist scholar who worked in the Netherlands.

Notes:

1. Tallon A., Williams P., 1982, Memorial Minutes James Joseph Dagenais 1923-1981, *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (Nov., 1982), pp. 253-255, Published by American Philosophical Association, Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3131239>

2. Dagenais J.J., 1972, *Models of Man, A Phenomenological Critique of Some Paradigms in the Human Sciences*, Martinus Nijhoff/The Hague, ISBN 90 247 1290 4

3. Cheung Chan Fai, 2001, Human Nature and Human Existence – On the Problem of the Distinction Between Man and Animal, pp. 365-383 (Prof. Dr. Cheung Chan Fai, B.A., M.Phil. (CUHK), Dr. phil. Freiburg, Germany), Office of University General Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

4. Heidegger M., 2010, *Über den Humanismus*, Verlag Vittorio Klostermann, ISBN 978-3-465-04091-0

5. Robert Zoellick, President of the World Bank, in NRC Handelsblad (Opinie) of Tuesday 14 October 2008 (www.nrc.nl) [*India, Brazilië en China moeten G7 bijstaan*], “Group of industrial powers is not big enough to resolve today’s problems.... The financial crisis offers an opportunity for a new multilateral network. Rising powers want to be heard too.... We should consider setting up a new steering committee, one that includes Brazil, China, India, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the present G7, that holds regular meetings, with active formal and informal discussions. The group should not simply replace the G7 by another group of countries, but must be continually adjusted to the circumstances. We cannot use methods from the ‘old’ world to create a new one....”

6. On consumerism, the manipulative nature and all-controlling influence of advertising and the magnitude of advertising budgets in the world and in the United States in particular, see the American political scientist Benjamin R. Barber, *Consumed: How Markets Corrupt Children, Infantilize Adults, and Swallow Citizens Whole*, originally published by W.W. Norton & Company in NRC Handelsblad, *Opinie en Debat*, pp. 15 en 16, of Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 September 2007 (www.nrc.nl) [*De infantilisering van de consument is een bedreiging van de democratie*]:

“More and more adults become infantilised. Consumption is on its way to becoming the highest, often the only, ideal. This results in a new cultural norm from which is difficult to escape and which has far-reaching political consequences: consumers are not citizens; commercialism has made us less free as citizens.”

Lindstrom M., Van de Velde P., 2009, *Buyology*, on “... neuromarketing, in which results from brain research are used to determine advertising strategies.” (Interview in *De Financiële Telegraaf* of Saturday 14 March 2009 (www.telegraaf.nl), p. T29 [*Spiegelneuronen sturen onze kooplust: Marketinggoeroe doet boekje open*].

7. Indian scientist Rajendra Pachauri, chairman of the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN climate panel, in NRC Handelsblad (Economie) of Monday 1 September 2008 (www.nrc.nl) [*Minder vlees beperkt uitstoot*] on cattle breeding as a cause of the greenhouse effect: “A change in lifestyle and

consumption patterns is badly needed” and “In democracies, change only takes place when it is truly wanted by people. If people realise the consequences of their present lifestyle they will want change. But this awareness must come from the people themselves. Politicians will response accordingly.” (Interview Hans van der Lugt)

8. On the magnitude and seriousness of the problems, see NRC Handelsblad Wetenschap of Thursday 25 September 2008 (www.nrc.nl) [Uitstoot van CO₂ stijgt razendsnel]: “Worldwide emissions of greenhouse gas CO₂ are rising faster than predicted in the least favourable scenario. Since 2000, carbon dioxide emissions have grown four times as rapidly as in the previous decade.” The main editorial of Friday 26 September 2008 (www.nrc.nl): “The climate issue requires a more rapid response. Although spending reductions can help, it is more courageous and more effective if stricter standards are set right now for energy production and industrial production.” (For more information, see www.globalcarbonproject.org)

9. Indian scientist Rajendra Pachauri, chairman of the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN climate panel, in NRC Handelsblad (Economie) of Monday 1 September 2008 (www.nrc.nl) [Minder vlees beperkt uitstoot] on cattle breeding as a cause of the greenhouse effect: “A change in lifestyle and consumption patterns is badly needed” and “In democracies, change only takes place when it is truly wanted by people. If people realise the consequences of their present lifestyle they will want change. But this awareness must come from the people themselves. Politicians will response accordingly.” (Interview Hans van der Lugt)

10. On the magnitude and seriousness of the problems, see NRC Handelsblad Wetenschap of Thursday 25 September 2008 (www.nrc.nl) [Uitstoot van CO₂ stijgt razendsnel]: “Worldwide emissions of greenhouse gas CO₂ are rising faster than predicted in the least favourable scenario. Since 2000, carbon dioxide emissions have grown four times as rapidly as in the previous decade.” The main editorial of Friday 26 September 2008 (www.nrc.nl): “The climate issue requires a more rapid response. Although spending reductions can help, it is more courageous and more effective if stricter standards are set right now for energy production and industrial production.” (For more information, see www.globalcarbonproject.org)

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